

## Lincoln County A&L Committee moves to forward Pine Crest offer to purchase to full County Board for consideration

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

The Administrative & Legislative (A&L) Committee held a special meeting on Monday, Feb. 12, 2024, to review and consider an offer provided by broker Marcus & Millichap for the purchase of Pine Crest Nursing Home. An Asset Purchase Agreement presented by the proposed buyer, Merrill Campus, LLC and Senior Management, Inc., proposed an \$8.5 million purchase price for the real estate and buildings/improvements and fixtures for both Pine Crest Nursing Home at 2100 E. 6th St. and the Health & Human Services (HHS) Building located at 607 N. Sales Street. The two buildings are physically adjoined and share HVAC and other systems, and the real estate boundaries were established via a Certified Survey Map recorded with the Lincoln County Register of Deeds on Dec. 7, 2023.

After an hour in closed-session deliberations, the A&L Committee returned to open session to take action and, after a motion by District 18 Supervisor

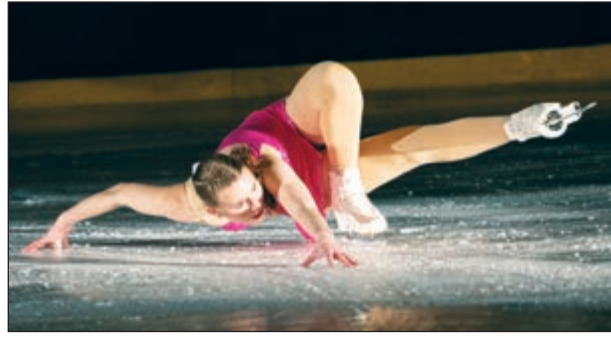
See PINE CREST page 7

## Happiest Place on Ice

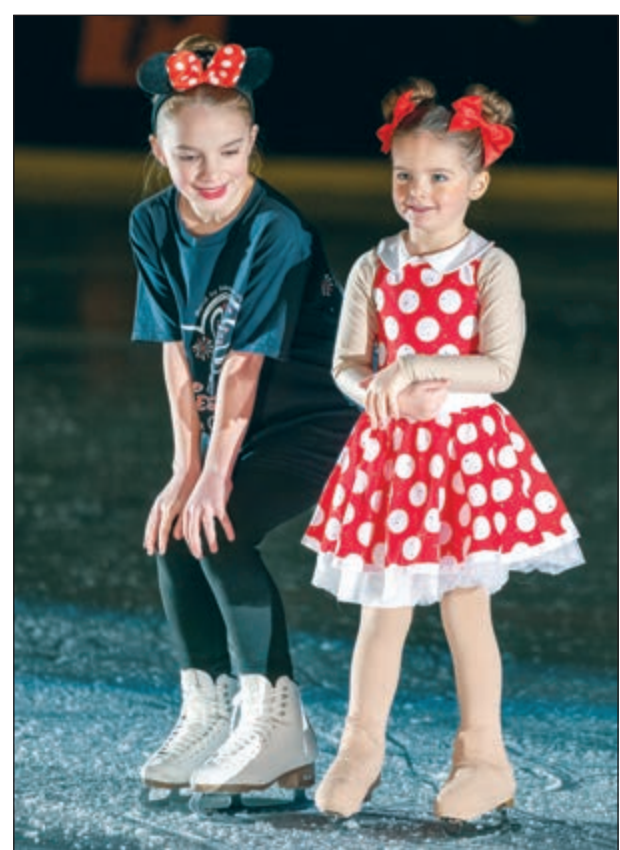
Skaters of all levels took to the ice at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex Ice Arena this past weekend, Feb. 10 and 11, 2024, to showcase their skills. The members of the Merrill Ice Reflections Figure Skating Club presented The Happiest Place on Ice with two shows. From bunny hops and backward crossovers to lunges, axels, and spirals ... each skater got to show what they've learned and the moves they've perfected, set to music, and in beautiful (or adorable for the little ones) costumes. If you didn't attend the show, our photo showcase (more photos online) will give you a peek at what you missed.



Mya Meyer.



Brooklyn Kraegenbrink.



Sophia Volpe and Amelia Grund Joseph Frederick photos.



L to R: Evie Parks, Genny Herman, Piper van der Westhuizen, Natalie Hartwig, Madeline Schenck, Zulekha Niyazi, Lydia Hoffman, and Collin Finucan.

More photos online [merrillfotonews.com](http://merrillfotonews.com)

**Diamond** **\$5.00 OFF**  
Diamond Dog Foods  
(Through 2-29-24)

**RiverCountry CO-OP**  
Merrill Country Store  
1400 Logan Ave. • Merrill • 715-536-2491  
Hours: M-F 7-6 • Sat. 8-1 • [rivercountrycoop.com](http://rivercountrycoop.com)

Thinking of advertising in the **FOTO NEWS?**  
**WE CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS GROW!**  
The Merrill Foto News is direct mailed by zip code to over 14,500 homes every Thursday.

Phone: 715-536-7121 | Email: [FotoNewsAds@mmclocal.com](mailto:FotoNewsAds@mmclocal.com)  
Address: 2011 E. Main Street Merrill, Wisconsin

**IF YOU DON'T GET A PAPER AT YOUR HOME OR BUSINESS EVERY WEEK... Please contact your Local Post Master or speak with your mail carrier**

Direct mailed by zip code to over 14,500 homes every Thursday!

**MERRILL Foto News** Your Hometown Newspaper Since 1956

## County Finance and Insurance Committee approves resolution to borrow \$4 million Lincoln County Landfill needs a new compactor and a new cell and Committee had no choice, they said

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

The Lincoln County Landfill needs a new compactor. The transmission on the landfill's existing compactor recently went out, rendering it inoperable and landfill staff unable to compact trash, which means less trash is able to be deposited into the landfill and the space isn't being properly utilized. The compactor literally compacts trash at the landfill, eliminating air space so more trash can be put into the same square footage. In really simple terms,

think of it like stuffing more into your suitcase by sitting on it to compress the contents so you can zip it. Or probably more accurately, think about the storage bags that use a vacuum to suck all the air out of the bag so a huge comforter makes a small, flat package. It's a similar concept. The Lincoln County Landfill needs to utilize a compactor on a regular basis to most effectively utilize our existing landfill space - which is running out at a faster rate than anticipated, as well. Of note, a track loader is also currently being repaired.

**But first, the compactor.**  
The Lincoln County Finance and Insurance Committee met on Feb. 2, 2024, to assess the situation and heard from Keith Cohrs, Lincoln County Landfill Manager, who explained the need for the machine and lack of availability of a compactor to rent, even on a short-term basis, to enable them to fix the current compactor, which would cost about \$50,000 to repair and is past its expected lifespan. He also explained that maintenance

See LANDFILL page 12

**PARKSIDE PRESCHOOL 4K CENTER 2024 - 2025**  
**4K REGISTRATION & OPEN HOUSE**  
Come join us on Thursday, February 29, 2024 from 6-7p.m. at our 105 E. 1st St. location.

This open house is for all prospective Parkside Preschool 2024 - 2025 MAPS Community Collaborative 4K students.

There will be opportunity to meet the teachers, ask questions, pick up 4K Registration Packets, see the facility and do a craft.

715-536-7716

**MARATHON CHEESE CORPORATION**

Advancement Opportunities  
Great Benefits Package • Paid Vacation  
Employee Appreciation Events  
Company Match 401(k)

Check our website for current openings. E.O.E

[www.mcheese.com/join-our-team](http://www.mcheese.com/join-our-team)

Join our team, where your dedication and passion will be appreciated. You will matter at Marathon Cheese!



# Underdown winter race added to the IRONBULL series

IRONBULL has added the Snowbound in the Underdown to its four seasons of events in 2024. This year's Snowbound in the Underdown event takes snowshoers and fat tire bikers through the majestic Prairie Dells and Underdown Recreation Area on Feb. 24, 2024.

With the City of Merrill recently expanding the parking area at the Prairie Dells Trailhead to accommodate the increased use of the trails, snowshoeing has been added to the 2024 event. The fat tire bike race has taken place since 2014, and as part of the Badger State Games over the past several years.

Race director, Chris Schotz, has worked to hold several summer events in conjunction with IRONBULL in recent years including the Underdown Trail Races and the TTT gravel bike ride. "Lincoln County and the Underdown are versatile adventure venues," said Schotz.

At the Snowbound in the Underdown, racers experience fat tire biking and snowshoe racing on the unique winter trails departing from the Prairie Dells. Bikers journey up the Prairie River gorge before hitting the hills and lakes of Underdown Recreation Area for rides of 10, 15 or 25 miles. Six-mile snowshoers will reach the majestic Prairie Dells while three-milers will take in the overlooks of the new Heinemann Loop. The planned race course is nearly all singletrack, plus trails go across frozen remote lakes and wetlands normally not accessible outside the winter months.

Despite the lack of snow this winter, Schotz intends to hold the fat bike race even without snow as long as the ground will be frozen to prevent trail damage. The snowshoe portion may be converted to a trail run/hike, similar to the Ice Age Trail hike that Schotz led as part



The Prairie Dells and Underdown Recreation Area offers a silent sports heaven with 37 miles of singletrack trails.

Photo courtesy of Chris Schotz.

of the Northwoods Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance recently on the trails. The hike had record turnout, with many hikers expressing amazement at the rerouted course.

The Snowbound in the Underdown race course may also be modified based on trail conditions. So far, the trails have held up well with the record high temperatures with bikers enjoying good trail conditions on frozen mornings. To keep a level playing field, bikes will still need tires of 3.8" or greater no matter the surface.

"We know where the ground is high and relatively dry," said Schotz. "The forecast is for frozen dirt, and there are many miles of glacial moraines that can withstand erratic weather. We'll design a fun course to fit conditions once the long term forecast comes into focus."

More details are available at: [ironbull.org/snowbound-in-the-underdown](http://ironbull.org/snowbound-in-the-underdown). Registration remains open, including same day registration, at: [ironbull-signup.redpodium.com/snowbound-in-the-underdown](http://ironbull-signup.redpodium.com/snowbound-in-the-underdown). If conditions do not allow for the race to be held, credit cards will not be charged for registrants. Free snowshoe rentals allow newcomers to access the sport (if there's snow on the ground).



Snowshoeing will be added to the 2024 Snowbound in the Underdown event.

Steve Coates/Coates Photography photo.

IRONBULL is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization that promotes outdoor adventure sports in Central Wisconsin. IRONBULL aims to drive economic development, benefit community organizations, and attract and retain a talented work force through the production of high quality races and events that promote healthy living in our community.

**Pet of the Week**



Meet **Vern**. He is a sweet hound/mix who loves to get attention and is great with people. He's good with other dogs his size but will need a cat free home. He loves to go for walks and play outside. **Vern** would be great in an active home. This handsome boy can't wait to find that special someone to adopt him!

Visit all the adoptable pets at the Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N. Memorial Dr., in Merrill. Hours: **MON.-SAT. 12-4 PM & SUN. 12-2 PM.** Call the shelter at 715-536-3459, or visit us at [www.furrypets.com](http://www.furrypets.com).

SPONSORED BY **Dave's County Market**  
300 E. First St. Merrill, WI

# Merrill Area Public Schools to host referendum information sessions

## District welcoming community members to see buildings, learn about April 2 capital facilities referendum

Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) will host two referendum information sessions to inform community members about the upcoming April 2 capital referendum.

Attendees of either referendum information session will have the opportunity to pose questions to District administrators, Board of Education members, and representatives from the District's financial, design, and construction partners. The District encourages all residents of MAPS to attend a session and tour each of the hosting school buildings, Jefferson Elementary and Merrill High School.

Referendum information sessions will be held at the following dates and times:

- Monday, Feb. 19 from 6-8 p.m. at Jefferson Elementary School
- Monday, Mar. 25 from 6-8 p.m. at Merrill High School

No RSVP is required to attend either of these events. On April 2, MAPS residents will have the opportunity to vote on a referendum question that requests permission for the District to borrow funds (issue debt) in an amount not-to-exceed \$16 million for a facilities improvement plan to make the best use of the District's best facilities.

MAPS has developed a plan to address the most pressing facilities issues and better utilize the District's educational spaces. To address the challenges facing the

District—funding, aging facilities, utilization, declining enrollment—a base plan was developed that would close four buildings and seek to sell the Pine River School for Young Learners (PRSYL) property. PRSYL, Bridges Virtual Academy (BVA), and the Northern Achievement Center (NAC) programming would move into the Jefferson Elementary building, following key updates and renovations to Jefferson.

"We are hosting these two referendum information sessions prior to the April 2 vote to give our residents and taxpayers a chance to learn more about the upcoming referendum and get any questions they may have answered. The administration and Board of Education, to continue to engage and inform our community of MAPS' future plans, encourage everyone to attend," said Shannon Murray, MAPS Superintendent.

He said MAPS is committed to continued efforts to make the best use of their best buildings, and has made it a priority to develop a plan to improve facilities and update the existing aging buildings and grounds.

For additional information, please visit the District's website at [mapsedu.org](http://mapsedu.org) or contact Shannon Murray at 715.536.4581 or email him at [shannon.murray@mapsedu.org](mailto:shannon.murray@mapsedu.org).

**BACON SALE!**  
John F. Martin  
Hickory Smoked Bacon  
Comes in 1 lb. Vacuum Packs  
**\$4<sup>29</sup>** lb.  
**\$50** 12-1 lb. packs (\$4.17 a lb.)  
Gluten Free and no sugar added!

**DRIED COCONUT**  
Sweetened Flake **\$2<sup>79</sup>**  
Unsweetened Flake **\$2<sup>99</sup>**  
Raw Unsweetened Chips **\$3<sup>29</sup>**

**Instant Pudding**  
Banana, Butterscotch, Lemon, Chocolate and Vanilla **\$2<sup>49</sup>** lb.

**DELI SPECIALS**  
Pepper Jack Cheese **\$3<sup>99</sup>** lb.  
White Turkey Breast **\$6<sup>49</sup>** lb.

**WINTER HOURS: WED. & SAT. 8AM-5PM. MON., THURS., & FRI. 8AM-5:30PM**

Located in Gleason. All prices subject to change. While supplies last.

**PRAIRIE PINES**  
715-873-4840  
STOP IN AND ENJOY OUR FRIENDLY, AGREEABLE SERVICE!

**Quality and Value**

Affordable and attractive buildings for suburban, equine, agricultural and commercial use.

When you are ready for a new building project, get all of the quality, value and service you deserve.

**Wick Buildings**  
Authorized Wick Builder



For more information contact **Willie Kimmons**  
**800-569-3090**  
[WillieAtWickBuildings.com](http://WillieAtWickBuildings.com)

**Merrill Girls' City League Softball Registration**

Wednesday, February 14<sup>th</sup> & Thursday, February 15<sup>th</sup>  
5:00 - 7:00 PM at  
702 S. Center Ave.  
M.Y.S.A. Facility

**ALL GIRLS WELCOME**  
Ages 5-14\*  
\*Girls Born 2009 - 2018




For more information, call Erin K. at (763) 229-6127

**NTC CHRISTIAN ACADEMY**  
3yr. Old Preschool & 4yr. Old Pre K  
Kindergarten - 12<sup>th</sup> Grade

**OPEN HOUSE**  
N2519 Hwy K, Merrill, WI

Thursday, February 20<sup>th</sup>  
8:00am - 4:00pm



- Classroom Visit
- School Tour
- Informational Packets
- Meet Teachers

Laying a Godly Foundation for your child's future.

Appointments preferred, but not required  
call 715-536-6855





Walgreens staff members gathered together, along with Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce staff and ambassadors, Merrill Mayor Steve Hass, and store manager, Mike Cich, to welcome back former pharmacy manager, Charise Saunders, and pharmacy operations manager, Amber Plautz, to the Merrill location and to celebrate the completion of store renovations. "We are excited about the start of a new year and about driving a positive customer experience at our pharmacy," said Saunders. "Walgreens has been very active in the Merrill Chamber of Commerce programs in the past, and we are looking forward to involvement in community events once again."

Photo courtesy of Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce.

**Merrill Area United Way**



**GIVE • ADVOCATE • VOLUNTEER**

February 2024 -- Foto News Article  
Merrill Area United Way  
Dee Olsen, Executive Director

The Merrill Area United Way recently held its Annual Meeting on February 5th. This meeting is our leadership transitional meeting when elections take place. It is also a meeting to evaluate our previous year and analyze and establish areas that the Board will move forward with in the new year.

Each year a third of our 21-member Board are up for election to an additional term on the Board. It is exciting when all members choose to be on the Board for another three-year term. We believe it speaks highly of the rewarding; effective work United Way is doing in the community. It also reinforces that we have a cohesive Board that works well together. Remaining on the Board for the term of 2024 to 2027 are **Brian Richards, Leah Burbach, Lin Kautza, Maria Brickner, Kurt Rust, Becca Klessig, and Tom Zentner.**

Taking on officer roles are President **Stacy Stevens**, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President **Joe Breaman II**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President **David Johnson**, Treasurer **Brian Richards**, Secretary **Jane Dehnel**, and Past President **Mike Ravn**. On the Executive Board are **Shannon Murray, Leah Burbach, Maria Brickner, and Mark Zulliger.**

The 2023 Annual Report for Merrill Area United Way was distributed at the meeting. The report identifies the significant role United Way plays in the community by supporting 20 programs to help people with health, education, basic needs, and financial stability. The Annual Report highlights the activities, challenges, and successes of 2023. The Annual Report is available to the public via our website; at [merrillareaunitedway.org](http://merrillareaunitedway.org) or visit us on Face Book. In April, the Merrill Area United Way Board will hold its Annual Planning and Goal Setting Session. We will look for areas to improve upon and ways to strengthen our organization and community.

February is the month of love. It is a time to reflect on the people and things you love. My mother used to tell me all the time "love thy neighbor as you would love yourself." That usually came about when she was lecturing me after an argument with a sibling, a classmate, or a friend. But it is true! We need to find peace and love in our lives again. Help stop everything hateful or negative. Valentine's Day is a special day when we show love. We need to show love year-round. Love should be what we are about all the time with our expressions of care, concern, and friendliness toward other human beings, our family, our community, our faith. It is easy to get lost in all the negativity in our society today but let us work on turning things around.

Through United Way we work hard to build a stronger, more positive, loving community, a community that cares about our fellow humankind, neighbors, family, people we know and do not know. You can show your support and help through giving, supporting, mentoring, and volunteering. Let this message be "your mantra" throughout the year. Let it be amplified during February, but then carry it forward throughout the entire year.

Donations to the Merrill Area United Way stay local and are always appreciated. If you wish to support Merrill Area United Way, then please mail donations to P O Box 813, Merrill, WI 54452. For more information about Merrill Area United Way visit: [merrillareaunitedway.org](http://merrillareaunitedway.org) (website currently under reconstruction) or email [Delores.Olsen@merrillareaunitedway.org](mailto:Delores.Olsen@merrillareaunitedway.org).

**Patrick J. Wood**  
Publisher  
[publisher@mmclocal.com](mailto:publisher@mmclocal.com)

**Tim Schreiber**  
General Manager  
[tschreiber@mmclocal.com](mailto:tschreiber@mmclocal.com)

**Rick Argall**  
Circulation Manager

**Sue Schroeder**  
Graphic Designer

**Tina L. Scott**  
Editor  
[tscott@mmclocal.com](mailto:tscott@mmclocal.com)

**Dinah Schneider**  
Sales Consultant  
[dschneider@mmclocal.com](mailto:dschneider@mmclocal.com)

**Jennifer Gartmann**  
Sales Consultant  
[jgartmann@mmclocal.com](mailto:jgartmann@mmclocal.com)

**Heidi Schult**  
Front Office Manager/CSR

**Heidi Griebel**  
Customer Service Representative

**Office Hours:**  
Monday - Friday • 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**Mailing Address:**  
Foto News  
2011 E. Main Street  
Merrill, WI 54452  
(715) 536-7121  
Fax: (715) 539-3686

**Ad & News Deadlines:**  
Display Advertising:  
12:30 p.m. Monday  
Classified Advertising:  
11:30 a.m. Monday

News or press release submissions must be one week prior to pub date.

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.  
© Copyright Multi Media Channels LLC 2024. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication or any of its contents may be reproduced, copied, modified, or adapted without the prior written consent of Multi Media Channels LLC.

# ADVERTISE Call 715-536-7121

## STOP THE SALE OF PINE CREST!

### URGENT UPDATE – CALLS NEEDED NOW!

**Chairman Don Friske and the Lincoln County Board are preparing to vote on the fate of Pine Crest.** Things are moving quickly. To keep Pine Crest, Lincoln County Board members need to hear from you TODAY. Here's what to tell them:

- **There is no reason to sell Pine Crest.** Pine Crest is financially stable and well positioned for the future. Pine Crest is providing high quality care and supporting families. Time and again, the people of Lincoln County have stated their support for keeping Pine Crest county owned. Will you vote against selling Pine Crest?
- **If selling Pine Crest is good for Lincoln County, Chairman Friske should hold a public meeting to answer questions about any offer to buy the nursing home before the county board votes on a potential sale.** If selling Pine Crest is such a good idea, then Chairman Friske and the board should be excited to meet with citizens, explain the offer and answer questions.

<b>William Bialeck</b>	District 1	715-536-5810
<b>Elizabeth McCrank</b>	District 3	715-436-0704
<b>Don Wendorf</b>	District 5	715-581-5035
<b>Greta Rusch</b>	District 7	715-536-8800
<b>Don Friske, Chair</b>	District 9	715-218-0410
<b>Randy Detert</b>	District 11	715-470-2653
<b>George Brixius</b>	District 13	715-612-4208
<b>Marty Lemke</b>	District 15	715-612-8063
<b>James Meunier</b>	District 17	262-208-6384
<b>Julie Allen</b>	District 19	715-453-8578
<b>Eugene Simon</b>	District 21	715-539-2889

<b>Lori Anderson-Malm</b>	District 2	715-803-5565
<b>Steve Osness, Jr.</b>	District 4	715-432-9977
<b>Norbert Ashbeck</b>	District 6	715-536-8716
<b>Laurie Thiel</b>	District 8	715-571-0078
<b>Jesse Boyd</b>	District 10	715-581-9557
<b>Julie DePasse</b>	District 12	715-536-2783
<b>Brian Hafeman</b>	District 14	715-612-7605
<b>Dana Miller</b>	District 16	715-966-1914
<b>Ken Wickham</b>	District 18	715-360-0912
<b>Angela Cummings</b>	District 20	715-218-7770
<b>Greg Hartwig</b>	District 22	715-216-2203

**Pine Crest has not yet been sold.** Selling Pine Crest will require a majority vote by the full county board. If you believe Pine Crest should remain an accessible, affordable, high quality, skilled nursing facility owned by the county, call your supervisor and Chairman Friske today.

**To get the latest news on Pine Crest, join our mailing list by sending an email to [people4pinecrest@gmail.com](mailto:people4pinecrest@gmail.com), and join our facebook page. Next People for Pine Crest meeting is Thursday, February 15 at 5:30 pm, at St. Stephens Church in Merrill.**  
People for Pine Crest - c/o Gene Bebel.



# OBITUARIES

**Roberta L. Stuemke**, 71, of Oshkosh, formerly of Merrill, passed away Saturday, February 3, 2024, at the Waterford at Colby, Colby, WI.

Roberta was born May 11, 1952, in Merrill, daughter of George and Florence (Thanholdt) Stuemke. She attended Merrill Senior High School, graduating in 1970. She then attended the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. She graduated in 1974 with a B.S. in English. Roberta served with VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) in Hill City, Kansas from 1975 until 1976. In 1976, she accepted a position at the Polk Library at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, as head of stacks management. In 2006, Roberta was presented with the Star Award from the UW-Oshkosh in recognition of performance above and beyond the expectations of her position. She continued working at the Polk Library until her retirement in December of 2011. During her employment, she also supervised student employees who always spoke fondly of Roberta regarding her teaching of shelving and finding missing books. Patrons of the library would comment that Roberta always had a smile on her face when greeting them.

Roberta was an avid reader, with a special love of science fiction that began after seeing the first Star Wars movie. Another special interest was writing science fiction and fantasy stories, with several being published by magazines of the same interest.

For many years, she lived with her good friend Judy Nord, head of the Halsey Research Center of the UW-O. Judy and Roberta enjoyed going to Sci-Fi conventions around the United States.

But her real love was for her cats. She always had at least one cat which she would adopt from the animal shelter in Oshkosh. She would typically look for cats there were least likely to be adopted such as the senior kitties or cats that had health issues.


Roberta is survived by her sisters, Kathryn Grons of Spring Grove, IL, Karen Rubom of Erie, CO, and Georgia (Randy) Gengler of Medford, WI; one brother, Edward (Sandy) Stuemke of Revenna, MI; and seven nephews and two nieces. Roberta was preceded in death by her parents, George and Florence Stuemke; brothers, Alan Stuemke and Dana Stuemke and three infant brothers; and brothers-in-law, Jerome Rubom and Donald Grons.

Interment will be in Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery. There will be no funeral or memorial service at this time. A family celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Roberta's wishes were that any memorial donations be made to Oshkosh Area Humane Society - 1925 Shelter Ct., Oshkosh, WI 54901.

Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting with arrangements. Online condolences may be made at [www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com](http://www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com)

**Robert D. 'Bob' Valliere**



Robert D. 'Bob' Valliere, 72, of Gleason, passed away surrounded by his family on Monday, February 5, 2024.

Bob was born January 27, 1952, in Chicago, son of Hiram and Florence (Schwartz) Valliere. When he was about two years old, Bob and his family moved to Lac du Flambeau. He grew up on the reservation and attended the local schools graduating from high school in 1970. He was a proud member of the Oneida Nation.

Bob attended the radiology school at Marshfield Hospital from 1970 to 1972. He married Susan Ruder on September 9, 1972, in Marshfield. Bob enlisted in the United States Navy on February 15, 1973 and was honorably discharged on February 14, 1977. During his time in the Navy, he served as a Corpsman and was stationed at Naval Station Great Lakes.

Bob and Sue lived in Illinois for twelve years. He worked at Victory Hospital and Lake Forest Hospital as a radiologic technologist with a specialty in C.T. imaging. Bob and his family moved to Merrill in 1989 and he worked in the X-Ray department at Good Samaritan Health Center. After 23 years at Good Sam, he retired in 2012.

Bob was an avid outdoorsman. He enjoyed hunting and fishing, but his first love was bow hunting. He harvested several Pope and Young trophy bucks bow hunting. He was a diehard Green Bay Packers fan and enjoyed going to the games.

Bob enjoyed spending time with his grandchildren and great grandchildren. He loved taking them for rides on the boat, 4-wheeler, snowmobile, and side by side.

Bob is survived by his wife, Sue Valliere of Gleason; sons, Jacob (Katie) Valliere of Merrill and Matthew (Allicia) Valliere of Wausau; granddaughters, Mercedes (Mike) Schreiber of Merrill, Charleze Valliere (Cody Jablonski) of Merrill, Suzy Valliere of Wausau, and Lilly Valliere of Wausau; great-grandchildren, Croix, Violet, Ila, and Mikey; brothers, Richard Valliere and Greg (Jeanne) Valliere of North Carolina; sister-in-law, Lynn Valliere of Waunakee; his longtime hunting buddy, Geoff (Jeanne Ruder) Burt; and his many Ruder in-laws and their families. Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Hiram and Florence Valliere; and brother, Charles 'Chuck' Valliere.

A celebration of life will take place from 1:00 P.M. until 4:00 P.M. on Saturday, March 9, 2024, at the Bierman Building in Merrill.

The family would like to thank the staff at Pine Crest Nursing Home, Merrill, and Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services for the wonderful care they provided Bob.

Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family. Online condolences may be made at [www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com](http://www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com)

**Lorraine Schwartz** 74, of Merrill WI passed away peacefully on February 3, 2024 at Aspirus Hospital.

A graduate of Merrill High School Lorraine married her husband Remi Schwartz on June 25, 1969. She was predeceased by her parents Herbert and Elsie Seager. Her brother Ronald Saeger. Lorraine is survived by her husband Remi. Her sons: John (Alissa) Schwartz, James (Stephanie) Schwartz and Jeffrey Schwartz. Her grandchildren: Trisha, Zackery, Christopher and Elsie. Her brother Roland Saeger.

She worked at Peterson and Wendorf Bus Services; Weinbrenner Shoe Factory; Ansen and Gilkey and Quality Wood Products. Lorraine's favorite past times were watching sports and spending time with her family and friends. A celebration of life will be held in Lorraine's honor on March 2, 2024 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. at Hub Inn. She will be dearly missed and always remembered.

**Carol Jean (Gille) Pester**, 88, of Merrill, passed away Saturday, February 10, 2024, at Aspirus Merrill Hospital.

Carol was born December 27, 1935, daughter of Peter John and Mabel (Lee) Gille. She graduated from Merrill Senior High School in 1953. After graduation, she worked for her parents in the cab business. In 1954, she went to work in the office at Livingston's Department Store in Merrill for three years. Carol was married in 1957, a union that lasted until 1975. In 1975, Carol went to work at the Family Medical Clinic as a Medical Assistant until 1990. On January 6, 1978, she married Fred J. 'Fritz' Pester. He passed away on June 7, 2020.

After their retirements, Carol and Fritz traveled extensively during the winter months in their motor home. Carol belonged to the Ladies Auxiliary of the Fleet Reserve Association and served as the Regional President in 1997-1998. She also belonged to the Navy Club and was a member of the V.F.W. She worked as a volunteer for the Ladies Auxiliary of Good Samaritan Hospital. She was a member of the Rosemaling Club, Women's Connecting, and Red Hat Mama's. Carol was also involved in bible study.

Carol leaves her five children, Laurie (Michael) Germain, Michelle 'Mickey' (Howard) Sczygelski, Jean (Thomas) Kouba, Polly (Jay) Koebe, and David Bienfang (Jenny Tesch); son-in-law, Randy Baguhn; one step son, Art (Debbie) Pester; ten grandchildren, Ryan (Jessica) Baguhn, Heather Lutze, Tony (Tyler) Ecklund-Kouba, Alex Germain, Ashton (Josh) Osness, Mallory Sczygelski, Ian (Elizabeth) Koebe, Sam (Jourdyn) Koebe, Noah Koebe, Riley Bienfang; one step grandson, Zach (Chelsey) Degner; and eleven great-grandchildren. She also leaves nine step grandchildren; fifteen step great-grandchildren; one sister, Gay (Kenneth) Baumann; and one brother, Lee (Nancy) Gille. Carol was preceded in death by her husband, Fred 'Fritz' Pester; parents, Peter and Mabel Gille; daughter, Sharon Baguhn; son, Gary Lee Bienfang; and granddaughter, Anne Germain.

In memory of Carol, memorials may be directed to St. Jude's or the Lincoln County Humane Society.

The funeral service for Carol will begin at 11:00 A.M. Thursday, February 15, 2024, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Merrill. The Rev. Scott Gustafson will officiate. The burial will take place in Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery. Visitation will begin at 9:30 A.M. Thursday at the church. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family.

Online condolences may be made at [www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com](http://www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com)

**Gary L. Pfantz**, 64, of Rhineland, passed away Saturday, February 10, 2024, under hospice care at Cumberland Heights in Rhineland.

Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting with arrangements.

**Barbara J. Bakke**, 75, of Merrill, passed away Monday, February 5, 2024, at her home. Barbara was born November 23, 1948, daughter of Franklin and Lois Schoenfeld.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date. Online condolences may be made at [www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com](http://www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com)

**Mid-Wisconsin Cremation Society**

Direct Cremation


Pre-Arrange Available **\$980.00** Locally Owned and Operated

Complete

948 Grand Ave. Schofield  
715-359-6488  
HonorOne.com

**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.*

It's hard to believe it's been 2 years already since you left us. We think of you every day.

Love & Miss You Jane, Sue & Bob

Stop or call our office to place your ad.

**30 to 60 Day Turnaround On All In Stock Monuments**  
(100 plus monuments in stock)



**Merrill Monument**  
N2182 CTH K  
Merrill, WI 54452  
715-536-6654

• Custom Etching  
• Pre-Need Monuments  
• Final Dates & Inscriptions  
• Custom Cemetery Work

EMAIL US: [merrillmonument@gmail.com](mailto:merrillmonument@gmail.com)  
STORE HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 9am - Noon & 1pm - 4pm

**Will your family know what you wanted?**

*We can help you record your wishes so they won't have to wonder. Call today.*

**WAID FUNERAL AND CREMATION SERVICE**  
301 Eagle Drive  
Merrill, WI  
(715) 536-4646  
[www.WaidFuneral.com](http://www.WaidFuneral.com)  
Email: [info@waidfuneral.com](mailto:info@waidfuneral.com)

YOUR FAMILY'S PERSONAL MEMORIALIST

**TOMAHAWK MONUMENT CO.**

*Specialists in Pre-Needs Planning*

FROM SELECTION TO DESIGN TO SETTING, ALL OF OUR WORK IS PROUDLY DONE IN-HOUSE

20 N. 2nd St., Tomahawk, WI • 715-453-6523  
Visit us at: [www.tomahawkmonument.com](http://www.tomahawkmonument.com)  
Email us at: [contactus@tomahawkmonument.com](mailto:contactus@tomahawkmonument.com)

**Serving the Community Since 1934**



**Taylor & Stine**  
Funeral Home and Cremation Services

Leah D. Reist, Director  
McKenna K. Meunier, Director  
Tammy Klade, Pre-Need Ins. Agent

903 E. 3rd Street • Merrill • 715-536-6244  
[www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com](http://www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com)

**MERRILL Foto News**

2011 E. Main St., Merrill  
715-536-7121



# OBITUARIES



**Everette L. Spiegel Sr.**, age 81 of Merrill, passed away on Thursday, February 8, 2024 at Marshfield Medical Center following a brief illness.

Everette Lee Spiegel Sr. was born December 9, 1942 in the Township of Belle Plaine, Shawano County, son to the late Adolph & Alice (Fraedrich) Spiegel. He attended school in Tigerton and graduated from Tigerton High School. Everette grew up on the family's home farm and there was plenty to do. As an adult, his work ethic kept him busy as he was a handyman of sorts, doing side jobs for folks in the area. This was in addition to helping his brothers on the farm. He was united in marriage to Barbara Greipentrog on September 4, 1971 at Zion Lutheran Church, Tigerton. He was a member of Grace Communion International Church, and enjoyed attending Highland Community Church, both in Wausau. Everette was strong in his faith and really enjoyed the community of folks at his churches. He could be found working in his large garden where he grew all sorts of vegetables and flowers for all to enjoy; he also loved to cook homemade meals for friends and family. Spending time with his children and grandchildren was what he cherished most. Everette was also thankful for the new friends he was able to spend time when they went out for coffee on Wednesdays. He will be remembered as a person who liked to make others smile, was fun-loving, and quite the jokester.

Everette is survived by: Sons: Everette (Cindy) Spiegel Jr., Tigerton & Shawn Spiegel, Merrill. Grandchildren: Trinity (Tim) Manthe, Derrick Rickert, Star Spiegel, & Spencer Spiegel. Great-granddaughter: Viola. Brothers: Arden Spiegel, Menasha; Gordon Spiegel, Tigerton; Norbert (Amy) Spiegel, Oshkosh; & Lyle Spiegel, Tigerton.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Barbara; and his son, Scott Spiegel.

A private graveside service with urn burial will take place at Tigerton Union Cemetery at a later date.

The Eberhardt-Stevenson Funeral Home & Crematory, Tigerton is assisting the Spiegel family.

An online guestbook is available at [eberhardtstevenson.com](http://eberhardtstevenson.com).



**Lorenz "Sonny" C. Breitenfeldt**, 78, Town of Wausau, passed away on Wednesday, February 7, 2024, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital. He was born August 30, 1945, in Wausau, the son of the late Lorenz A. and Linda (Voelker) Breitenfeldt. Sonny met Charlotte Gut at a polka dance and married her on April 1, 1967, at Trinity Lutheran Church, Wausau. Since the age of 15, Sonny has been farming on the Breitenfeldt family farm in the Town of Wausau. He was curious, innovative, and willing to try new things on the farm, with the snowmobile club, and with the race cars driven by his family. His adventurous spirit and deep love for his family, especially his grandchildren, will live on in the hearts of all who knew him.

Survivors include his wife, Charlotte Breitenfeldt, Town of Wausau, his children, Alan (Kathe) Breitenfeldt, Wayne (Lori) Breitenfeldt and Connie (Kent) Laessig, all of Wausau; his grandchildren Eric (Olivia) and Ella Breitenfeldt, Brett and Jenna Breitenfeldt, Connor, Karlen and Callie Laessig, and his great grandchild Owen Breitenfeldt.

Memorial Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. Friday, February 16, 2024 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Wausau. The Rev. Jim Mayland will officiate. Burial will be in Pine Grove Cemetery, Wausau. Visitation will be held on Thursday from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and again on Friday from 9:00 a.m. until the time of services all at the church. Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Home, Wausau, is in charge of arrangements. A full obituary can be read at [www.petersonkraemer.com](http://www.petersonkraemer.com).

Memorial Services will be held at 11:00 a.m. Friday, February 16, 2024 at Trinity Lutheran Church, Wausau. The Rev. Jim Mayland will officiate. Burial will be in Pine Grove Cemetery, Wausau. Visitation will be held on Thursday from 4:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. and again on Friday from 9:00 a.m. until the time of services all at the church. Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Home, Wausau, is in charge of arrangements. A full obituary can be read at [www.petersonkraemer.com](http://www.petersonkraemer.com).



**John E. Dymerski** It is with a heavy heart that we announce the passing of John E. Dymerski, 69 of Two Rivers WI, formerly of Merrill WI. He passed away on Tuesday, February 6, 2024 at Hamilton Health Center in Two Rivers WI under Hospice. John loved God and spent most of his adult life serving him in a church setting. He was born in Chicago IL married to the love of his life Karla Hanke for 46 years. Devoted father of Dean (Misty) Kreamsreiter of Merrill. WI. Tracey (Jeff) Jaeger of Merrill, WI, late Shaun Dymerski. Loving son of late Edmund and Adeline Dymerski. Dear brother to Carol (Joe) Aley of Forest Grove, OR, Richard Dymerski of Two Rivers WI and Sandy (Jim) Kitlinski of Schaumburg IL. Cherished grandfather to Austin, Ashlyn, Erin and Elijah. Fond uncle of many nieces and nephews. There will be a celebration of life this summer in Merrill.

Merrill, WI, late Shaun Dymerski. Loving son of late Edmund and Adeline Dymerski. Dear brother to Carol (Joe) Aley of Forest Grove, OR, Richard Dymerski of Two Rivers WI and Sandy (Jim) Kitlinski of Schaumburg IL. Cherished grandfather to Austin, Ashlyn, Erin and Elijah. Fond uncle of many nieces and nephews. There will be a celebration of life this summer in Merrill.

Please send announcements, news briefs, photo submissions and letters to the editor to: [tscott@mmclocal.com](mailto:tscott@mmclocal.com)

# PAID 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:**

I am responding to a letter concerning Pine Crest, published in the Feb. 8 edition of the *Foto News*. The letter states that last year the County had to cover 1.1 million dollars in operating deficits. The author must be referring to the deficit for 2022, because last year in 2023, Pine Crest had no operating deficit and in fact ran a surplus.

The letter also refers to the Ad Hoc Committee report concerning the future of Pine Crest that was completed before the increase in the Medicaid reimbursement rate that enabled Pine Crest to run a surplus. The increased rate in reimbursement is in place now and will continue. The Ad Hoc Committee report is obsolete.

The letter states the County owes over 8 million dollars for the 2017 addition to Pine Crest. The annual payment on the debt is \$630,000. The letter doesn't mention that the financing has been paid, up to now, out of Pine Crest revenues not out of taxes collected by the County. That revenue will no longer be available if Pine Crest is sold. If the debt is not paid off out of the sale, the taxpayers will foot the bill.

It is worth remembering that the millions of dollars of operating expenses incurred by Pine Crest annually are almost all paid by Medicaid, Medicare, and private insurance. The taxpayer's share of Pine Crest operating expenses is the \$440,000 the County is obligated to pay under its contract with NCHC.

I for one am willing to bear that expense.

– Don Dunphy  
Merrill, Wis.

**To the Editor:**

I read with interest the Letter to the Editor by Don Friske.

Below is pertinent information that was not included.

NCHC did request \$1.1 million dollars. Why? The State Department of Health reallocated the amount they provide County skilled nursing facilities without warning. This amounted to a \$1.5 million reduction in funding. Saying it failed may be putting an incorrect interpretation on the matter.

Another detail, in 2023 the NCHC/Pine Crest Operating Budget had a positive \$450,000 balance, a difference of almost \$1.75 million dollars compared to 2022. Is that failing? Not in my book. Can that be guaranteed for years to come? No, but based on Medicaid rates going from an average of \$201 to \$340 per day, the future is certainly brighter. Is the County Board acknowledging this powerful change? I haven't seen it.

By the way, that \$450,000 is being applied to the Fund Balance Account, currently at a -\$1,474,000 dollars; fund balances should be positive.

Missing in history is the amount of public outpouring that the citizens have demonstrated to retain ownership of Pine Crest. This has been well documented by a survey, petition, testimonials, and meetings.

Pine Crest's financial history has had it challenges, but we have overcome them. The intrinsic value of Pine Crest to the community has been greater than the challenges.

This is an incredibly important decision at hand. Yes, someone will have to pay for the continued operation of Pine Crest. I feel the 2023 data is the beginning of the answer we have been waiting for. It

needs recognition and support.

For 70 years the people of Lincoln County have been able to rely on Pine Crest. What types of decisions when a privately-held facility make when profits are thin?

Do not let your voice go unheard at this critical juncture. Do not allow the Board members to rush through any type of vote on its sale. Request a public venue to provide information and answers before any vote of the full County Board.

– Eileen Guthrie  
Merrill, Wis.

**To the Editor:**

And the Lincoln County Supervisor Chairman Don Friske and all other 21 Supervisors and the people of Lincoln County.

I would like to make a few points regarding the possible sale of our nursing home, Pine Crest.

1. This home belongs to US, and WE, your constituents, want to keep it in OUR possession. WE have been paying for it.

2. You denied us to vote in a referendum. Were you afraid of the outcome?

3. Regarding the value of the property: It has not been assessed, no appraisal has been done and, therefore, we do not know the value of it and neither do you. How can you set a price?

4. Maintenance costs have to be paid whether they are for public roads, City Hall, Jail, or other County-owned buildings, and this is no reason to sell Pine Crest.

5. How would a private buyer improve a five-star nursing home (Pine Crest) and still make a profit? Please, stop the sale!

Respectfully,  
– Susanna Juon-Gilk  
Merrill, Wis.

*The cost for Paid Letters to the Editor is \$40.00 per letter of up to 250 words, plus \$10.00 per additional 50 words, and must be prepaid prior to printing.*

**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. PLEASE NOTE: Our Letter to the Editor Policy has been updated (please read below) as of Feb. 5, 2024.

**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.
- We retain complete discretion to determine whether a letter is printed. The First Amendment right to free speech protects speech from government control; it does not give people the right to have their views published in a privately-owned newspaper, or anywhere else for that matter.
- We will not accept letters that make controversial or unsubstantiated claims.

This is because we are liable for any false claims we publish, regardless of the source of the claim. 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](http://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).

**POLITICAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY:**

- Letters to the editor on political issues, with or without a candidate endorsement, including those submitted as an endorsement for a political candidate, referendum, or political agenda will carry the same guidelines as above EXCEPT longer letters will be allowed; however, all Paid Letters to the Editor will be charged \$40.00 per letter of up to 250 words in length plus \$10.00 per additional 50 words.
- All political letters must be prepaid prior to printing.
- Letters to the Editor will not be accepted from candidates running for election or representatives of an organization endorsing their own referendum, as these are clearly advertisements and not opinion letters; those submissions will be referred to our Advertising Department to be run as paid ads.

*In memory of:*  
**Harvey "Hobber" Hoffman**  
**7-12-1939 - 2-14-2008**

*A million times we've thought of you,  
A million times we've cried.  
If our love could have saved you,  
You never would have died.  
For you hold a place within our hearts,  
No one could ever fill.  
When nothing else can make us smile,  
We know your memories will.*

Greatly missed by his wife,  
SANDY, Daughters Becky & Vicky  
Sons Jesse & Brion, Family & Friends

**BE THE BOSS!  
TURN-KEY BUSINESS!**

Well-Established, Custom Sawing Business in Kennan needs nothing but a New Owner!

Large 60x120 manufacturing area, 60x27 addition w/office space all on 13 Acres—plenty of room for expansion! Includes buildings, acreage, all associated equipment, & clientele. \$575,000

Call Jacob Lallemond today @ 608.863.3928

**NorthernInvestment.Com**

**Specializing in High-Value,  
Customized Post Frame Buildings**

Discover the Cleary Advantage at [ClearyBuilding.com](http://ClearyBuilding.com)

- Financing Available
- Search Our Buildings
- Virtual Planning
- Proven Reliability Since 1978
- Lifetime Steel Warranty
- Featuring Doors

Call us for a FREE consultation  
**WAUSAU, WI**  
**715-675-7701**

**800-373-5550**  
**ClearyBuilding.com**



Notice of Spring Primary and Sample Ballots February 20, 2024

Office of the Lincoln County Clerk To the voters of Lincoln County

Notice is hereby given of a spring primary election to be held in Lincoln County on February 20, 2024, at which the officers named below shall be nominated.

Information to Voters

Upon entering the polling place and before being permitted to vote, a voter shall:

- state their name and address
show an acceptable form of photo identification\*
sign the poll book\*\*

\*If a voter does not have acceptable photo identification, the voter may obtain a free photo ID for voting from the Division of Motor Vehicles.

\*\*If the voter is unable to sign the poll book due to disability, a poll worker may write the word "exempt."

If a voter is not registered to vote, they may register to vote at the polling place serving their residence if the voter provides proof of residence.

Where ballots are distributed to voters, the initials of two inspectors must appear on the ballot.

Upon being permitted to vote, the voter shall enter a voting booth or go to a machine and cast their ballot. The vote should not be cast in any manner other than specified here.

A voter who is a parent or guardian may be accompanied by the voter's minor child or minor ward.

An election official may inform the voter of the proper manner for casting a vote but the official may not advise or indicate a particular voting choice.

Assistance for Voting

A voter may select an individual to assist in casting their vote if the voter declares to the presiding official that they are unable to read, have difficulty reading, writing, or understanding English, or that due to disability are unable to cast their ballot.

Where Paper Ballots are Used

The voter shall fill in the oval next to the name of the candidate of his or her choice for each office for which they intend to vote.

Spoiled Ballots

If a voter spoils a paper or optical scan ballot, they shall return it to an election official who shall issue another ballot in its place, but not more than three ballots shall be issued to any one voter.

After Voting the Ballot

After an official paper ballot is marked, it shall be folded so the inside marks do not show, but so the printed endorsements and inspectors' initials on the outside do show.

The following is a sample of the official ballot:

Signature of Christopher J. Marlowe

Christopher J Marlowe, Lincoln County Clerk

Lincoln County State of Wisconsin February 20, 2024

Official Primary Ballot Nonpartisan Office February 20, 2024

Notice to Voters: If you are voting on Election Day, your ballot must be initiated by two election inspectors.

General Instructions: If you make a mistake on your ballot or have a question, ask an election inspector for help.

To vote for a name on the ballot, fill in the oval next to the name like this:

To vote for a name that is not on the ballot, write the name on the line marked "write-in" and fill in the oval next to the name like this:

Official Primary Ballot form with sections for County (County Supervisor, District 2) and Municipal (Aldersperson, District 8) with candidate names and write-in lines.

Published February 15th, 2024

WNAXLP

LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

BY THE COURT: DATE SIGNED: 02/06/2024 /SHON. GALEN BAYNE-ALLISON CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE, BR I STATE OF WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY Notice and Order for Name Change Hearing Case No. 24-CV-20 IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME CHANGE OF Carla Jane Corazalla NOTICE IS GIVEN: A petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above: From: Carla Jane Corazalla To: Carla Jane Bradfish Birth Certificate: Carla Jane Bradfish IT IS ORDERED: This petition will be heard in the Circuit

Legals 7700

Court of Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin: Judge's Name: Honorable Galen Bayne-Allison Place: Lincoln County Courthouse-Br 1 Courtroom 1110 E. Main St., Merrill, WI 54452 Date: 03/14/2024 Time: 4:00 PM If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation. IT IS FURTHER ORDERED: Notice of this hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 3 notice for three (3) weeks in a row prior to the date of the hearing in the Foto News a newspaper published in Lincoln County,

Legals 7700

State of Wisconsin, Published: February 15, 22 & 29, 2024 WNAXLP BY THE COURT: DATE SIGNED: February 1, 2024 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer Probate Registrar STATE OF WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Monica N. Talbot Notice Setting Time to Hear Application and Deadline for Filing Claims (Informal Administration) Case No. 2024-IN-05 PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: 1. An application for informal administration was filed. 2. The decedent, with date of birth October 1, 1928, and date of death December 22, 2023, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 1500 O'Day Street, Merrill, WI 54452. 3. The application will be heard at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office, before Becky Byer, Probate Registrar, on March 7, 2024 at 9:30a.m. You do not need to appear unless you object. The application may be granted if there is no objection. 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is May 10, 2024. 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office. 6. This publication is notice to any persons whose names or addresses are unknown. If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 715-536-0342 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. Michael V. Geisler 204 Cottage Street Merrill, WI 54452 Published February 8, 15 & 22, 2024 WNAXLP

Legals 7700

CITY OF MERRILL MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT NOTICE OF BID The City of Merrill Maintenance Department will accept bids for the following equipment at the Merrill City Clerk's Office, 1004 East First Street, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452, until 2:00 p.m. on Thursday February 29th, 2024. Bid specifications may be obtained from the Maintenance Director at (715)-722-1127 or can be found on the City of Merrill website http://www.ci.merrill.wi.us. One: 1 Ton Regular Cab Truck The City of Merrill reserves the right to reject any or all bids or to accept any bid they deem advantageous to the City of Merrill. Nick Wszalek City of Merrill Maintenance Director Published February 8 & 15, 2024 WNAXLP

LOCATION AND HOURS OF POLLING PLACES LINCOLN COUNTY

At the Spring Primary Election to be held on February 20, 2024, in Lincoln County, the following are the designated polling places:

- CITY OF MERRILL 2nd District City Hall, 1004 E. First St 8th District Lincoln County Service Center, 801 N Sales St

Contact your municipal clerk if you have any questions concerning your polling place.

All polling places will open 7:00 a.m. and will close at 8:00 p.m.

All polling places are accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

Christopher J Marlowe, Lincoln County Clerk

Published February 15, 2024

WNAXLP

TOWN OF MERRILL W4594 PROGRESS AVE., MERRILL, WI 54452 REQUEST FOR BID

Town of Merrill is requesting a bid for "Reconstruction of Airport Road" to include gravel, Pulverizing, Hot Mix Asphalt Paving (HMA) and shouldering. The project is approximately 1.23 miles long. Bidding documents and special provisions are available from Town of Merrill.

This is a WisDOT LRIP TRID project Project will be completed by October 1, 2024 Completed bids should be submitted to:

Town of Merrill W4594 Progress Ave. Merrill, Wisconsin 54452 Any questions should be directed to Mike Hass, Chairman at 715-218-7821 or email: Clerk-treasurer@townofmerrillwi.gov

Bids will be open at Town of Merrill Town Board Meeting: March 11, 2024. Town reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids.

Published February 8, 15, 22 & 29, 2024

WNAXLP

BY THE COURT DATE SIGNED: February 2, 2024 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN, CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Dennis Rothmeyer Notice to Creditors (Informal Administration) Case No. 2024 IN 06

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: 1. An application for informal administration was filed. 2. The decedent, with date of birth 07-09-1948 and date of death 08-21-2021, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of WI, with a mailing address of 801 Superior Street. 3. All interested persons waived notice. 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is 05-17-2024. 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office. Melissa Krueger W5952 County Road Z, Merrill, WI 54452 715-432-6768 Published February 8, 15 & 22, 2024 WNAXLP

DATE SIGNED: January 31, 2024 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN, CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF HARRIET H. TORKELSON Notice to Creditors (Informal Administration) Case No. 2024-IN-04

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE: 1. An application for informal administration was filed. 2. The decedent, with date of birth December 20, 1920 and date of death January 3, 2024, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 1500 O'Day Street, Merrill, WI 54452. 3. All interested persons waived notice. 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is May 10, 2024. 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Room probate Office. Craig J. Nienow N5041 County Road JJ Irma, WI 54442 71 5-536-7185 Bar Number 01015178 Published February 8, 15 & 22, 2024 WNAXLP

NOTICE OF CHANGE IN CLASSIFICATION

Pursuant to NR 1.02(7)(c), Wis. Adm. Code, the Department of Natural Resources gives notice of the change in classification for 11 streams in Marathon County for a total of 75.48 miles of stream to be changed from unclassified trout water to Class I or II trout water. Most of these streams are in Marathon County, but three of these proposed classifications cross county lines into Taylor and Lincoln Counties. The streams include:

- 1) Unnamed tributary to Fourmile Creek - Class I (2.15 miles)
2) McVay Brook - Class I (3.81 miles)
3) Baldwin Creek - Class I (9.96 miles; flows through parts of Taylor and Lincoln Counties)
4) Stony Creek - Class II (4.08 miles)
5) Einert Creek - Class I (5.78 miles)
6) County Line Creek - Class I (9.55 miles; flows through parts of Lincoln County)
7) Unnamed tributary to County Line Creek - Class I (3.25 miles)
8) Little Rib River - Class II (18.22 miles; flows through parts of Lincoln County)
9) Little Brook - Class I (5.35 miles)
10) West Fork Little Rib River - Class I (10.79 miles)
11) Unnamed tributary to West Fork Little Rib River - Class I (2.54 miles)

These classifications are based on surveys which indicate self-sustaining populations of Brook Trout in the absence of stocking, with natural reproduction occurring to sustain the fishery, multiple year classes of trout present to indicate substantial survival from one year to the next, and sufficient density of trout to utilize available habitat.

The Department shall waive any hearing requirement on this classification unless a written request for a hearing is received before March 16, 2024. Requests should be sent to: Lucas Koenig, Senior Fisheries Biologist, Wisconsin DNR, 225051 Rib Mountain Drive, Wausau, WI 54401.

A Class I Trout Stream is a stream or portion thereof with a self-sustaining population of trout. Such streams contain trout spawning habitat and naturally produced fry, fingerling, and yearling in sufficient numbers to utilize the trout habitat; or contains trout with 2 or more age groups, above the age of one year, and natural reproduction and survival of wild fish in sufficient numbers to utilize the available trout habitat and to sustain the fishery without stocking.

A Class II Trout Stream is a stream or portion thereof that contains a population of trout made up of one or more age groups, above the age one year, in sufficient numbers to indicate substantial survival from one year to the next, and may or may not have natural reproduction of trout occurring; however, stocking is necessary to fully utilize the available trout habitat or sustain the fishery.

A Class III Trout Stream is a stream or portion thereof that requires the annual stocking of trout to provide a significant harvest; and does not provide habitat suitable for the survival of trout throughout the year, or for natural reproduction of trout.

Published February 15, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF TRUST ADMINISTRATION

STATE OF WISCONSIN, County of Lincoln, in the matter of the Norma J. Hanson Revocable Trust dated March 27, 2017 and amended April 28, 2020 (the "Trust"):

1. Norma J. Hanson, with date of birth February 15, 1935 and date of death January 22, 2024 was domiciled in Lincoln County, Wisconsin. 2. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent, Norma J. Hanson, is June 8, 2024. 3. All claims must include detailed documentation and must be submitted to the Trustee of the Trust at the following address: 902 Rock Ridge Court, Apt. 4, Merrill, WI 54452. Date: January 31, 2024 Norma J. Hanson Revocable Trust dated March 27, 2017 and amended April 28, 2020. By:/s/ Thomas J. Young Thomas J. Young, Trustee Craig J. Nienow, Attorney Published February 8, 15 & 22, 2024 WNAXLP

TIME TO PLACE AN AD? PHONE: 715-536-7121 EMAIL: fotonewsads@mmlocal.com ADDRESS: 921 E. Main Street Merrill, WI WEBSITE: merrillfotonews.com FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/merrill.fotonews MERRILL Foto News



**PINE CREST**  
*from page 1*

Ken Wickham, a second by District 20 Supervisor Angela Cummings, and discussion, the Committee unanimously voted to forward the Asset Purchase Agreement for the full County Board to consider at their Feb. 19, 2024, County Board meeting and to direct corporate counsel to draft a resolution accordingly. District 10 Supervisor Jesse Boyd and Cummings agreed to co-sponsor the resolution.

**Proposed purchaser background: A history of high-quality skilled nursing home care**

Grant Thayer is listed as the registered agent of the proposed buyer, Merrill Campus, LLC, which was formed in Wisconsin in early November 2023 with a Ladysmith, Wis. address, and as the CEO of Senior Management, Inc., with a Batavia, Ill., mailing address, a company organized in Minnesota in 2004. He signed the proposed Asset Purchase Agreement.

At the onset of the discussion portion of the meeting, Boyd said: "I'd like to just point out that I am very, very impressed with the potential purchase individual ... [and] I'm very impressed with the effort and dedication that this team and the individuals involved have put forth. I believe that we are on the path of success for keeping residents in Lincoln County. And with this purchase agreement, it lays out a lot of positives for Lincoln County. And I'm proud to have my name on that resolution."

Members of the A&L Committee said Thayer and his wife own five other skilled nursing facilities in Wisconsin:

- Care & Rehab Ladysmith 1
- Care & Rehab Ladysmith 2
- Care & Rehab Cumberland
- Care & Rehab Barron
- Care & Rehab Boscobel

"I had the opportunity to do some research on the potential buyer and actually tour one of their nursing homes," Wickham said. "And I also attended the Town Hall on Pine Crest ... and heard the concerns and the measures that were put forward on what constitutes a good nursing home, the concerns that were expressed on private versus county owned. And my takeaway from that was ... the five-star rating, the comparison of staffing, how many hours are spent with staff, the residents who receive antipsychotic medications, long-stay residents/short-stay residents who newly received antipsychotic medications, and percentage of residents who receive an antianxiety or hypnotic medication, as well as long-stay residents with pressure ulcers." [See the chart he prepared to show comparisons between each of those five nursing homes and Pine Crest at the top of this page.]

"I went out and looked at the nursing homes that the buyer actually owns," he said. "He owns the nursing homes. He does not sublet or give them to a property

Comparison of Quality Measures for Pine Crest and Care & Rehab as of January 2024									
Nursing Home	Current Star Rating	Number of 5-Star Ratings in Last 10 Years	Number of Better than Average State Quality Measures	Number of Worse than Average State Quality Measures	Comparison to State Average (4.0) Total Staff Hours Spent on Average Per Resident	Comparison to State Average (14.3%) for Long-Stay Residents Who Received Antipsychotic Medications	Comparison to State Average (1.1%) for Short-Stay Residents Who Newly Received Antipsychotic Medications	Comparison to State Average (15.4%) for Long-stay Residents Who Newly Received an Antianxiety or Hypnotic Medication	Comparison to State Average (7.9%) of Long-Stay Residents with Pressure Ulcers
Pine Crest, Merrill	5	2	15	7	Better 4.67	Worse 14.4%	Worse 1.6%	Better 10.8%	Worse 10.1%
Care & Rehab Ladysmith 1	5	5	10*	8	Better 4.37	Worse 31.5%	Worse 3.2%	Better 4.6%	Better 6.8%
Care & Rehab Ladysmith 2	5	5	14*	3	Better 4.43	Better 6.7%	Better 0.0%	Better 0.0%	Better 2.4%
Care & Rehab Cumberland	5	5	11	11	Better 4.05	Worse 18.8%	Better 0.0%	Better 10.7%	Worse 9.9%
Care & Rehab Barron	3	2	15	7	Better 4.13	Better 14.1%	Better 0.0%	Better 12.2%	Better 4.3%
Care & Rehab Boscobel	3	2	11	11	Worse 3.71	Better 6.5%	Worse 1.5%	Better 14.3%	Better 5.4%

\*= Indicates some measures were listed as not available. (A complete summary of ratings is available at nursinghomedatabase.com)

The NursingHomeDatabase.com database is a comprehensive collection of information about healthcare providers in the United States, including information about skilled nursing homes, hospice care providers, home health care providers, doctors and other medical professionals, doctor groups, dialysis providers, hospitals, and owners of skilled nursing homes. They pull data primarily from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS), the federal agency that regulates and oversees healthcare providers in the U.S.

manager or something ... this company owns them, manages them, and administers them."

"They have nursing homes that are in rural Wisconsin, are very similar communities as we have here," Wickham said. He said he prepared the comparison so that he could vote in clear conscience on the proposal based on facts and not emotion.

One of the concerns heard from area opposition to the sale of Pine Crest was that a new purchaser would not take as many Medicaid residents. Wickham said his research put that concern to rest for this proposed buyer. "They have an 80 percent Medicaid residency," he said.

Another concern has been the five-star rating. "Pine Crest is currently a five star rating," Wickham said. "In the last 10 years, Pine Crest has had 2 five-star ratings."

A comparison shows three of the five facilities owned by the proposed buyer currently have five-star ratings and all five of the other facilities were five-star rated in at least 2 of the last 10 years, just like Pine Crest, with three of the facilities being five-star rated in 5 of the last 10 years, which is better performance than Pine Crest's ratings.

"Out of the last 10 years, that to me speaks that you have some well run nursing homes," he said.

"This is fact. It's not based on hearsay. It's not biased and it answers the concerns that were expressed," Wickham said, "that these nursing homes don't take on the residents, drug them up, put them in a corner."

A careful study of Wickham's chart shows some of these nursing homes are significantly better than state averages

and in some cases, have a 0% of antipsychotic, antianxiety, or hypnotic medications. On numerous comparisons, the Thayer-owned nursing homes performed better than Pine Crest's existing ratings and, while Pine Crest was rated worse than the state-average in three of the five comparison categories, none of the Thayer-owned nursing homes were rated worse in more than one or two of those same comparison categories.

"I think we need to get by the perception ... that government versus private, that government is always going to be better," Wickham said. "That's not the case. It's going to go both ways. There's going to be private facilities that are worse, then there's going to be government."

**On-site visit/tour of Thayer-owned facility**

"As we toured the facility, I was very impressed ... and

it wasn't a contrived visit. It was genuine," he said. "It was neat; it was clean."

"We weren't restricted on anywhere that we could go ... It also had assisted living facilities attached. We actually went in and were able to tour one of the residences, which is occupied by a retired Catholic sister. [It's] very, very nice."

Wickham said the facility had amenities including hair salons and a calendar of social events typical with nursing homes, and a craft sale event was happening the day he was there.

"We actually ate lunch in the facility, the same food that the residents ate," he said. "It was good food."

"They opened up their financials for us that we were able to look at," Wickham said. "I'm not a finance wizard, but our finance people have looked at them. They're solid."

**Owners are proactive**

"They're very proactive," Wickham said. "One of the things that impressed me most was how they resolved their staffing situations."

"The owner - a man and his wife - she during COVID went out and got her CNA certification and she actually works on the floor side-by-side [with other staff]. The residents knew her; they interacted with her," he said. "She had her dog there that day and you could tell that was a joy to the residents that were there. They really enjoyed that."

"Also for staffing ... there's a federal government plan where you bring in foreign healthcare workers. They do that primarily from the Philippines."

Wickham said there weren't a large number of staff from the program, but

See PINE CREST page 11

**8 - 1 hour Beginning Group Guitar Lessons**  
Starting 2/27/24  
Call Merrill Enrichment Center

**ALange Auction & Realty**  
Saturday, February 17, 2024 10:00 AM  
MOVING AUCTION  
EXPO Center, 303 N. Sales St. Merrill  
See Website for Directions. WATCH FOR SIGNS!  
Dr. Pepper Clock • Coca Cola Clock • Bird Cages • Lamps • Ammo • Bird Houses • Glass Side Table • Antique Thread & Bins • Collectibles • Beer Mirrors • Hummel Figures • Old Tobacco Tins • Old Jack in the Box • Collector Toy Register • Thermos • Holiday Steins • Glassware • Tea Sets • Sauerkraut Cutter • Pictures • Doilies • Ice Cream Parlor Chairs • Commercial Frig, Grill & Coffee Maker • Tools and Much Much More!  
Visit our website for pictures, details, Terms, conditions & Buyers Premium at:  
www.alangeauctionrealty.com or Call Arnold at: 715-574-2258  
Registered Wisconsin Auctioneer • Col. Arnold H. Lange, Manager/Broker, WI Lic. #230 & Deb Woller, WI Lic #3081  
OVER 50 YEARS OF TRUSTED EXPERIENCE

**HANSEN AUCTION GROUP ONLINE REAL ESTATE AUCTION**  
80± Acres Tillable & Recreational Land Offered in 2 Parcels, Arpin - Wood County, WI  
Explore the possibilities on this 80± acres of prime real estate, located just 1.5 miles northeast of Arpin, and just 30 minutes west of Stevens Point. This versatile property combines tillable and recreational features, with the field currently planted in alfalfa. A picturesque pond adds charm, surrounded by woods with mixed timber, providing diverse recreational opportunities. Being offered in two parcels, Parcel 1 - 39± acres mostly tillable and Parcel 2 - 41± acres with pond and mixed timber wooded recreational land. Bid on any one or combination of parcels. Embrace the chance to enjoy the bounty of the land with hunting and fishing opportunities, making this property a perfect blend of productivity and leisure.  
Open House Wed., Feb. 21 from 1pm-3pm - Cty Rd N, Arpin, WI 54410  
Online Bidding Ends Tuesday, March 5th  
In conjunction with Northern Investment Company / Hansen Real Estate Group  
For More Information Call: Hansen Auction Group: 715-607-4411  
Nate Obitz: 651-249-4739, Bryce Hansen: 715-418-1030  
Terms: 7% Buyers Fee, Bryce Hansen, registered WI auctioneer #225  
BID NOW AT HANSENAUCTIONGROUP.COM

**YA STUDENT STARS**  
These students were chosen because of their exemplary performance at their place of employment. CONGRATULATIONS!

**GRETCHEN SUCH**  
St. Francis Xavier Child Care

"Being part of the YA program, I have enjoyed the field trips traveling to see different job fields. YA has helped me achieve a better work ethic and communication skills. I would recommend YA to others because it's easy credits and you gain work experience. My plan after high school is to go to college at NTC for vet technician." Gretchen Such

"Gretchen comes to work every day with a great attitude and ready to pitch in wherever she is needed. She's always willing to help with homework, play games and make the students' after school time enjoyable." Kate Schimmel, St. Francis Xavier Child Care

**MCKENNA MEYER**  
Incredible Bank

"YA has helped me improve my social skills by communicating frequently with customers. It's a great way to earn money, credit and life experiences all at the same time. I'm going to UW-Whitewater to pursue a business degree. I wasn't sure what I wanted to do but my job at Incredible Bank has made me positive I want to go into the business world." McKenna Meyer

"At IncredibleBank, we don't think of McKenna as a Youth Apprenticeship Student, she is truly part of our team! McKenna is a key member, providing exceptional customer service, account opening, process improvement and team building to our branch. I can honestly say we would be truly lost without her!" Susan Ryman, Incredible Bank

**JACOB GRAAP**  
Russ Davis Wholesale

"YA taught me hard work pays off. It has helped me get ahead with money, go to school and still get the credits I need to graduate. I will stay on at Russ Davis after I graduate but want to eventually become an apprentice operator." Jacob Graap

"Jacob has been a great help to the Russ Davis team. He has proven to be someone we can count on to get work done effectively and efficiently when needed. At our weekly meetings regarding his goals with school and what he can learn on the job, it has been a pleasure to teach and help him with both of these." Wyatt Booth, Russ Davis Wholesale Warehouse Manager

**MERRILL HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH APPRENTICESHIP** This message was provided through The Wisconsin Youth Apprenticeship Grant.





Fleet Farm recently reached out to the Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS) and made a \$2,000 donation to help provide care for the shelter animals. "We are so grateful for their support" and "amazing donation," shelter staff said. In photo, L to R: Brin from LCHS with Riley from Fleet Farm. Submitted photo.



Nancy Stadler, Branch Manager from Nicolet National Bank recently visited the Merrill Community Food Pantry to deliver a donation check for \$750 from the Nicolet Foundation. During her visit she got a tour of the food pantry and spent some time with Sister Celine and Dick Duginski, managers of the food pantry to find out a little more on how the pantry helps feed those in need in our community. L to R: Dick Duginski, Sr Celine, and Nancy Stadler. The Nicolet National Foundation, Inc. is a public charity directed by the employees of Nicolet Bank. Submitted photo.

# LCHS December Honorariums

The Lincoln County Humane Society would like to thank everyone who donated in honor of a loved one in December:

Louise Fox by Heidi Schreiber & family, Paul & Karen Cournaya, Ann Lynch & Mark Hoffmann, Dawn Gourlie & Kenneth Graap, Kevin & Dawn Pfingsten, Sue Schumacher, Marge & Gary Roggenbuck & family, Earl & Mike Dallman & family, LaVonna Young by Terry & Nancy Kasper;

David & Faye Jean Osnes by Phyllis Buch; Raymond "Ray" J. Olson by Daniel Hurd; Veronica "Boots" Zwirchitz by Mike Zwirchitz; Sally Tupa by Ken Tupa Sr., Lora & Dave Reichelt & family, Ken & Tiffany Tupa, family & friends; K.J. Skofronick by David Blado; Mary Ann Rehwinkel by Mariann & Steve Hanig; Mary Lagerbloom by Lise Skofronick; LeAnna Wells by Charmaine Hamilton; Ed Endreas by Kris Lokemoen; Joe & Noelle Condon by Ron & Sharon Pankow; Bunter & Sheldon by Kim & Terri Kriewald; Max & Tucker by Linda Semling Peterson; Skyla Komorowski by Robert & Debra Brown; Jack Grawien by Peggy & Bob Bauman; Melvin Klebenow by Gerald & Dawn Schmidt; Ralph D. Voigt & Arlene Voigt by Tina Voigt; and Cricket the cat by Brenda Maloney.

Your support is greatly appreciated!

# LCHS December Donors

The Lincoln County Humane Society would like to thank the following donors for their support in December:

Meghan Stevenson; Dean Barker; Linda Hudzinski; Alexandra Hartinger; Thomas Hensel; Shirley Mae Engel; Larry & Joann Benzinger; Boyd & Dorinda Gustke; Dawn Gourlie; Kerry Hass; Ruth James; William Berghahn; Penny Bevard; Mary Jaax; Jamie Lemke; Merrill Ace Hardware; Judith Kusiak; Laura Lussier-Lee; James Blair; Nadine Appel; Darlene Raunio; Michael & Jill Oemichen; Cheryl Aspenson; Arzelee Drown; Lois Britt; Charities Aid Foundation America; Cecil Ballou; Allen & Sharon Thatcher; UnitedHealth Group; Kristi Stoltz; Town Of Tomahawk; Dr. Norman & Jan Deffner; Liberty Mutual Group; Michael & Jessica Latzig; Lora Walters; Bonnie Spieth; Thomas & Brenda Mueller; Sandra & William Lussenhop; Brian & Sharon Gulke; Daniel Lambrecht & Dawn Dunk; Marvin & Betty Kamke; Edward & Nicole Gruett; Janet Selnes; Pamela Welch; Richard Serafin; Tim's Auto Repair & Sales LLC; Kendra Hawley; Evelyn Foat; Auntie Ray's Santa Event; Peggy & Bob Bauman; Polly Lamontagne; Janet Kleinschmidt; Diane & Brian Brunelle; Kristi Zentner; Sue Hass; Ivy Catlin; Don Viergutz; Jan Krueger; Church Mutual Insurance Company; Michael & Tracy Gengalo; Arnold Genrich; Mike & Susan Manning; Kay Walsh; Erin Wells; Sharayah Lee; Tasha Jaeger; Paypal Giving Fund; Randy & Sharon Welch; Jared & Jodie Semling; Jeffrey & Debra Kiefer; Holly Lange & Jeffrey Hanson; Rick & Judith Lombard; Gerald & Charlotte Wick; Diane Belter; Russell & Nancy Putnam; Joan C. Miller; Connexus Credit Union; Network for Good; Ryan & Shelly Schilling; Amy Marthenze; Jane Parsons; Linda Tompach; Boyd Gustke; Sandy Weber; Peter Roger Meyer; Emily (Candace) Peterson; Tomahawk Farmer's Market Corp; Friendship Senior Citizens Club; Leesa Roth; Hilary Scully; Laura Norton; Edward Locke; Mike & Vonya Ellsworth; Christine & George Brahos; and Jo Wengeler.

We appreciate the support of our shelter pets!

**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

**FEB. BOOZE OF THE MONTH**  
**ALL CRUZANS**  
 \$5.00 - 16 oz. Pint

**SATURDAY FEB. 17TH**  
**MEAT RAFFLE**  
 Opens 11am, Starts 1pm  
**RAFFLE BASKETS, 50/50, 10-LINE CARD**

**SATURDAY FEB. 24TH**  
**CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT**  
 Open 11am, Start 12 Noon  
**LUNCH INCLUDED \$40 A TEAM**

**STEPPIN OUT**

**WEEKLY BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 15<sup>TH</sup> - 19<sup>TH</sup>**

**THURSDAY - RIBS**  
**FRIDAY FISH FRY - FROG LEGS & WHITE FISH**  
**SATURDAY - T-BONE & SHRIMP**  
**SUNDAY - BROASTED CHICKEN**  
**BINGO - HOT HAM & CHEESE**  
**MONDAY - HAM & NOODLES**

**THIS WEEKEND! BINGO 4PM SUNDAY, FEB. 18TH!**

**Conference Room & Hall Rental Available**  
 Open at 4pm Mon. & Thurs. • Open at Noon Fri. Open at 11am Sat. & Sun. • Closed Tues. & Wed.

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**  
 601 Johnson St., Merrill • 715-536-5708  
**NOW HIRING! P/T - KITCHEN**

**WE SELL FLAGS!**

# Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar

- Feb. 15 - Open Mic Night at Sawmill Brewing Co.
  - Feb. 16 - Fish Fry at St. Francis Xavier
  - Feb. 17 - Ice Drags - CANCELED
  - Feb. 17 - MACR Sleds n Jams Snowmobile Ride & Poker Run to benefit Brandtly Clark - changed to personal vehicles and ATV/side-by-side ride due to lack of snow
  - Feb. 18 - BINGO at VFW
  - Feb. 19 - MAPS Referendum Info Session
  - Feb. 21 - Trivia at Sawmill Brewing Co.
  - Feb. 22 - Open Mic Night at Sawmill Brewing Co.
  - Feb. 23 - Fish Fry at St. Francis Xavier
  - Feb. 24 - Ice Drags - CANCELED
  - Feb. 24 - Snowbound in the Underdown
  - Feb. 24 - Gleason Community Club Ice Oval Night Races
  - Feb. 24 - Snowmobile Dance at Schult's Country Inn
  - Feb. 24 - Merrill Youth Hockey Charlie Phelps Memorial Merrill Mite Jamboree
- For more information, go to: [merrillchamber.org/events](http://merrillchamber.org/events) or contact the event sponsor.

**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 FEB.**  
**TUESDAY NIGHTS**  
 FEB. 20TH - HAM & SCALLOPED POTATOES  
 FEB. 27TH - BOURBON CHICKEN  
 Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

**FRIDAY NIGHTS**  
 FEB. 16TH - CATFISH  
 FEB. 23 - 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-8pm  
 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**

**PANCAKES** All-You-Can-Eat (Potato and Regular) Drinks available  
 This Sunday, Feb. 18, 2024 • 9am-1pm  
 Adults \$10.00 • Children (6-10 years) \$5.00  
 Children 5 and under are FREE (Carry-Out Available)

PROCEEDS WILL BE GIVEN TO **MARY STAMM** TO HELP DEFRAY MEDICAL EXPENSES

**"HELP WHERE HELP IS NEEDED"**

**LENT SPECIAL!**  
 Ash Wednesday Feb. 14 thru Easter Sunday Mar. 31, 2024  
**EVERY DAY, ALL DAY!**

**6" Tuna \$4.59!** • Reg. \$5.69

**SUBWAY**  
 Antigo, Merrill, Tomahawk  
 Certain restrictions apply, not valid with other offers.

**RED GRANITE BAR AND GRILL**  
 EST. 1933  
 FOR A GOOD OLD TIME

**11420 S. County Rd. K, Merrill WI 715-536-9391**  
 Sun. 7am-2am, Mon.-Thurs. 11:30am-2am, Fri. 11:30am-2:30am, Sat. 7am-2:30am,  
 Dine-in • Takeout  
 NO Delivery

**Saturday & Sunday**  
 Breakfast 7am-11am  
 Mimosas & Bloody Mary's

**Mondays**  
 \$5 Burger & Home Fries

**Sunday & Tuesday**  
 Broasted Chicken 12 Noon-8pm

**Friday**  
 Fish Fry 12 Noon-8:45pm

Red Granite Bar & Grill  
 Order Online - Check wait times or just stop in!  
 Find us on

**COSMO Theatre** KIDS • \$5.00 SENIORS • \$5.00 ADULTS • \$8.00  
 Main St. • Merrill

**MOVIES AND SHOWTIMES 2/14/24 TO 2/22/24**  
 Mondays All Seats \$5.00

**MADAME WEB** "PG13" (1HR 57MIN)  
 OPENS WEDNESDAY (2/14) AND THURSDAY: 7:00PM  
 FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:15PM  
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:30, 7:00 & 9:15PM  
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:30, 7:00PM  
 MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

**ARGYLLE** "PG13" (2HR 19MIN)  
 WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY: 7:00PM  
 FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:15PM  
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:30, 7:00 & 9:15PM  
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:30, 7:00PM  
 MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

**TURNING RED** "PG" (1HR 40MIN)  
 WEDNESDAY AND THURSDAY: 7:00PM  
 FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM  
 SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:00PM  
 SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:15, 7:00PM  
 MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM ONLY

[www.cosmomovies.com](http://www.cosmomovies.com)  
**715-536-4473**





Gary and Mary Schwartz, owners and manager of the Pine Ridge C-store in Merrill, present Superintendent Shannon Murray (center) with two \$1,000 checks. They applied for an ExxonMobil Grant and matched those funds. They continue in this long-term annual endeavor to receive funds for the education of youth and the betterment of the MAPS District. **Submitted photo.**

## MAPS accepts January donations

The following donations were approved and/or accepted at the January 2024 Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) Board of Directors meeting:

A donation of funds from Merrill High School Band Endowment Fund, Inc. valued at \$7,140.88 for the instrumental music program at Merrill High School; donation of 2500 pairs of Bomba socks from Kocourek Kids Program valued at \$25,000 for the MAPS Nest and distribution to students in need in the District; a check from Misty Welch valued at \$30.00 from a fundraiser at Vibe Out Nutrition for MAPS Student Council; cash from an anonymous donor valued at \$1,000.00 for use at Kate Goodrich Elementary School for a school presentation from an outside vendor; gift cards from Secret Santa valued at \$2,000.00 for student use at Kate Goodrich Elementary School; a monetary donation from Xi Alpha Nu valued at \$50.00 for the PRMS Nest; hats and gloves from the Mitten Tree valued at \$150.00 for student use at Kate Goodrich Elementary School; three sports books valued at approximately \$34.00 for use at the Merrill High School; money from the following donors for the Merrill High School Nest: Lee Ann Lindquist, \$100.00; Jordan & Bree Kratz, \$50.00; Von & Charise Saunders, \$50.00; Ann Iattoni, \$100.00; Debbie Moellendorf, \$250.00; and Matt &

Sarah Thomas, \$75.00; a monetary donation from Park City Cares Foundation valued at \$2,250.00 for the MHS Fab Lab to purchase a portable CNC Router; a monetary donation from Matt & Sarah Thomas valued at \$75.00 for the Prairie River Middle School Nest; hats and gloves for every student at PRSYL from the Merrill High School

DECA and Business Classes valued at \$400.00 from the Warm Hands, Warm Hearts Project; the gift of money from an anonymous donor valued at \$1,000.00 for helping families in need in MAPS; and funds from Henry & Patricia Zomchek valued at \$25.00 for the Merrill School Forest in memory of Eldridge Curtis.

## Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation announces inaugural Lincoln County Summit

The Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation (LCEDC) recently announced they will hold the first annual Lincoln County Summit, set to take place on March 14 and 15, 2024, at the Bierman Building/Expo Center in Merrill. This event, themed "Succession," aims to bring together business leaders, entrepreneurs, policymakers, and community stakeholders from across the region to discuss and strategize the future of economic growth and leadership transition within the county.

Mark O'Connell, President and CEO of the Wisconsin Counties Association, will be the keynote speaker for the event. With his extensive experience and insightful perspectives on economic development and county leadership, O'Connell is expected to provide valuable contributions to the theme of succession and sustainable economic progress.

The Lincoln County Summit aims to address the critical importance of effective succession planning in all areas of life, ensuring the longevity and prosperity of local businesses, organizations and rural communities. Through a series of presentations by area leaders, panel discussions, and networking sessions, participants will explore innovative strategies for leadership transition, talent development, and maintaining organizational resilience in times of change.

"The Lincoln County Summit represents a significant opportunity for our community to come together and lay the groundwork for a future that embraces

change with confidence. We believe that focusing on succession planning is key to sustaining economic growth and building a strong foundation for the next generation of leaders in Lincoln County," said Elsa Duranceau, Executive Director LCEDC.

The event will also feature various exhibitors, giving attendees the opportunity to learn about the latest tools, resources, and services available to support their operations. Major supporters of the event include the Active and Aware Citizens, the City of Merrill, the Merrill Area Development Corporation, the Merrill Chamber of Commerce, and the Tomahawk Chamber of Commerce.

Attendees are encouraged to mark their calendars and prepare for two days of engaging discussions, valuable networking opportunities, and actionable insights into the future of economic development in Lincoln County, Wis.

For more information and registration details, a schedule of events, and sponsorship opportunities, go to: [lincolncountyedc.org](http://lincolncountyedc.org) or call 715.390.0747.

*The LCEDC is committed to fostering economic growth and development in Lincoln County, Wis. Through collaboration with local businesses, government entities, and community organizations, LCEDC works to create a thriving economic environment that supports innovation, enhances quality of life, and ensures the prosperity of our community for generations to come.*

*Happy 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday*  
to  
**Doris Dahlke**  
February 10<sup>th</sup>

From all your family and friends.  
Thanks for all the beautiful love and Jesus too.

MERRILL FOTO NEWS

### Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is

**Nash Rethaber**  
Son of Marly Rethaber  
Nash is in 4th Grade at New Testament Christian Academy. He was nominated by Mrs. Nelmark.

**What is your favorite subject in school? Why?**  
My favorite subject is Social Studies, because you get to learn about famous people.

**What is your favorite part of school? Why?**  
My favorite part of school is lunch break, because I can talk with my friends and play sports in the gym after lunch.

**What would you like to do/become someday? Why?**  
When I grow up I want to be a taxidermist. I like to know about the animals in the woods.

Nash definitely loves anything to do with the outdoors. He is a wonderful student. He gets along great with his fellow classmates.  
~ Mrs. Nelmark

Student of the Week Sponsored by:

**INTERFLEX GROUP**  
1401 W. Taylor St., Merrill  
(715) 536-5400

## MAPS In - Person Referendum Informational Opportunities

February 15	7:00 AM	Coffee w/ Superintendent District Office
February 19	6:00 PM	Referendum Information Session Jefferson School
February 29	7:00 AM	Coffee w/ Superintendent District Office
March 7	7:00 AM	Coffee w/ Superintendent District Office
March 25	6:00 PM	Referendum Information Session Merrill High School

# No interest. No loan fees. No kidding.

You could get up to **\$3,500** within minutes of filing with a **Refund Advance loan** at **H&R Block**.

**Offer available: Jan. 2 - Feb. 29**

Visit us at  
2411 E MAIN ST STE 102  
MERRILL, WI 54452 | 715-536-2188

[hrblock.com](http://hrblock.com)

**H&R BLOCK**

This is an optional tax refund-related loan from Pathward®, N.A.; it is not your tax refund. Loans are offered in amounts of \$250, \$500, \$750, \$1,250 or \$3,500. Approval and loan amount based on expected refund amount, eligibility criteria, and underwriting. If approved, funds will be disbursed as directed to a prepaid card or checking account at Pathward. The loan amount will be deducted from your tax refund, reducing the refund amount paid directly to you. Tax returns may be e-filed without applying for this loan. Fees for other optional products or product features may apply. Limited time offer at participating locations. HRB Maine License No. FRA2, OBT#13096-BR. ©2023 HRB Tax Group, Inc.

## REPORTS

### MERRILL FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS

For week ending Feb. 11, 2024

- Alarm system activation, no fire - unintentional 1
- Carbon monoxide detector activation, no CO 1
- Dispatched and cancelled en route(EMS) 2
- EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury 37
- Gas leak (natural gas or LPG) 1
- Smoke or odor removal 1

Total This Week: 43  
TOTAL INCIDENTS/  
CALLS FOR 2024: 275



# CLASSIFIEDS

Deadline: Monday at 11:30 a.m.  
Phone: 715-536-7121  
Fax: 715-539-3686

### Announcements 7005

**WCAN (Wisconsin Community Ad Network) and/or the member publications review ads to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, many unscrupulous people are ready to take your money! PLEASE BE CAREFUL ANSWERING ANY AD THAT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!** For more information, or to file a complaint regarding an ad, please contact **The Department of Trade, Agriculture & Consumer Protection 1-800-422-7128 (WCAN)**

### General Employment 7110

**LOCAL CONCRETE** contractor looking to fill multiple positions. Pay based on experience. \$18-\$30/hr. Company offers 401k, paid vacation & company bonus plan. Call 715-453-7100.

### Estate Sales 7208

**JANE'S**  
Estate Sales & Services  
LLC  
201 Walnut St, Spencer  
Saturday 2/17 10-3  
Sunday 2/18 10-1

- NO EARLY SALES. We DO NOT give out prices or information prior to the sale. Please do not text, call or email requests.

- NO NUMBERS GIVEN OUT AT THIS SALE. FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED.

2006 Kawasaki 4 wheeler, John Deere riding mower, loads of tools, hunting, gun safe, generator, and much more!  
Go to JANE'S Estate Sales on Facebook or estatesales.org, Sunday evening (2/11) for photos and more info.

### Auctions 7282

**AUCTION - MARCH 9th -10AM** Real estate & personal property of the Brian Jung Estate, **W11157 CR-A, Gresham, WI** including 253+/- acre Farm, Machinery, & Special items. Open House March 2nd 1-3PM contact **NOLAN SALES LLC**, Marion, WI 715-754-5221 Lic#165 & 142 www.nolansales.com for details **(WCAN)**

### Computers and Electronics 7216

**SWITCH & SAVE UP TO \$250/YEAR** on your talk, text & data. No contract & no hidden fees. Unlimited talk & text with flexible data plans. Premium nationwide coverage. 100% U.S. based customer service. For more info, call **1-844-883-1477 (WCAN)**

### Firewood 7244

**DRY OAK & Hard Maple**, \$250/cord. Over 15 mi is extra. Have hard wood in wood shed over a year old. Clean & no bark. 715-351-1888 or 715-873-4196.

### Lawn and Garden 7250

**New & Used Lawn & Garden Equipment** Servicing all brands. Full service small engine repair. Snowblowers, tillers, mowers, chainsaws, log splitters & more. North Central Power Equipment 4001 Dixie Ave, Wausau 1 mile north of Fleet Farm off Hwy K, east on Emery Dr. to South on Dixie 715-370-3002

### Guns 7264

**56th ANNUAL NCWGCA Spring Gun Show Merrill Expo Building** (Lincoln Co. Fairgrounds) North Sales St, Merrill, WI **March 1st and 2nd, 2024**  
Hours Open to Public:  
Friday 3pm-8pm  
Saturday 9am-4pm  
Admission \$5. Youth under 14 free (with paid adult)  
Sponsored by:  
North Central WI Gun Collectors Assoc. Inc  
For information only call Fred 715-443-2825

### Guns 7264

**COLLECTORS GUN SHOW** Mar 16 & 17 - HS Gym Cornell Sat. 8am-5pm, Sun 9am-3pm **ATTN: TRUE COLLECTORS!** This show will host modern guns & also a LARGE percentage of High End Collectible Guns! Winchester, Drillings, Colts, Smith & several more. **MARK YOUR CALENDAR FOR THIS SPECIAL SHOW** Info 563-608-4401 Marv Kraus

### Miscellaneous Merchandise 7266

**DO YOU HAVE ITEMS TO SELL?** .... GET RESULTS! Affordable advertising that fits your budget! Reach OVER 300,000 homes! Place your ad in MANY weekly Wisconsin Shoppers & Buyers' Guide papers for as low as \$36.00 **Call today! Publishers Development Service, Inc. (PDS, Inc.) 1-800-236-0737 www.pdsadnet.com**

### Wanted to Buy 7268

**STONEWARE WANTED** Collector paying \$1000+/- for Red Wing salt glazed or advertising crocks, jugs, churns & water coolers. (612)685-6762

### Dogs 7272

**AKC German Shepard Puppies.** Ready now. \$750 with AKC papers. \$550 without AKC. Shot and vet checked. 715-451-0244

**AKC REG COCKER SPAN PUPS!** 50% OFF! 2 Rescues avail too! Sweet Adorable Pets! Shots 920-563-3410 mornings (#268588) (WCAN)

**CAVAPOO PUPPIES** Born 12-8-23 3-Males 2-Females vet checked dewormed shots, \$300 No Sunday Sales 715-267-6887

**COCKALIERPOO** Born 2-18-23 Non-Shed, spayed/trained \$500 No Sun Calls 715-644-3684

**FREE TO GOOD HOME** Blue Heeler & Australian Shepard mix pups. Male & female ready now. 715-350-1282

**German Shepard Puppies** parents on site. \$400 each (715) 612-3677 or (715)-679-4977.

**KING CHARLES CAVALIER PUPS** 4-M, 1-F Vet/shots Ready Now \$600 OBO 715-701-2066

### Dogs 7272

**MINI COCK-A-POOS** Hypo-allergenic, Non-shed, shots/vet F-\$600, M-\$500; **PUREBRED REG COCKER SPANIEL PUPPIES 715-758-2433**

Mini-doodles, Cava-poops, Yorkie-poops & mini Golden Retriever pups. Vaccinated, wormed, 1-yr. guarantee. Delivery part-way. \$500. Call or text: 715-850-1933

**Non-Registered (F) English Lab & (M) Yellow Lab.** Shots/wormed. \$300 715-721-0927

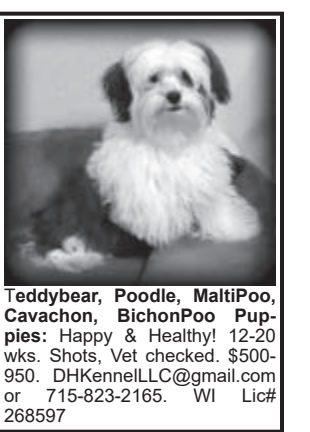
**POMERANIANS APRI CERTIFIED PEDIGREES** Show prospects, Friendly Vet chk, Health Guar. \$800 715-654-5149

**PUREBRED BOXER PUPS** Flashy Brindle & Fawn Shots **UTD Ready Now!** \$300 715-701-1473

**PUREBRED MINI POODLE PUPPIES** Shots/wormed Well socialized w/kids \$600 **N4328 Cty Rd T Shawano 715-758-6282**

**SHIH'TZU PUPPIES:** Black females, \$300, healthy, exc. temperament, dew claws removed, wormed, parents on site. Manawa, no text. 920-470-2121.

**SILVER LABRADOODLES** non-shed shots/wormed \$300. Ready to Go! 715-660-1085



**Teddybear, Poodle, Maltipoo, Cavachon, BichonPoo Puppies:** Happy & Healthy! 12-20 wks. Shots, Vet checked. \$500-950. DHKenneLLC@gmail.com or 715-823-2165. WI Lic# 268597

### Agriculture Services 7292

**Hand Crafted Garden & Storage Sheds, Garages & Cabins.** Many Styles and Options. Sizes from 8' x 8' up to 15' x 40' are available. **Call BAKER BARN, LLC** 715-873-3338 mile North of Gleason, Hwy 17

### Vacation For Rent 7421

**WESLEY FINANCIAL GROUP, LLC** Timeshare Cancellation Experts Over \$50,000,000 in timeshare debt & fees cancelled in 2019. Get FREE informational package & learn how to get rid of your timeshare! FREE consultations. Over 450 positive reviews. **CALL 844-374-2565 (WCAN)**

### Motorcycles 7502



**CONVENTION & EXPO CENTER AT CEDAR CREEK** 10101 MARKET ST ROTHCHILD, WI  
**49TH ANNUAL MOTORCYCLE SWAP MEET IN WAUSAU** SAT. FEB. 24, 2024 10AM-4PM Motorcycles, parts old & new Leather goods & more. For more info: (715) 571-1802

### Vehicles Wanted 7554

**DONATE YOUR CAR,** truck, boat, RV and more to support our veterans! Schedule a FAST, FREE vehicle pickup and receive a top tax deduction! Call Veteran Car Donations at 1-844-406-2647 today! (WCAN)

**GET YOUR DEDUCTION AHEAD OF THE YEAR-END!** Donate Your Car, Truck or SUV to assist the blind & visually impaired. Arrange a swift, no-cost vehicle pickup & secure a generous year-end tax credit. Call **HERITAGE FOR THE BLIND** today at 844-374-3067 (WCAN)



**Classifieds Rock**  
Merrill Foto News  
715-536-7121

## THE CLASSIFIEDS

SMALL ADS BIG DEALS



**MAPS- Job Opportunity: Director of Transportation, Building, and Grounds**  
--Full-time/Year Round--


**Ideal candidate would have:**

1. A minimum of 3 years as a Supervisor
2. Experience with Maintaining Facilities
3. Directing and Managing Custodial/Maintenance Staff

If you meet this criteria, apply at: [wecan.waspa.org/Employer/Vacancy/PublicSupport/3546](http://wecan.waspa.org/Employer/Vacancy/PublicSupport/3546)

Contact Kelley Strike with questions at: 715-536-4581 Ext. 10001 or [kelly.strike@mapsedu.org](mailto:kelly.strike@mapsedu.org)

MAPS is an Equal Opportunity Employer



**We are Hiring!** **JOIN OUR TEAM**

**SIERRA PACIFIC WINDOWS**

- Crew Member, \$19.21 - 20.71/HR
- Department Manager, 2nd Shift

**4 10-Hour Days**

- Both shifts available
- Possible OT on Friday
- Attendance BONUS (Up to additional \$1.50/hr)
- Retirement & Life Insurance
- Paid Holidays and Vacations
- Excellent Low Cost Benefits (Health, Dental, Vision)

**Individual: \$88/Month**  
**Spouse: +\$140/Month**  
**Child: +\$63/Month**

**APPLY IN-PERSON**  
1815 Water Street • 605 N. Ohio Street  
Questions? Call: 715-722-1884

**Visit us online at [spi.careers!](http://spi.careers!)**

Sierra Pacific is an (EOE) Equal Opportunity Employer, including those with a disability and veterans.

## EMPLOYMENT

**We are looking for professional, friendly, and reliable Member Service Representatives (Tellers) and Call Center Staff**  
EXCITED TO ADVANCE THEIR CAREER!



**Starting \$18/HR** **PAID COMMUNITY SERVICE TIME** **FINANCIAL SERVICES EXPERIENCE NOT REQUIRED** **INCENTIVES AND GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE** **MATCHING 401(K) PLAN**



Scan Here or apply in-person for same-day interviews.

**park city CREDIT UNION**  
[www.parkcitycu.org](http://www.parkcitycu.org)

# KOLBE

## WINDOWS & DOORS

We're for the visionaries.®

Kolbe & Kolbe Millwork Company, Inc. is recognized throughout the industry as a leader in the manufacturing of custom, superior quality windows and doors that can be found in some of the most visionary residences and commercial projects in North America.

The Kolbe story began 77 years ago after the Kolbe brothers began repairing and building window frames. As the business grew, maintaining a closely held family business was the priority, along with understanding the important role a large company plays in the community. Those commitments remain intact and have greatly influenced the success of the company. We hope you will consider joining the Kolbe team!

**Seeking Full-time 1st Shift Production Team Members**  
**No Experience Required**

Four-day work week, 5am-3pm, Monday through Thursday.  
\$18.50 per hour.

Three-day work week, 5am-5pm, Thursday, Friday, Saturday.  
No required over-time. \$20.55 per hour.

Part-time, work 24-28 hours during first shift hours. \$20 per hour.

Excellent benefits package, relaxed and safe working environment.

Apply online at [www.kolbewindows.com/careers](http://www.kolbewindows.com/careers).

EOE



**PINE CREST** *from page 7*

“they were there.”

“They do it in all their nursing homes, but they also train them on-site. They have the accreditation, and we toured their training facility, and they had beds set up, they have mannequins, they had computers ... They train them and then they [the trainees] go out and they have to take the same exam that everybody else takes. And then this government program offers them an opportunity, I believe it's after two years or something, where they can apply for a permanent residency or something to do with that,” he said.

“It was very impressive,” Wickham said. They also don't have big staffing issues. “They have people that have been there for 27 years, at least I know their nursing director had been there for 27 years. They're having very low turnover rate.”

He said he also saw evidence that they are very involved in the community when he was there and that “the owners themselves were involved in some community activities.”

He said it was a very, very nice facility and the experience was genuine. “I have not toured the other facilities,” Wickham said, “but when you have their five stars, you have all this. I would assume they're very similar. So I'm very comfortable.”

“Can I just say that in the reading of the agreement and the vetting, that it's a quality nursing facility that wants to retain our residents and our employees and work with them in a professional and qualified manner,” Cummings said.

**Details of the proposed agreement**

As indicated, the proposed offer is for \$8.5 million, and the proposed purchaser's intent is to procure the necessary licenses to operate Pine Crest as a 120-bed certified skilled nursing facility. As a condition of sale, the purchaser represents and warrants it is their intent to continue to operate Pine Crest as a skilled nursing facility.

The allocation of the \$8.5 million purchase price is broken down as follows:

Nursing Home Land .....	\$9,400
Nursing Home Land Improvements .....	\$90,300
Nursing Home Building .....	\$6,130,600
Nursing Home Fixed Equipment .....	\$1,361,300
Nursing Home Moveable Equipment .....	\$408,400
HHS Building .....	\$500,000
Total .....	\$8,500,000

The agreement would exclude County-owned property used in the operation of the Health Department and Department of Social Services (DSS) and related departments in the HHS

Building not used in the operation of Pine Crest, all personal property owned by other tenants that currently occupy space in the HHS Building, and all tools owned by Lincoln County maintenance staff and County-owned Milwaukee battery-operated power tools.

The proposed purchaser made an initial deposit of \$10,000 - currently being held by their attorney - which would be held in trust by the escrow agent in an interest-bearing account if the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors approves the agreement, and an additional \$100,000 earnest money deposit would then also be due within five days, also to be held in escrow until closing.

Per the terms of the agreement, another \$6,390,000 would be due at closing and the proposed buyer has already secured financing for this portion of the purchase so the offer has no financing contingency.

Then, Lincoln County would finance the remaining \$2 million as an installment sale for a period of five years with 59 payments of \$12,652.99 to begin 30 days after closing until the 60th and final balloon payment of \$1,666,652.61 is due. This would be secured by a second mortgage on the property. County officials said this enables Lincoln County to retain a vested interest in both Pine Crest Nursing Home and the HHS Building for five more years for the benefit of the community.

Lincoln County and the other tenants of Lincoln County that currently lease space at the HHS Building would continue to lease space from the new owner for that five-year period.

According to the proposed agreement, closing would take place on June 30, 2024, with official ownership to transfer effective July 1, 2024 at 12 a.m.

**Next steps**

The full Lincoln County Board will now consider a resolution to accept the Asset Purchase Agreement at this month's regular County Board meeting this Monday, Feb. 19. A majority of the County's 22 Supervisors will need to approve the resolution for the sale to move forward.



Lincoln County Humane Society(LCHS) would like to send a big thank you to Angel S.! She brought items in for the pets for Christmas! “Thank you so much for being so kind!” the LCHS said. **Submitted photo.**

**Insurance 7308**

**DENTAL INSURANCE.** From Physicians Mutual Insurance Company. Coverage for 400 plus procedures. Real dental insurance - NOT just a discount plan. Don't Wait! Call now! Get your FREE Dental Information Kit with all the details! **855-807-9516** [www.dental50plus.com/wicommunity#6258](http://www.dental50plus.com/wicommunity#6258) (WCAN)

**UP TO \$15,000 OF GUARANTEED LIFE INSURANCE!** No medical exam or health questions. Cash to help pay funeral & other final expenses. Call **Physicians Life Insurance Company 844-433-5898** or visit [www.Life55plus.info/wcp](http://www.Life55plus.info/wcp) (WCAN)

**Health Care Services 7310**

**MobileHelp, America's Premier Mobile Medical Alert System.** Whether you're home or away, for safety and Peace of Mind. No Long Term Contracts! Free Brochure! Call Today! **1-855-491-0732** (WCAN)

**STROKE & CARDIOVASCULAR** disease are leading causes of death, according to the AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION. Screening can provide peace of mind or early detection! Contact **Life Line Screening** to schedule your screening. Special offer - 5 screenings for just \$149! Call **1-888-675-5048** (WCAN)

**Internet 7318**

**CONNECT TO THE BEST WIRELESS** home internet with EarthLink. Enjoy speeds from 5G & 4G LTE networks, no contracts, easy installation, & data plans up to 300 GB. Call **844-223-7265** (WCAN)

**HughesNet Satellite Internet:** 25 mbps starting at \$49.99/mo! Get More Data, FREE Off-Peak Data, FAST download speeds. Wifi built in! FREE Standard Installation for lease customers! Limited Time Call **1-844-829-5070** (WCAN)

**Satellites and Antennas 7324**

**DIRECTV OVER INTERNET** Get your favorite live TV, sports, & local channels. 99% signal reliability! CHOICE Package, \$84.99/mo for 12 months. HBO Max & Premium Channels included for 3 mos (w/CHOICE Package or higher) No annual contract, no hidden fees! Some restrictions apply. Call **IVS 1-833-574-1746** (WCAN)

**DIRECTV Sports Pack 3 Months** on Us! Watch pro & College sports LIVE. Plus over 40 regional & specialty networks included. NFL, College Football, MLB, NBA, NHL, Golf & more. Some restrictions apply Call **DIRECTV 1-888-925-9452** (WCAN)

**Satellites and Antennas 7324**

**Switch to DISH** Get up to a \$300 gift card! Plus get the Multisport pack included for a limited time! Hurry, call for details: **1-844-897-8523** (WCAN)

**Home Building Supply 7358**

**DON'T LET THE STAIRS LIMIT YOUR MOBILITY!** Discover the ideal solution for anyone who struggles on the stairs, is concerned about a fall or wants to regain access to their entire home. Call **AmeriGlide** today! **1-888-686-1458** (WCAN)

**JACUZZI BATH REMODEL**

Can install a new, custom bath or shower in as little as one day. For a limited time, we're cutting installation costs in half & offering a FREE safety upgrade! Additional terms apply. Subject to change and vary by dealer. Offer ends 3/31/24 **1-833-224-4977** (WCAN)

The bathroom of your dreams in as little as 1 day. Limited Time Offer - \$1000 off or No Payments & No Interest for 18 months for customers who qualify. **BCI Bath & Shower. Many options available. Quality materials & professional installation. Senior & Military Discounts Available.** Call today! **1-877-651-1850** (WCAN)

**THINKING ABOUT INSTALLING A NEW SHOWER?**

American Standard makes it easy. FREE design consultation. Enjoy your shower again! Call **1-844-479-1327** today to see how you can save \$1,000 on installation, or visit [www.newshowerdeal.com/wcp](http://www.newshowerdeal.com/wcp) (WCAN)

**Heating and Cooling 7362**

**PREPARE FOR POWER OUTAGES TODAY** with a GENERAC home standby generator. Act now to receive a FREE 7-year warranty w/qualifying purchase\*. Call **1-877-626-1009** today to schedule a free quote. it's not just a generator. Its a power move. (WCAN)

**Roofing and Siding 7370**

**REPLACE YOUR ROOF** w/the best looking & longest lasting material, steel from **Erie Metal Roofs!** 3 Styles & multiple colors available. Guaranteed to last a lifetime! Limited Time Offer - up to 50% OFF Installation + Add'l 10% off install (for military, health workers & 1st responders) Call **Erie Metal Roofs 1-877-845-6606** (WCAN)

**BUSINESS DIRECTORY**  
NEIGHBORHOOD PROFESSIONAL AND RELIABLE SERVICE DIRECTORY

**SCRAP METAL**  
We'll Pick it Up  
• Clam Truck Service  
• Dumpster Service  
• Buying Cars & Trucks  
Serving Central & Northern WI for over 80 years  
Prompt Service • Fair Prices  
**Cousineau Recycling**  
Hwy. 45 South, Antigo • Toll Free 866-330-3730 or 715-623-2372

**RIB MT MARINE**  
TRAILERS ALL SIZES  
Order yours today!  
Think Spring!  
SINCE 1954!  
1220 Flieth St  
Same location since 1954  
715-845-3355  
www.ribmountainmarine.com  
Wausau's only full service marine dealership

**"Give me a call, before the rain starts to fall!"**  
- Brian Plisch • Owner/Operator  
LOCALLY OWNED  
Serving the area for 20 years.  
FREE ESTIMATES  
Bus: 715-297-0907  
www.bpseamless.com Email: bpseamless@gmail.com  
Great Look, Great Price, 5% off if you mention this ad.

**images Hair - Merrill**  
Jancy Hanke, Cassie Schmidt, Kelly Davenport, Mariah Chandler Weddings Only, Sue Swanson  
1005 E. Main St. • 715-536-1345  
• Lashes • Facials • Body Waxing  
• Nails • Pedicures • Sandy Gipple, Owner

**PODEWELTZ**  
Repair Service, LLC  
Heating • Cooling • Sheet Metal

**TRANE** W2810 Hwy. C, Merrill  
(715) 536-6791  
It's Hard To Stop A Trane?

**NORTHERN WISCONSIN'S LARGEST RARE COIN & PRECIOUS METALS COMPANY IS ALWAYS BUYING**  
• Old U.S. coins, proof sets & paper money.  
• Also buying gold & silver jewelry, watches & diamonds.  
• Old sports cards - 1969 & earlier. Currently paying top prices.  
• No Collection too SMALL or LARGE  
• Sports Wear & Memorabilia Headquarters  
**Augie's Collectibles**  
11 South 2nd St. • Tomahawk, WI 54487  
Open Mon. & Tues., 10am - 5pm or by appointment.  
(715) 453-3141

**Wisco Spray Foam, LLC**  
N16465 Bachelors Ave., Thorp, WI 54771  
Commercial Residential & Agricultural  
Free Estimates  
Call Jerry at 608-696-8617

Joseph Thorne Fully Insured  
**THORNE CONSTRUCTION LLC**  
715-432-5197  
Your Dream Builder  
• Build & Remodel • Shop-Sheds  
• Complete Remodels • Concrete/ICF Walls

**Call Vernon 715-512-1356**  
• Can Be Installed Over An Existing Roof  
• 40 Year Factory Warranty  
• 4-Star Hail and Fire Resistant  
• Ventilated At Peak  
• Energy Star Efficient  
• Hidden Fastener  
• 28 Colors Available  
• Steel or Asphalt Roofing  
• Top Quality Work for Less  
• Individual Homeowners, Contractors, or Commercial  
**BADGERLAND STEEL ROOFING**  
Tired Of Re-Roofing Your House?  
Try a Steel Roof!  
Do it Once, Do it Right!  
CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATE

**BADGER STATE STEEL ROOFING**  
FREE ESTIMATES!  
Tired of re-roofing your house?  
TRY A STEEL ROOF!  
• Snaplok (hidden fastener) • Can Be Installed Over An Existing Roof • 40 Year Factory Warranty • 4-Star Hail and Fire Resistant • Ventilated At Peak • Energy Star Efficient • 28 Colors Available  
Jerry Stutzman Do it Once, Do it Right! 715-314-2295



### LAND FILL from page 1

and replacements of machinery have been getting deferred for years.

As to getting a new compactor for the landfill, he did some research.

“There’s one available right now - they have it on reserve for us. If we agree to purchase that this week and payment next week, they will hold it for us or deliver it,” Cohrs said on Feb. 2. “If we do not do that, they have other people that are interested and they’re not going to wait three more weeks. If we wait three weeks and decide to purchase another piece, this is a remanufactured compactor, it will be 3-4 months for them to remanufacture another one and the price for remanufacture will go up \$70,000 because CAT part prices continue to rise.”

Cohrs said this machine is also a larger machine about 40,000 pounds heavier, which is better suited to the volume of waste being handled at the landfill and will work more effectively.

Fenske explained: “The need [for the compactor] is about \$700,000 and that’s just a little bit to cover in case something goes over because he’s got about \$625,000 into the main compactor in and of itself, plus there’s freight, plus there’s mounting, and we have to buy wheels for it, so all-in it will probably be about \$690,000 ... \$10,000 cushion there. Again the people he’s

contacted, today is the day they need to know whether or not they can have it and then the next question becomes the funding source because right now they don’t have anything left in their Fund balance, they have about \$568,000 in unreserved cash if I’m remembering correctly from at the end of 2023 or currently, and it’s an immediate concern. Every day that they don’t have the compactor, the more air space that gets wasted; therefore, the landfill gets filled faster.”

“In the meantime we don’t have a compactor because we can’t even find one to rent,” Committee Chair and County Supervisor Julie DePasse said.

#### Solid Waste Fund depleted

Lincoln County Finance Director Samantha Fenske reported on the status of the Solid Waste Fund that was originally put into place to address such issues and provide for replacement of machinery, landfill expansions, etc.

That Fund had a year-end balance of \$6,043,079 at the end of 2003, but as of the end of 2022, the fund had only \$258,031 remaining. Investment losses accounted for some of the loss in value, she said, but over the years former County Boards started tapping into the Solid Waste Fund to cover General Fund expenses, and that started draining the principal account balance. Fenske noted that in 2009 and 2010

via resolution \$200,000 was transferred from the Solid Waste Fund to the General Fund, and then every year afterward it became part of the budgeting process to do the same thing.

When the current Board became aware of the problem, there was a motion and action at this Committee level to not have that transfer happen in 2023, which would have almost totally depleted that account, and they will request that no such transfer be made in 2024 either.

#### Landfill needs a new cell

And there’s another issue: In addition to equipment maintenance and replacement being deferred in recent years leaving the County Landfill with an equipment problem, the Lincoln County Landfill is also filling up faster than anticipated.

“The other things that are working into this is we have a landfill construction that needs to be done, and that involves a clay haul, engineering fees, and the liner construction,” Fenske said. “We’re kind of estimating that project to be around \$2.1 million to \$3 million. It’s really hard to estimate because every time we go out and we think it’s gonna be this price, it ends up being a lot more, so we’re anticipating his total funding needs to be between \$3 and \$4 million to get the clay haul, the engineering, the liner construction ...and the equipment he needs.”

The current cell was constructed in 2021, they were slated to build the next cell in 2025, but after reviewing tonnage reports they send in every month, the engineering firm anticipates we will run out of space this year, Cohrs said.

“I don’t think the next cell could even get built by July, and we’re going to run out of room before July, so we’re going to be handling waste more than one time,” Cohrs said. “We’re going to have to put it here (motioning with his hands) and later move it somewhere else.”

“Tonnages have gone up faster than anticipated. I don’t know if that’s because of COVID and people moving up here creating more waste, but this cell that we’re constructing this year was set to be constructed next year,” he said. Now it’s imminent.

“It’s just the economics of having out-of-county waste coming in at a higher rate has caused this cell to fill up much faster than anticipated,” Cohrs said.

“One of the other measures they took at the last meeting was to cancel those contracts where we have out-of-county waste coming in,” DePasse said, “because it’s a losing proposition and the fact that the taxpayers end up subsidizing out-of-county waste that comes into our landfill, so they made the decision to stop.”

The clay haul for the addition of the 2023 cell will have enough clay hauled to accommodate this cell and the next one, Fenske said. That’s something.

And “Two more cells [have been] approved by DNR,” Cohrs said. But “Moving forward we would have to make a decision ... on whether or not we’re going to expand the landfill further or we’re gonna seek some other options, and that decision should be made probably the end of this year or early next year.”

Finding a new landfill site will not only be very pricey, but “that’s about a four or five year process,” Cohrs said.

Discussion followed about rates, which were increased, the short- and long-term outlooks for the current landfill, and the Committee agreed these are all things that need to be explored further.

“Long-term anything can be fixed, but short-term we have this very immediate

need,” DePasse said. “This is what happens when, for more than a decade, County Supervisors didn’t look at the long-term anything. Short-term decisions were made fiscally, over and over and over again. We went into debt to build a huge Service Center that we have to maintain, we went into debt to double the size of our Jail which is now half empty and we have to maintain and staff, [we] expanded Pine Crest - we went into debt to do that and now it’s half empty, ... and the whole time we did that, we robbed money from literally every fund we have, we started subsidizing operating out of the CIP Fund, Solid Waste we started robbing \$200,000 a year out of that Fund to subsidize operating, to subsidize more spending, and now we’re to the point where Sam [Fenske] estimated at the end of this year our CIP balance is going to be down to \$64,000. We have \$50 million worth of buildings, and we have \$64,000. We’ve got less than \$800,000 left of ARPA money, and our Unassigned Fund balance is less than \$3 million. So our short-term options in my mind are really limited to bonding. We have to borrow this money to take care of this, and then we have to work on a plan to make sure that this doesn’t happen again and that we dig ourselves out of this hole that we all were given.”

“There’s lots to look at,” DePasse said. “We need to take a long-term view on everything.”

#### Committee votes to approve resolution to borrow \$4 million

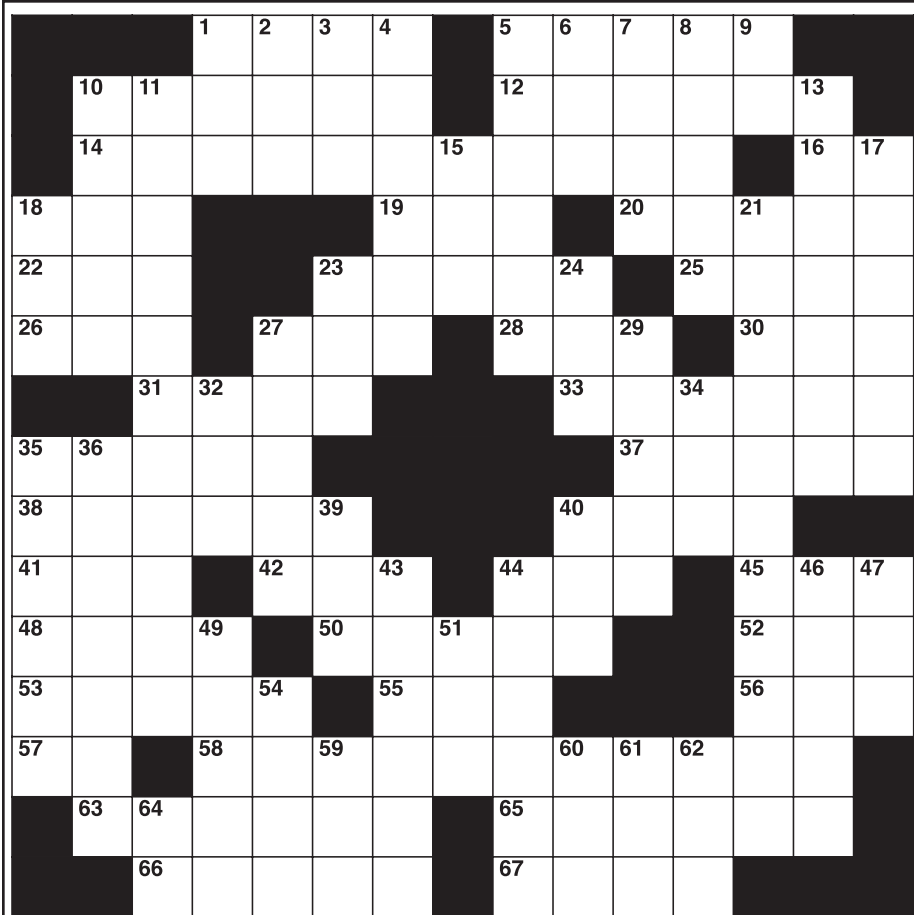
In the face of their current limited options and after hearing a presentation about bonding options from a Baird representative, the Committee decided short-term financing of \$4 million was the best option to meet the Lincoln County Landfill/Solid Waste Department’s immediate needs for 2023. Fenske explained that comes out to about \$22.50 per \$100,000 of value on a tax bill.

“I like how you put it, Julie,” said Supervisor Lori Anderson-Malm. “We don’t have an option. We don’t have a choice right now. Because of how things were done from previous Boards, they presented us with this scenario that we’re dealing - that we’ve been dealing with now - and that we’re going to continue to deal with because nobody decided to do anything.”

Anderson-Malm made a motion, which was seconded and unanimously approved, to approve a bonding resolution for \$4 million, to forward it to the Board, to authorize the ordering of the compactor, and to allow Fenske in the immediate term to use unassigned General Fund funds to pay for the purchase of the compactor with the anticipation of bonding being used to reimburse that, if that is approved, and if the bonding is not approved, the General Fund to cover that cost. The remainder of the funds not used for the compactor, anticipating Board approval, would be used to construct the new cell at the landfill this year.

#### An eye toward the future

“We’re going to start talking 2025 budget next month. ... Just so we all know, that \$200,000 cannot be taken out of Solid Waste anymore,” DePasse said. “That’s going to have to end, so that’s a \$200,000 hole we’ll have to fill with regard to General Fund, and you all know we’ve been beating the drum on the same has to happen with CIP. We were able to get about \$300,000 in operating expenses out of that this year just because of the State windfall but we’re going to have to do that, too. We have to shore up all of it.”



©MetroCreative

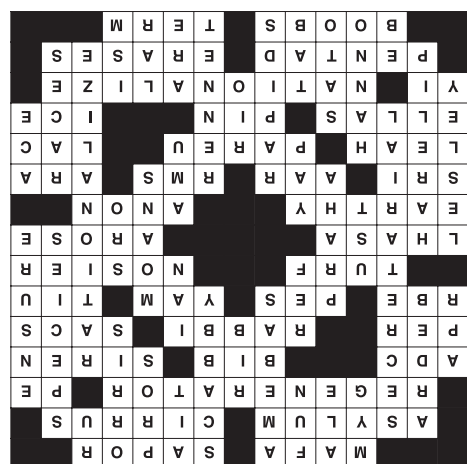
#### CLUES ACROSS

- 1. Gene type
- 5. Persian male given name
- 10. Type of protection
- 12. Cloud
- 14. One who returns to life
- 16. Gym class
- 18. General’s assistant (abbr.)
- 19. Baby’s dining accessory
- 20. Enchantress
- 22. Prefix denoting “in a”
- 23. Spiritual leader
- 25. Cavities
- 26. Relative biological effectiveness (abbr.)
- 27. Foot (Latin)
- 28. Sweet potato
- 30. Pharaoh of Lower Egypt
- 31. Land
- 33. More inquisitive
- 35. Dog breed: \_\_ Apso
- 37. Stood up
- 38. Direct and uninhibited
- 40. Authorless
- 41. Blocking type of drug (abbr.)
- 42. Retrospective analysis (abbr.)
- 44. Root mean square (abbr.)
- 45. Macaws
- 48. Actress Remini
- 50. Polynesian wrapped skirt
- 52. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
- 53. Fitzgerald and Baker are two
- 55. Bowling alley must-have
- 56. A way to cool down
- 57. Ethnic group in Asia
- 58. A way to alter
- 63. Set of five
- 65. Removes from the record

- 66. Dummies
- 67. Set period in office

#### CLUES DOWN

- 1. DC Comics superhero
- 2. Brew
- 3. Play
- 4. Single-celled animals
- 5. Rough to the touch
- 6. Small island (British)
- 7. Often noted alongside cons
- 8. Preparation of rootstock
- 9. Atomic #44
- 10. Egyptian unit of capacity
- 11. About secretary
- 13. Particular groups
- 15. Poke fun at
- 17. Make certain that something occurs
- 18. Financial term
- 21. Justify
- 23. Arbiter
- 24. 007’s creato
- 27. Czech name for Prague
- 29. Groans
- 32. American time
- 34. No seats available
- 35. \_\_ Stahl, journalist
- 36. Cleft lip
- 39. Talk incessantly
- 40. Expresses atomic and molecular weights (abbr.)
- 43. A part of a river where the current is very fast
- 44. Curdled milk
- 46. Running competitions
- 47. A team’s best pitcher
- 49. Carthaginian explorer
- 51. World-renowned city
- 54. Most common Japanese surname
- 59. The bill in a restaurant
- 60. They \_\_
- 61. City of Angels football team (abbr.)
- 62. Distinctive practice
- 64. One quintillion bytes



397333

## PUBLISHER’S LETTER

### Valentine’s Day: A Timeless Celebration

Dear Reader,

As we approach St. Valentine’s Day, let’s reflect on the profound significance of expressing love to someone special. While this day has become a symbol of affection, it serves as a gentle reminder to celebrate love not just on February 14th, but throughout the entire year.

Love is a force that knows no bounds even in the hustle and bustle of our daily lives. Its celebration should be a continuous journey rather than a fleeting moment in time. Every day offers an opportunity to cherish and nurture the bonds that bring



joy and companionship into our lives.

So, as we exchange heartfelt gestures on this St. Valentine’s Day, let it be a catalyst for a year filled with love, understanding, and gratitude. May each day be an opportunity to celebrate the extraordinary connections that make life richer and more

meaningful. After all, the true beauty of love lies in its ability to brighten not just one day, but every day of the year.

**PATRICK J. WOOD**  
Publisher

Author of “Reflections” a new book now available on Amazon.





St. John Lutheran School held an induction ceremony for the National Junior Honor Society on Monday, Feb. 5, 2024. St. John students in 6th-8th grade with a 3.5-grade point average were invited to apply by completing a detailed application listing leadership, awards, and service activities. Izabella Erickson, Adalyn Schooley, Brynlee Heidemann, and Isabella Sprague were selected to become new members based on the five pillars of scholarship, service, leadership, character, and citizenship that the National Jr. Honor Society upholds. The students will serve as active role models within their school and community, planning positive activities for students and raising funds for charity throughout the school year. Congratulations to the new inductees!

Photo courtesy of St. John Lutheran School.

## PRAIRIE RIVER MIDDLE SCHOOL 2023-2024 second quarter Honor Roll

### EIGHTH GRADE

**GOLD 4.00:** Ava Bagdon, Brooklyn Bellin, Azalea Blake, Karmen Brietzke, Kaleb Cook, Austin Doering, Brady Genisot, Caleb Gennrich, Sawyer Grubb, Marie Hagemester, Lilee Haltinner, Haley Hooch, Noelle Iverson, Connor Josiger, Avery Kolinski, Claire Kufahl, Annabelle Lee, Isaac Lersch, Alexis Lonsdorf, Jameson Morgan, Izabella Nelson, Keira Presley, Cecillia Priebe, Karlee Ravn, Chayse Reinichen, Eliza Rogers, Brianna Schmirler, Broc Suchocki, Fletcher Talerico, Mikenna Vandeweerd, Madeline Voigt, Cameron Wszalek, Shelby Yates, Benjamin Zastrow

**SILVER 3.750-3.999:** Ian Asinas, Lilly Bong, Alexander Bushar, Brooklyn Clabots, Norah Elliott, Alexis Fehr, Shane Gibson, Kane Hanson, Orion Hill, Mykenzie Hinz, Addisyn Krause, Jacey Lyon, Hunter Rhode, Kylie Roberge, Alina Savagian-Demoss, Preston Schmidt, Alicia Schneider, Nikolajs Schulz, Cadence Seliger, Dylan Weber, Emma Wendt, Anna Whited

**BRONZE 3.50-3.749:** Madisyn Anderson, Hayden Ballard, James Barker, Alana Brendemuehl, Peyton Brown, Jennavecia Conrad, Gage DeForrest, Cecilia Gerbig, Payton Guite, Megan Gustum, Lexie Hass, Kylee Hoffman, Brodie Isaacson, Morgan Kucirek, Mylie Kufahl, Finlee Lange-Peronto, Ava Latzig, Eli Lofink, Jacoby Loren-Nelson, Denver McCaskill, Dezariah McDaniel, Emmanuel Ollmann, Mason Renken, Robert Rutkowski, Jordan Scheuermann, Avalynn Schult, Alexa Staskiewicz, Tayla Stieber, Tanner Vanvuren, Vanessa Wolfe

### SEVENTH GRADE

**GOLD 4.00:** Ella Bergh, Darby Bonnell, Keira Clerveaux, Alexandria Derizzo, Colton Fox, Autumn Genisot, Jameson Gerdes, Jaedyn Goetsch, Jase Huston, Cassandra Johnson, Andrew Josiger, Mara Kautzer, Willett Knospe, Payge Osness, Abigail Parks, Korbet Ravn, Draven Sangster, Luke Wegner, Dantell Williams, Owen Zerbe

**SILVER 3.750-3.999:** Alle Bergh, Ella Burrow, Aaron Collinsworth, Bethany Crockford, Jacob Hanson, Kyla Hoffman, Mathew Mueller, Kelsey Pankow, Aili Sayles, Michael Schreiber, Cadence Stutting, Caylenn Van Der Nest

**BRONZE 3.50-3.749:** Aiden Becker, Tanner Carpentier, Moses Gates, Madilynn Geiss, Allie Kohnhorst, Aubrey Krombolz, Raiyna Perez, Evelyn Reinhardt, Evalynn Robertsen, Kinzie Stevenson

### SIXTH GRADE

**GOLD 4.00:** Leighton Burrows, Parker Hannemann, Preston Hannemann, Corbin Hanson, Oliver Kahr, Cameron McCaskill, Emma Myers, Payten Nelessen, Connor Savagian-Demoss, Carter Schmidt, Aiden Schultz, Cooper Schwartzman, Claire Ziebell

**SILVER 3.750-3.999:** Iva Brownell, Emma Daley, Sylvia Durbin, Mason Fuchs, Addilyn Mulrooney, Cameron Thom

**BRONZE 3.50-3.749:** Caelyn Belant, Elizabeth Hinz, Mackenzie Matthias, Alexander Neumann, Hank Skomars, Hunter Staskiewicz, Ashton Thom, Kyle Yingling

### FIFTH GRADE

**GOLD 4.00:** Aubrie Brandenburg, Avery Clark, Peyton Corro, Aaron Crockford, Zachary Gennrich, Kennedy Gerdes, Bentley Graap, Claire Hooch, Alexis Jannusch, Brooklyn Johns, Drew Kaminski, Logan Koehler, Jazalyn Lee, Scarlett Lee, Aaron Marturano, Keylee Mork, Owen Rhode

**SILVER 3.750-3.99** Natalie Barnett, Rosaline Brooks, William Frisch, Lily Glisch, Emily Grunenwald, Hailey Hoff, Devon Johnson, Carter Madden, Lila-Ann McCulley-Fisher, Jayce Oxborrow, Bentley Wyland

**BRONZE 3.50-3.749:** Wyatt Becker, Roger Brooks III, Alvaro Carreto, Jacob Caskey, Addison Durham, Connor Gibson, Wesley Gronke, Lucas Hagenbucher, Maddyn Jahnke, Adele Kahr, Charlie Krause, Logan Learman, Emelina McClellan, Brea Neubauer, Aurelia Phelps, Alexis Rothenberger, David Wilson, Tidas Zernicke

## St. John Lutheran School announces 2023-2024 second quarter Honor Roll

**HIGHEST HONORS (4.0):** Poppy Geisler, Brynlee Heidemann, Ruby Hoffman, Addelyn Ineichen, Delana Podeweltz, Adalyn Schooley, Lily Schultz, Ever Smith, Esther Verpoorten, Job Verpoorten, Christian Voigt, Evan Voigt, Chelsea Wengeler

**HIGH HONORS (3.76-3.99):** Eli Boehm-Wendt, Izabella Erickson, Kennedy Hess, Ella Humphrey, Malayna Kufahl, Macie Lange, Lillian Mattson, Isabelle Podeweltz, Siobhan Schuetze, Isabella Sprague, Eva Storm, Samuel Szeto

**HONORS (3.5 - 3.75):** Layla Jacobson, Evie Klug, Lola Klug, Bentley Kropp, Julia Skaar, Aaron Swanson, Joanna Szeto, Madilynn VenRooy

## Superintendent's Corner ...

### Getting proactive with facilities challenges at MAPS

The Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) will be coming to the voters on April 2 with a capital referendum to address facility needs in our district. I encourage everyone to become informed on this subject, as it has long-term implications for our district and our community.

Here's the short version to serve as a starting point: discussions began over a year and a half ago regarding what should become of Jefferson Elementary School; a building that became vacant as a result of declining enrollment and school consolidation. When I became Superintendent, I wanted to study that issue very closely since, once a building like Jefferson is sold, MAPS can't bring it back. As part of that process, we wanted to study the state of all of our buildings to see if Jefferson was even the one that should remain vacant or be sold. Condition assessments, repair and maintenance projections, and future costing estimates were done on each of our buildings and the result was quite sobering. Next, we invited community members to join us for three separate focus groups last summer to get into our schools, study the data regarding the condition of our various buildings, and to come up with some solutions that were cost effective. Everyone in the community was invited to attend and the discussions were very productive. The overarching question was: "How can we make best use of our best facilities?"

The community groups proposed

and studied numerous alternatives and landed on a solution that remodels existing spaces and that will take several buildings offline. Essentially the plan calls for the renovation and update of Jefferson Elementary School and to move the Pine River Head Start and 4K program, the Northern Achievement Center program, and the Bridges Virtual Academy into the renovated Jefferson Elementary. In addition, the plan calls for renovating underused spaces at Merrill High School and moving the Central Office operations into that space. Finally, the district maintenance building would be replaced. This plan would take four buildings - many of which are well past their useful life - offline (sold or demolished), would save millions of dollars over the next 10 years, and would make best use of our best facilities.

There's a cost to those significant renovations, however, so a survey went out to every resident in the district to help gauge support for the project and the \$16 million referendum that would be needed to make it happen (impact on the taxpayer is expected to be 32 cents per \$1,000 of property). Response to the survey was very encouraging with approximately 60% of residents showing support for both the plan and the referendum that would be needed to make it happen. Given that high level of support, MAPS



decided to proceed with the concept by taking it to the voters on April 2.

You will hear a lot about this proposal between now and April 2, and there are many opportunities to learn more. We will be making presentations to local townships, municipalities, and service clubs.

MAPS will hold two information nights (Feb. 19 at 6 p.m. at Jefferson Elementary and March 25 at 6 p.m. at Merrill High School). I will be hosting several "Coffee with the Superintendent" gatherings at the Central Office (Feb. 29 and March 7 at 7 a.m.). Information will be coming to you in the mail, and our webpage will be continually updated. You can find all of the referendum information, as well as detailed information regarding the facilities plan at mapsedu.org. Also, the MAPS Facebook page will be updated regularly with information regarding this topic. Of course, you can call me directly at any time with questions at 715.536.4581.

I encourage you to become informed on this important topic and to become engaged in the subject, as we truly have an opportunity to make the best use of our best buildings, to gain efficiencies by taking several unused buildings offline, and to save significant operations dollars for years to come. Go Bluejays!

Shannon Murray  
Superintendent

## Eye-Opening reasons people bully others (and what to do about It)

### Stand for the Silent, an organization helping to stop school bullying is helping communities around the nation

Anyone who has had their child bullied knows all too well the emotional and physical toll it can take. Millions of people experience it yearly in schools around the country, leaving many to wonder who it is that bullies and why they do it. The more we learn about why people bully, the more we as a society can help bring it to a much-needed end. The good news is that plenty of information is available explaining why people bully others.

"When communities understand more about bullying and who does it, they can help prevent it," said Kirk Smalley, co-founder of Stand for the Silent. "Reducing and eliminating

bullying is a community-wide issue and should be addressed that way for the best results."

Bullies are not born. Instead, they become that way through their environment as they grow up. According to *Psychology Today*, becoming a bully usually starts at an early age, during toddlerhood. When toddlers become aggressive, if not handled consistently, they fail to learn internal restraints against such behavior and feel they can use it to get what they want.

This is essential information for parents and child caregivers alike. How toddler behavior is addressed helps lay the foundation for the child's behavior

in the future. Teaching children this age to express their feelings through words and healthier options rather than aggressive behavior will help them develop a healthy sense of what to do with their emotions.

According to research published in the journal *American Psychologist*, here are four additional reasons why people become bullies:

- **Family issues.** Children who grow up in a hostile family environment, lack parental emotional support, or are raised with an authoritarian parenting style are more prone to becoming bullies. Authoritarian parents set strict

See **BULLYING** page 16



# Spring Primary Election to be held in four Wards in the City of Merrill on Tuesday

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

In advance of next week's Spring Primary Election on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2024, as a public service, we offered each of the candidates who will be on that ballot the opportunity to share a little information about themselves and their reasons for running for office. Not all candidates responded. Those candidates that did respond have their responses to the questionnaire printed here. We hope this will help voters make informed decisions prior to voting.

A Spring Primary Election is being held in our area in only four Wards in the City of Merrill:

• **City of Merrill in District 2 (Ward 4)** - The only race on the ballot is for District 2 Lincoln County Supervisor. The purpose of this primary is to narrow the choice of candidates from three to two in the race for County Supervisor for District 2. Scott Doerr, Lori Anderson-Malm (incumbent), and Keras Nimz are all running for the office, and the primary will narrow the race to the two candidates with the most votes who will then run against each other for the position in the April 2 Spring Election.

• **City of Merrill in District 8 (Wards 2 and 15)** - The only race on the ballot is for City of Merrill District 8 Alderperson. The purpose of this primary is to narrow the choice of candidates from three to two in the race for City of Merrill District 8 Alderperson. Allen Wix, Rebecca Rutkowski, and Renea Frederick are all running for the office, and the primary will narrow the race to the two candidates with the most votes who will then run against each other for the position in the April 2 Spring Election.

• **City of Merrill in District 8 (Ward 3)** - The voters in this District will have both of the above-mentioned races on their ballots: District 2 Lincoln County Supervisor and City of Merrill District 8 Alderperson. See the above two bullet points for the candidates and explanation of this primary vote.

## Candidates on the primary ballot for Lincoln County District 2 - County Supervisor are: Scott Doerr, Lori Anderson-Malm (incumbent), and Keras Nimz.

**Name:** Scott Doerr  
**Age:** 66

**Family:** I was born and raised in Merrill. I have been married to Linda for over 42 years. We have two sons that have their own businesses.

**Employment/position:** I was a 29-year employee at Semco, and in 2007 became Manager of the Merrill Eagles Club where I am still employed.

**Past or present elected offices held, dates served:**

**Membership in religious, service, fraternal, etc., clubs or organizations, and offices held, dates served:** Fraternal Order of Eagles Past Regional President, Past State President, Current State Treasurer, and current Aerie Secretary. Past President, Treasurer and Negotiator for Former Local Union 2344. I was Co-Chair with my wife Linda for Relay for Life, raising over \$200,000 locally for Cancer research and programs. I was also a political Liaison for The American Cancer Society, meeting with legislators in Madison and Washington D.C. I am League Secretary for the Wednesday Night Bowling League. I am a member of The Eagles and Noon Optimist Club.

**Why have you chosen to run for the office you seek:** I am in support of keeping Pine Crest County owned. I feel the decision to sell Pine Crest should be up to the taxpayers. The current County Board saw fit to vote down a referendum, rather than let us have a voice. I am also concerned that a sale to a private entity could cost some, if not all, jobs held by Lincoln County employees. Other programs such as Lincoln Industries and the UW Extension were also cut or eliminated. These were important programs for disabled adults, youth, and even businesses in Lincoln County. Bringing back the peoples voice! I want to be your voice on County issues, and I will invite your views as well as your thoughts on issues regarding County government. Thank you for taking some time to learn and make an informed vote.

**Name:** Lori Anderson-Malm (incumbent)  
**Age:** 60

**Family:** Married - Eric, two step-children - Austin & Brittany, two step-grandchildren - Forest & Gianna, one lovable mini-dachshund - Abby

**Employment/position:** Merrill City Clerk

**Past or present elected offices held, dates served:** County Board Supervisor District 2 - April 2022-present; Merrill City Clerk - April 2022-present

**Membership in religious, service, fraternal, etc., clubs or organizations, and offices held, dates served:** Member of St. Stephens UCC; Committee member of the O'Tannenbaum Tour since 2018; Board member and Treasurer for the Friends of the TB Scott Library since 2010; Volunteer at St. Francis fish fries for 16 years.

**Why have you chosen to run for the office you seek:** A few of the reasons I chose to run for office were to increase transparency in government and to continue



to ensure election integrity. In the two years I've served as your District 2 Supervisor, those goals were established.

The first was a resolution to record and make available to the public, County Board and Committee meetings. As a taxpayer, it's imperative to have transparency in government and the ability for anyone to view prior recorded meetings. This was not done prior to 2022. This was followed by a policy change requiring all ordinances and resolutions be sponsored by a County Board Supervisor (by name) in order to appear on the agenda. This change took away the anonymous authors of policy changes that occurred prior to 2022. An ordinance regarding donations, grants, and integrity for elections was passed in July 2022, as well as a resolution for an advisory referendum question regarding the prohibition of election officials from soliciting or using private funds, technology, or services from special interest groups, people, or other private entities for the purpose and administering of elections. Going forward, I will continue to keep transparency in government and election integrity at the forefront.

Another reason I chose to run for office was to ensure fiscal responsibility. Lincoln County does not have an endless supply of money nor can we continually ask taxpayers to pay more to cover previous Boards' poor financial decisions. We need to ensure the money we receive is spent wisely. Making fiscally responsible choices is not easy and is not popular; no one wants to hear the word "no." Decisions need to be made for the long-term financial future of Lincoln County and its taxpayers instead of the short-term fixes that were done in the past. There is more to accomplish and the majority of those tasks will not be easy.

For the past two years, I have listened to my constituents and have voted accordingly. It has been an honor to serve as your District 2 Supervisor. I am asking for your support and vote on Feb. 20. Thank you.

## Candidates on the primary ballot for City of Merrill District 8 Alderperson are: Allen Wix, Rebecca Rutkowski, and Renea Frederick.

**Name:** Allen Wix  
**Age:**

**Family:**  
**Employment/position:** Currently, I am retired, although I work full time in the spring and fall.

**Past or present elected offices held, dates served:**

**Membership in religious, service, fraternal, etc., clubs or organizations, and offices held, dates served:**

**Why have you chosen to run for the office you seek:** Most of my life has been spent in Lincoln county, with the last four years as a resident of the city of Merrill. Graduating from the Merrill school system, I then stayed employed in the area while raising a family. The last several years I have attended some of the City Council meetings with the intent of familiarizing myself with the City situation, as well as how the government works. My biggest concern is to stay open minded while helping to keep the City progressing in an affordable fashion. We already carry too much debt in my opinion and the last tax hike was hard for everyone considering the cost of everything else due to inflation. We need to spend less than what we currently take in. It would also be wise to retire some of the current debt before we incur more. Inflation affects everyone, let's keep the City's burden to a minimum.

**Name:** Rebecca Rutkowski  
**Age:** 38

**Family:** Married. My husband and I live on Lake Steet, a couple blocks from where I grew up.

**Employment/position:** I work at United Healthcare as an account manager.

**Past or present elected offices held, dates served:** I have served on the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Ad Hoc Committee for the City Administrator position. I am currently serving on the Redevelopment Authority and Park and Recreation Board. The Redevelopment Authority makes crucial decisions about the future and growth of the City. I feel I make informed decisions, while being budget conscious and supporting local business.

**Membership in religious, service, fraternal, etc., clubs or organizations, and offices held, dates served:**

**Why have you chosen to run for the office you seek:** I feel I would be an asset to our City Council as I am an regular taxpayer. I am not a politician and I feel the questions I ask or concerns that I have would mirror a lot of yours. If elected and you have a concern, let me know and I will help address it or get an answer to you on your question. I feel I am able to listen to all of the information presented and perspectives before making a decision. I think that everyone should have a voice in how their Councilperson votes, as they are voting on issues that affect all of us. District 8 is in desperate need of some street repaving and water and sewer upgrades. I also feel we should learn from what has not worked in the past to improve the future and be open to change. I support



transparency in our City government. I really care about this community and want to keep making it a better place to live and raise families in.

As indicated above, I serve on the Park and Recreation Board. The Park and Recreation Board is also important as our parks and recreational activities are a huge part of Merrill's history and hopefully our future. We are very blessed to have all of our great recreation. From the Riverbend Trail to the MARC, the Underdown, Ice age Trail, the City Forest, our lakes and rivers, to all the sporting activities. I would love to see the Riverbend Trail connect to Marathon County one day. I love to fish and also to ride my bike or walk through our parks. I support public safety, as we all deserve to live in a safe community. Childcare options are also very important. While I will fight to improve these areas of our community, I will also keep the tax dollar in mind.

Thank you for your time and please vote Feb. 20 at the Lincoln County Service Center.

**Name:** Renea Frederick  
**Age:** Old enough

**Family:** Married to Todd Frederick, son: Tyler Frederick, daughter-in-law: Annette Frederick, granddaughter: Lily Frederick

**Employment/position:** Co-owner of FreMarq Innovations Inc. and Prairie River Properties, LLC.

**Past or present elected offices held, dates served:** Merrill School Board 2006-2009

**Membership in religious, service, fraternal, etc., clubs or organizations, and offices held, dates served:** People for Pine Crest, March 2023 to present, Aware & Active Citizens - Treasurer, 2020 to present; Merrill Foundation and Merrill Community Foundation - Treasurer and President, 2016-2023; UW Marathon Foundation, President 2006-2012; Merrill Chamber; Maple Grove PTO.

**Why have you chosen to run for the office you seek:** I chose to run for office because Merrill should be thriving not just surviving. The City of Merrill has great assets, such as the location to the freeway, the rivers, school system, and its people. I would like to use my experience in building businesses from scratch, repurposing abandoned buildings, and working with folks such as the SBA, Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation, and banks to develop programs to grow Merrill's entrepreneurs and small businesses. This will bring people to Merrill for these opportunities. These small businesses, owners, and entrepreneurs will fill our downtowns. They will fill our business park. They will grow Merrill's tax base. It will bring other businesses here to support them. Merrill will be thriving not just surviving. Merrill was built by entrepreneurs; I would like to see history repeated.



**MERRILL Foto News** **ADVERTISING WORKS!**

*"We have been putting in weekly ads for a number of years. I know our customers read the ads because if I make a mistake, I usually hear about it. The Advertising Staff has been real helpful developing our ads. I tell them what I need and they always come up with solutions. The circulation area allows us to reach more potential Customers. We usually see some new faces every week." ~ Scott*

**Merrill Eagles Club • 715-536-7471**  
**1205 Lake Street, Merrill**

Make your advertising WORK by calling 715-536-7121, or stop by our office at 2011 E. Main Street.

**Coming up:**  
**MERRILL PARK & REC**  
**2024 Summer**  
**Activity Guide**

Be a part of this highly read summer guide.  
Your message will be printed in full color.  
Now Digitally available on MAPS website, the MARC website, the Merrill Foto News website!

A summer long shelf-life ensures your ad will be seen!

**MERRILL Foto News**  
To advertise in this publication, contact the Merrill Foto News office at:  
**(715) 536-7121**



# Merrill Varsity Wrestler are vying for a chance to go to State

Eight Merrill Varsity Boys Wrestlers qualify for Sectionals; Varsity Girls will compete at same Sectionals

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

On Saturday, Feb. 10, 2022, Merrill Varsity wrestlers traveled to DC Everest to compete in the WIAA Division 1 Regional tournament for a chance to advance to the Sectionals. "The top four wrestlers in each weight class advance," Merrill Head Varsity Wrestling Coach Brian Suchocki said.

From Merrill, eight Varsity wrestlers qualified to move forward to the Sectional tournament. Those wrestlers, listed with their place in the Regional tournament for their respective weight classes, are: Remington Skic (second), Dusty Schmirler (third), Hunter Opper (third), Noah Klug (third), Callum Wheeler (fourth), Austin Depies (fourth), Carson Brooks (fourth), and Mikal Plautz (fourth).

"Remington has been rock solid all season and had another solid performance," Suchocki said. "Good things will continue to happen for Remington by staying consistent and aggressive. Remington did a nice job staying poised and sticking to what he does best."

"Dusty wrestled tough," he said. "He continues to wrestle hard at the end of matches, giving himself a chance."

"Hunter is wrestling his best he has all season right now," Suchocki said. "Hunter has progressed well and stayed the course. He picked up a nice pin in the third-place match. It's exciting to see him competing well."

"Noah had a tough break in the semifinal match but finished the day strong," he said. "Noah is wrestling in a style that is steady which is good this time of the year. Noah will work to get a few more scoring opportunities."

"Callum had some really nice matches and has all the tools needed," Suchocki said. "Callum finished the day with a nice win, helping him advance. I'm excited to see what he can do next week."

"Austin also finished the day with a good win, pinning his opponent to advance," he said. "Austin has good technique and this week will be working on sticking with the wrestling positions best suited for him."

"Carson had his work cut out for him; after losing his first match, he needed help to get an opportunity to qualify," Suchocki said. "He made the best of it and wrestled really solid to move on. Carson missed a lot of the season, so he is still getting back in the swing of things."

"Lastly, it was awesome to see Mikal advance," Suchocki said. "As our lone Senior, he has been the rock for us. I know he wanted it so badly and sometimes that creates extra nerves that don't help a wrestler compete their best. He did a great job coming back, after a disappointing loss to a wrestler he lost to earlier this season. I'm very proud he was able to deal with the adversity and make it to Sectionals."

"Unfortunately, Brady Norton suffered an injury, ending his chance to advance" Suchocki said. "I think he had a real good opportunity to move on, but he will recover and be a force next season."

"We had other wrestlers in the hunt but came up short," he said. "They are all underclassmen and they had valuable experience competing at a very competitive Regional." Suchocki was referring to wrestlers Jayden Graap (fifth), Brett Suchocki (sixth), Will Miemietz (DNP), and Preston Schuelke (DNP).

"Even though we had some struggles throughout the day, we finished strong in the wrestleback round, which shows how much our wrestlers wanted it," Suchocki said. "It's the time of season where wrestlers get anxious, knowing their season can end. We, the coaches, are proud of how hard the wrestlers worked throughout the season and convey that to them to 'trust the training.' I think that mindset helped at times, but some still struggled with nerves."

"Going into Sectionals, we want to compete our best no matter what that is," Suchocki said. "We will focus on the things we can control and not what the outcome could be. When wrestlers do that, they perform their best."

The Sectional tournament will be held this Saturday, Feb. 17, in Marshfield.

The Merrill Girls Wrestling Team will also compete at the same Sectional for a chance to go to the State tournament.



Merrill Boys Varsity Wrestlers qualifying for Sectionals. Front, L to R: Noah Klug, Dustin Schmirler, Remington Skic, and Callum Wheeler. Back, L to R: Carson Brooks, Hunter Opper, Austin Depies, and Mikal Plautz. Photo courtesy of Merrill Wrestling Program.

## 2024 WINTER MERRILL HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS SCHEDULE

### Girls Basketball (Varsity, JV & JV2)

Thurs. Feb. 15 D. C. Everest (JV) Home 5:45 pm  
Thurs. Feb. 15 D. C. Everest (Varsity) Home 7:15 pm

### Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, JV2 & JV3)

Fri. Feb. 16 D. C. Everest (JV2) Away 4:00 pm  
Fri. Feb. 16 D. C. Everest (JV) Away 5:45 pm  
Fri. Feb. 16 D. C. Everest (Varsity) Away 7:15 pm  
Tue. Feb. 20 Chippewa Falls (JV & JV2) Away 5:45 pm  
Tue. Feb. 20 Chippewa Falls (Varsity) Away 7:15 pm  
Thurs. Feb. 22 Marshfield (JV & JV2) Home 5:45 pm  
Thurs. Feb. 22 Marshfield (Varsity) Home 7:15 pm

### Boys Wrestling (Varsity & JV)

Sat. Feb. 17 Sectionals (Varsity) Away 9:00 am

Please see [wiaawi.org](http://wiaawi.org) for all payoff schedules and brackets.

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



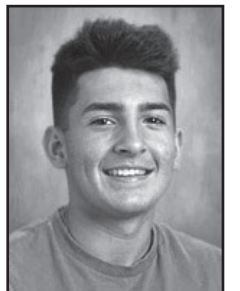
Merrill Varsity Girls who will wrestle at Sectionals, L to R: Kaylynn Allen, Allison Hunter, Adison Clark, and Merin Yates. Photo courtesy of Merrill Wrestling Program.

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**D'Ondre Houghton**, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. D'Ondre plays point guard for the Merrill Varsity Boys Basketball Team and played JV as a Sophomore, JV2 as a Freshman, and played in seventh and eighth grades at Prairie River Middle School (PRMS). He also plays safety (defense) on the Merrill Varsity Football Team, and this past season was his second year on Varsity. He started on JV2 Football as a Freshman, played for PRMS in seventh and eighth grades, and played tackle football for his school in Portland, Oregon, from fourth through sixth grade.

D'Ondre moved to Merrill with his family when he was in the sixth grade and said he really likes living in a small town, having all of his friends close by and living near each other, and said Merrill is a nice community. His favorite class at school is Unified PE where he gets to help with special ed students. D'Ondre works part time at Festival Foods in Weston, and in his free time, he likes to play video games, fish, play sports, and work out at Riverside Athletic Club.

The son of Vanessa Houghton of Merrill, D'Ondre has a 2.6 GPA and, after high school graduation, plans to go to college to major in radiography and become a radiographer.



**D'Ondre Houghton**

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](mailto:fotonews@mmclocal.com)

# Real Rewards, Year After Year

# Nicolet NATIONAL BANK

800.369.0226 | [NicoletBank.com](http://NicoletBank.com)



**Real Rewards Checking** (Real Rewards) is available for consumer deposits only. Annual Percentage Yield ("APY") is accurate as of 1/1/2023. Real Rewards is a variable rate account. Your APY may change at any time after your account is opened, at the discretion of Nicolet National Bank. Real Rewards is a tiered rate product. If qualifications are met for the qualification cycle, Tier 1: The portion of your balance that is equal to or less than \$15,000 will earn 3.00% APY. Tier 2: The portion of your balance that is over \$15,000 will earn 0.01% APY. The APY for Tier 2 will range from 0.40% to 3.00%, depending on the balance in your account. If qualifications are not met for the qualification cycle, your entire balance will earn 0.01% APY. You must enroll in online banking and e-statements in order to qualify. Transactions required each qualification cycle: At least ten posted and cleared debit card transactions (ATM-processed transactions do not count as qualifying debit card transactions), and at least one posted and cleared direct deposit of payroll or social security. Disclosed APY assumes all interest remains on deposit. Fees and withdrawals of interest will reduce earnings and APY. All Nicolet National Bank checking accounts are subject to credit approval. Additional terms and conditions apply. See [Nicoletbank.com](http://Nicoletbank.com) for details. Member FDIC.



# Blastomycosis: The fungus among us

Lincoln County Health Department would like to remind community members of the risk of Blastomycosis (or "Blasto"). Although the risk of getting this fungal infection is low, every year there are individuals in Lincoln County who get Blastomycosis. Lincoln County is in the top five counties for the highest incidence rate of Blastomycosis in Wisconsin. Furthermore, from 2013-2022, 40 individuals in Lincoln County tested positive for Blastomycosis, 21 of which ended up hospitalized.

The fungus that causes Blastomycosis lives in moist soil with decaying wood and leaves. Wooded areas that are close to water are prime settings for the fungus to live. Only under exact conditions of humidity, temperature, and nutrition, can the fungus grow and produce spores that can be inhaled when soil is disturbed. With a warmer than usual late fall and early winter, we should be aware of the potential risk of conditions being favorable. People most likely also spent more time outdoors during these times.

It is important to know that Blastomycosis symptoms typically do not occur until

2-15 weeks after exposure. Symptoms can mimic other respiratory illnesses like the flu or acute bacterial pneumonia, making it difficult to diagnose. Usually, Blastomycosis symptoms resemble those of a lung infection, but it can affect other body systems including your skin and bones.

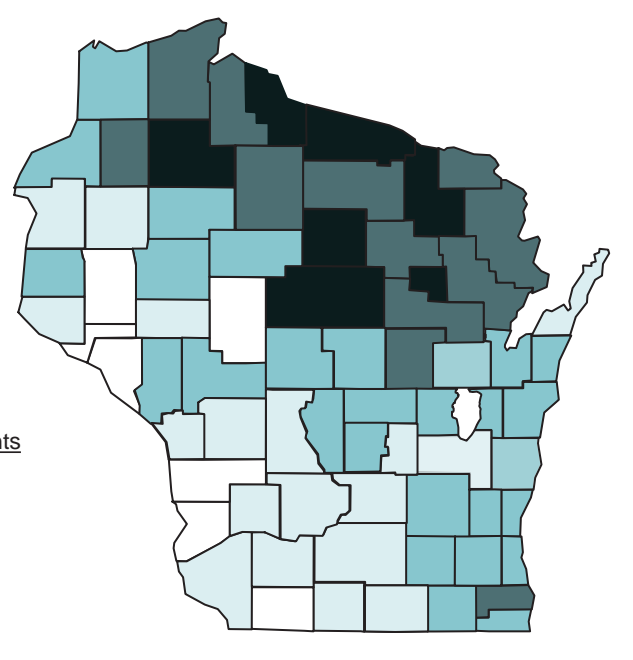
Blastomycosis symptoms may include:

- Fever or chills
- Cough
- Shortness of breath
- Chest or back pain
- Feeling very tired
- Skin sores that may look crusted and growing in size

About half of people infected will not have any symptoms. People with a weakened immune system or a chronic illness are more likely to show symptoms. Your risk increases if you participate in outdoor activities like farming, clearing brush, construction, riding all-terrain vehicles, gardening, hiking, hunting, and camping.

"Given the significant overlap with other respiratory illness symptoms, it is important for patients to follow-up with their primary care provider (PCP) or other

**Blastomycosis annual incidence by county of residence in Wisconsin, 2011-2020 (1,142 cases)**



Annual Incidence cases/100,000 residents

- 0 cases
- < 1 cases
- 1-3 cases
- 3-7 cases
- ≥ 7 cases

provider if respiratory symptoms are not improving or worsen, and to be sure your provider is aware of activities that may increase your exposure to Blastomycosis," said Dr. Michael Clark, MD, Lincoln County Health Department Medical Advisor.

If you are having these symptoms and think you may have Blastomycosis, be sure to talk to your healthcare provider right away. People are usually treated with antifungal medicine.

Early recognition and appropriate treatment can minimize illness. Although there are no formal recommendations to prevent Blastomycosis, if you have a weakened immune system or are elderly,

you may want to consider wearing a dust mask when taking part in activities in which the soil is disturbed or avoiding these activities all together.

A Blastomycosis: Trends in Lincoln County 2013-2022 data brief was published last year; it can be found at: [co.lincoln.wi.us/health/page/blastomycosis-blasto](http://co.lincoln.wi.us/health/page/blastomycosis-blasto).

If you have questions or concerns, contact the Lincoln County Health Department at 715.536.0307.

More information is also available at the Wisconsin Department of Health Services website: [dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/blastomycosis.htm](http://dhs.wisconsin.gov/disease/blastomycosis.htm).

## CLOVERDALE COUNTRY STORE

**STORE HOURS: Mon. - Fri. 8:30 am - 6:30 pm • Sat. 8:30 am - 4 pm • Closed Sunday**  
**2 miles South of Curtiss on Hwy. E 715-223-4797**  
 We accept: SNAP/EBT Cards

<b>Chicken Tenderloins</b> Uncooked - Frozen 2.5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$2.99</b>	<b>Yogurt</b> Harvest Peach 32 oz. ONLY <b>\$1.29</b>	<b>Sunflower Seed</b> Black Oil 50 lbs. ONLY <b>\$19.99</b>
<b>Chicken Breast</b> Skinless, Boneless, Frozen 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$1.69</b> a lb	<b>Orange Juice</b> No Pulp 52 oz. ONLY <b>\$1.69</b>	<b>Saltine Crackers</b> 16 oz. ONLY <b>89¢</b>

**OPEN MONDAY - FRIDAY 8:30-6:30 • SATURDAY 8:30-4:00**

<b>Ham Steak</b> Bone In - Frozen ONLY <b>99¢</b> a lb	<b>Cheddar Cheese</b> 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$1.89</b> a lb	<b>Mushrooms</b> Pieces & Stems 4 oz. ONLY <b>99¢</b>
<b>Roast Beef</b> Fully Cooked - Frozen 8 lbs. ONLY <b>\$2.49</b> a lb	<b>Butter</b> Salted Whipped 8 oz. ONLY <b>\$1.49</b>	<b>Cheddar Sour Cream Chips</b> Case 72 ct 1.5 oz. ONLY <b>\$15.99</b>
<b>Ham</b> Smoked Uncured Thick Cut - Frozen 20 oz. ONLY <b>\$2.99</b>	<b>American Cheese Loaf</b> EZ Melt 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$4.99</b>	<b>Sandwich Cookies</b> Chocolate Mint ONLY <b>99¢</b>
<b>Meat Loaf Patties</b> Fully Cooked Frozen 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$1.49</b> a lb	<b>Cheddar Cheese</b> Sharp - Sliced 1.5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$2.99</b>	<b>Pickles</b> Whole Dill 46 oz. ONLY <b>\$1.29</b>
<b>Philly Steak Meat</b> Seasoned - Fully Cooked Frozen ONLY <b>\$2.89</b> a lb	<b>String Cheese</b> Mozzarella 20 oz. ONLY <b>\$2.99</b>	<b>Wheat Flakes Cereal</b> w/Red Berries 11.2 oz. ONLY <b>99¢</b>
<b>Pizza</b> Crispy Crust Pepperoni - Frozen 26 oz. ONLY <b>\$3.49</b>	<b>American Cheese</b> Sliced - White Reduced Fat 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$7.99</b>	<b>Baked Beans</b> Zero Sugar 27.5 oz. ONLY <b>99¢</b>
<b>Black Forest Ham</b> Fully Cooked Sliced - Frozen 10.5 oz. ONLY <b>\$1.29</b>	<b>Pollock Battered Portions</b> Pub Style Frozen ONLY <b>\$2.49</b> a lb	<b>Pinto Beans</b> 15 oz. ONLY <b>69¢</b>
<b>Spiral Ham</b> Brown Sugar - Frozen 9 lbs. ONLY <b>\$1.49</b> a lb	<b>Hashbrown Patties</b> Mini - Frozen ONLY <b>\$4.99</b>	<b>Bratwurst</b> Uncooked - Original Frozen 40 oz. ONLY <b>\$4.99</b>
<b>Chicken Breast</b> Fully Cooked - Sliced w/Rotisserie Seasoning, Frozen 9 oz. ONLY <b>69¢</b>	<b>Onion Rings</b> Breaded - Frozen 3 lbs. ONLY <b>\$4.99</b>	<b>French Fries</b> Crinkle Cut - Frozen 5 lbs. ONLY <b>\$5.99</b>

*In-store ONLY. We reserve the right to limit quantities.*

## BULLYING

*from page 13*

rules without providing explanations and give their children severe punishment if they are disobeyed.

• **Peer influences.** Children are more likely to become bullies if they are affiliated with aggressive peers, including gangs. Plus, bystanders, who we would think would help stop bullying, often encourage the bully, who wants to impress them.

• **School climate.** The school climate plays a significant role in bullying because much of it takes place there. School climates

where teachers or the schools lack a response to bullying or a negative school atmosphere help create ideal settings for more bullying.

• **Community environment.** When children live in a community that is unsafe and negative and are exposed to violent television or video games, they are more likely to become bullies.

"We all live in communities and need to work together to help solve this problem," said Smalley. "We must make it a mission to create a community culture of kindness in school and around the neighborhood. Putting out that good energy

will have a ripple effect."

Knowing what leads people to become bullies is only half of it. The other part is knowing what to do if someone is bullying. Once it is identified, it needs to be addressed. Schools need to have a zero-tolerance policy for it. Children should be taught how to handle their emotions healthily from early childcare and elementary school. Communities and schools must focus on creating an environment that pushes bullying out and makes a welcoming and kind place for everyone. Communities and schools should consider hosting bullying seminars, parenting classes, etc.

Smalley and his wife, Laura, started the organization following their 11-year-old son ending his own life due to bullying. They turned their pain and loss into a mission of helping others. He travels the country giving presentations about bullying to schools, providing bullying prevention, giving out scholarships, offering intervention strategies, and more. Those interested in getting involved can start a chapter of the group in their area, obtain a free K-2 bullying prevention curriculum or cyberbullying handbook for parents, host a presentation at their school, and donate to help support the cause. To get more information, visit the site at: [standforthesilent.org/](http://standforthesilent.org/)

Started in 2010, *Stand for the Silent* is an organization on a mission to help eliminate bullying nationwide. Kirk and Laura Smalley founded the group after their child took his own life due to bullying. They offer free resources for parents and educators and travel to schools to host presentations. Kirk has been to over 6,025 schools and spoken with more than 4.15 million students. To get more information, visit [standforthesilent.org/](http://standforthesilent.org/)

# TRUCK SALE

## PRESIDENTS' DAY SALES EVENT

## 10% Rebate! \*

**RAM 1500 is the most luxurious and technologically advanced RAM 1500 ever. \*\***

\*10% Rebate on 2023 RAM 1500 & 2024 RAM 1500, 2500, 3500, Laramie, Rebel, Limited and Longhorn. \*\*Based on standard and available features offered.

## Last chance for a HEMI V-8 or Eco Diesel on RAM 1500.

### Brickners Park City, Inc.

Jeep CHRYSLER DODGE RAM

**3000 EAST MAIN STREET MERRILL**

Phone: (715) 536-2833

Toll free 800-499-JEEP (5337)

LOCATED 1/2 MILE WEST OF HWY. 51-64 INTERCHANGE

Visit our web site at [www.bricknersparkcity.net](http://www.bricknersparkcity.net)