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Corey Dornbrack, Dave Wendorf, and Norm Haskins in front of the Sherman tank in its long-time location in front of the Wisconsin National Guard armory building in Merrill. All three have longstanding ties to the Wisconsin National Guard and the tank.



Corey Dornbrack and his service dog, River, and Norm Haskins talk with the Wisconsin National Guard personnel tasked with relocating the Sherman tank.
Tina L. Scott photos.

Merrill's Sherman tank relocated to Northwoods Veterans Post

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BY TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

For more than 60 years, the iconic green Army tank stood guard in front of the Wisconsin National Guard armory building at 106 N. Memorial Dr. in Merrill. Last Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024, the M4A3 Sherman tank - which was manufactured by the Ford Motor Company in 1943 and is believed to have taken up residence in Merrill in the 1960's - was relocated to a new concrete pad on the grounds at the Northwoods Veterans Post between the building and Merrill Memorial Cemetery, just behind the small pond. Because it is now located a bit further from the road and

passing traffic, it almost appears to have shrunk, but it is still the same tank, simply moved to a new and somewhat more picturesque home.

The armory building has seen limited use by the Wisconsin National Guard since the Merrill unit was discontinued some years ago, and the building will likely soon be sold. "As part of a national focus on modernizing Army National Guard facilities, a number of older armories like that in Merrill will be divested to allow for the renovation, expansion, or construction of fewer, more modern readiness centers better capable of supporting

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Van Der Geest races to raise funds

KDDP driver Levon Van Der Geest raises more than \$25,000 for local nonprofits

BY TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

At age 20, Merrill's Levon Van Der Geest is living out his dream and setting a fast pace raising funds for local charities, as he endeavors to compete both on and off the race track as one of seven national finalists in the 2024 Kulwicki Driver Development Program (KDDP). The son of Kristin and Jay Van Der Geest of Merrill, "My racing goal is to be one of the top competitors in midwest super late model racing," Levon said. He is well on his way to achieving his

goals, having wrapped up his 2024 racing season the first weekend in October at LaCrosse Speedway in second place in overall point standing for the 2024 ASA [American Speed Association] Midwest Tour, a pavement super late model auto racing series. While Levon always strives to be first to finish and see that checkered flag waved in his honor, this season he was focusing on more than just being out in the lead on the race track. As one of the KDDP finalists, he was also competing throughout the

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Sesquicentennial: Lincoln County celebrates 150 years



More photos online
merrillfotonews.com
More photos on Page 18

Face painting was popular at the Sesquicentennial celebration in Merrill. Joseph Frederick photo.

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

On Aging

Dear Reader,

As we grow older, the reality of needing a little extra help to stay healthy becomes more apparent. High blood pressure, cholesterol, diabetes, asthma—these conditions often creep into our lives as we age. The truth is, once we hit 60, it's common to rely on at least one medication to manage our health. It's a fact of life, and it's not something to be ashamed of. Instead, it's a sign that we're taking the necessary steps to ensure we live longer, healthier lives.

But what can we do about this reality? First and foremost, we need to recognize that our bodies are the most precious assets we have. With just one body to carry us through life, it's essential that we take care of it—physically and mentally. That means staying active, eating well, and ensuring that our mental health is just as much of a priority as our physical health.

In the hustle and bustle of daily life, it's easy to focus only on the physical aspects of health—taking our prescribed



pills, going to our doctor's appointments, monitoring our blood pressure. But mental health is equally crucial. To be dynamic, charismatic, and fully functional, we need to nurture our minds just as we do our bodies. Whether it's through meditation, social connections, hobbies, or simply taking the time to relax and de-stress, maintaining mental well-being is key to a truly healthy life.

So, while it's true that pills may become a necessary part of our daily routine, let's not forget that they're just one tool in our arsenal. A healthy lifestyle—both physically and mentally—can make all the difference in how we age and how we feel. Let's embrace the fact that, with the right support, we can live vibrant, fulfilling lives, no matter what age we are.

PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher

Author of "Reflections" a new book now available on Amazon.



Wisconsin National Guard personnel utilized cables and winches for multiple aspects of the tank relocation.
Tina L. Scott photo.

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future National Guard missions," said Paul D. Gorman, Deputy Chief of Public Affairs for the Wisconsin National Guard. "The divestiture of the Merrill readiness center (armory) is part of the ongoing Readiness Center

Master Plan which will reduce the total number of Wisconsin Army National Guard readiness centers over the course of several decades. The plan is part of a national initiative to update Army National Guard facilities by altering or replacing aging structures with modern readiness centers designed to meet evolving National Guard missions and responsibilities."

When local veterans Corey Dornbrack [also VFW Post 1638 Senior Vice Commander] and Norm Haskins speculated about the sale of the building more than a year ago, they initiated a process to request the tank be relocated to the Northwoods Veterans Post so that the Merrill icon could remain in the community in a place of honor where veterans and future generations could continue to appreciate it. Since the Northwoods Veterans Post is now the location for multiple veterans service organizations, and the grounds had ample space, it was the perfect location.

"The relocation of the tank was formally initiated by VFW Post 1638 through

the U.S. Army's Static Display Program, which allows for the conditional issue of condemned or obsolete Army equipment for static display purposes," Gorman said.

First, Dornbrack had to determine who actually owned the tank. That, in itself, was quite the process he said.

Then ... "I had to write a justification letter - persuasive letter to the powers that be - as to why we wanted it [kept] in the community," Haskins said. "We went through the channels and filled out tons of paperwork. We invited the USPFO (United States property and fiscal officer). We invited him up. We gave him a tour of the VFW. We told him the history and how I served when that tank was here. That's where I cut my teeth - and many other members of the Northwoods Veterans Post, you know? ... And then he saw the memorabilia that Corey has been so expertly been putting around inside the Post ... maintaining the history of our military heritage. So once they saw that ... they're like, yeah, that tank needs to stay, but we got a lot of work to do."

"John Rathke, being the Commander, had a bunch of paperwork to do," Dornbrack said. "And without Robert Brania from the USPFO, this might have not happened. He directed us on the paperwork that had to be done, along with keeping us on the timeline, and knew the people and organizations to contact." Once approved, the Northwoods Veterans Post needed to contact diggers hotline, check into the necessary permits, get the GPS coordinates of where the tank was currently located and where it was to be relocated, and then prepare the location - a heavy duty concrete pad - suitable for holding the 30-ton weight of the tank.

"The community really came together," Haskins said. Everyone wanted to keep a Merrill icon in the community, he said. "If we wouldn't have rallied to do this, it would have ended up somewhere else."

Donations from area businesses made the new concrete pad for the tank possible and were very willingly given, Haskins said. Donors included:

- Merrill Tool and Equipment Rental (Doug Carbone) - site excavation

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How about a particular photo of that trophy Whitetail Buck or other game? If so, we want to hear from you!

Please send your submissions to Merrill Foto News Editor Tina Scott at tscott@mmclocal.com by Friday, Oct. 25th.

Your submission(s) may be featured in the Merrill Foto News' Annual Hunting Guide in mid-November!

**Any hunting-related submission is welcome, regardless of how new or old. While e-mailed submissions are preferred, in-person submissions may be dropped off at the Merrill Foto News Office (2011. E. Main Street) between regular business hours of 8 a.m-5 p.m, Monday-Friday.*





The Sherman Tank in its new home. Set against the fall foliage and reflected in the pond, it will be a great addition to the other military memorabilia featured at the Northwoods Veterans Post. **Joseph Frederick photo.**

• Peterson Sand & Gravel (Brandon Peterson) - sand for the site

• Gold Medal Trailer Sales (Andy Van Der Geest) - rebar

• County Materials/Sonnentag Foundation (Rebecca Sonnentag) - concrete

• Lokemoen Construction (Jason Lokemoen/Dan Stockman) - concrete form, rebar set, pouring concrete, landscaping

• Lightning Towing (Chad Oslage) - transportation of materials

Volunteers did all the work on their own time, some from the companies listed and others from the Northwoods Veterans Post and local VFW.

Wisconsin National Guard and logistics management team members visited Merrill to plan the move and then a date for the move was set.

A crew of Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers arrived at the armory building at approximately 11 a.m. on Saturday with the specialized equipment needed to relocate the tank, and though the distance for the move was just a few blocks, it took some skill and expertise, along with that equipment and a few hours' time, to complete the move. The crew brought an Oshkosh M1070 heavy equipment transporter and M1000 trailer to transport the tank, which was designed to load, unload, and transport the M1 Series Main Battle Tank and other heavy tracked or wheeled vehicles weighing up to 140,000 lbs.

First the crew used equipment to turn the tank. Then they were able to release the brake in order to engage the tracks on the tank. Though the tank itself is no longer operational, the tank's tracks still engaged and moved when the unit was pulled with a cable and winch system, despite being locked into place for more than half a century. This made it easier for the crew to load the tank onto the flatbed trailer for transporting to the new location, and then the system was reversed. The description makes it sound simple and easy, but it was a bit more complex than that. Some video clips of the move are available on the Merrill Foto News Facebook site at: facebook.

com/merrill.fotonews.

The tank transportation operation was conducted by a team of nine Wisconsin National Guard soldiers assigned to the 1158th Transportation Company in Black River Falls. Originally constituted May 1, 1993, the 1158th Transportation Company based in Beloit and Black River Falls is currently the largest Army National Guard company in Wisconsin.

Platoon Leader, 2nd Lt. Alexis Mercado from the 1158th Transportation Company was one of those on-site for the relocation operation on Saturday to oversee the operations. Sgt. 1st Class Ty Ribovich, assistant truckmaster and readiness noncommissioned officer with the 1158th Transportation Company and Robert Brania, Logistics Management Specialist with the U.S. Property and Fiscal Office (USPFO), Wisconsin Army National Guard, were instrumental to the move.

Reminiscing and watching

Prior to and during the tank moving operation, numerous veterans gathered to watch the process and progress. Many reminisced about playing on the tank when they were children growing up in Merrill. A good number shared that they had joined the military at the Merrill armory and/or served in the Merrill unit of the Wisconsin National Guard for at least a portion of their military career. Some, like Haskins, started in the Wisconsin National Guard and then went on to join another branch. For him, it was the US Air Force, and he served a total

of 22 years between the 2 branches of the military. Others, like Dornbrack, started out in the US Army in 1988 and then joined the Wisconsin National Guard afterward. His rank when he left was Sgt. 1st Class. Dave Wendorf, who was a 1st Sgt. in the Merrill unit of the Wisconsin National Guard location, working there full-time for 16 years, including six years as a reservist, was one of those who came to watch. His military career spanned 28 years and he retired as a Master Sgt. Wives of military veterans and members of the local auxiliary were also there to watch, as well as members of the community who were just curious and interested. Many took photos and videos of the tank-moving operation.

Veterans there weren't aware of any documentation indicating when the tank was first moved to its location at the Merrill armory, but many couldn't remember a time when it hadn't been there. "I would love to know the history [of the tank]," Haskins said. "You know, where it originated, did it see action or not?"

Now to get it painted

Dornbrack said the next step will be fundraising to get the tank repainted in its new location, to its original World War II color. "It looks rattle-canned right now," Dornbrack said, "with the paint peeling and everything." It's just been neglected, he said, and he has been trying to get that done for close to 20 years, but now the time has come.

To donate to the tank repainting project, stop at the Northwoods Veterans Post or contact Dornbrack at 715.218.3537.



Levon Van Der Geest presenting a check to the school social workers at Merrill Area Public Schools, who will each have \$1,100 for underprivileged kids at Kate Goodrich, Washington, Prairie River Middle School, and Merrill High School. **Submitted photo.**

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2024 season to raise funds for community causes he believes in, and to date, he has raised more than \$25,000 this year to support area kids, families, veterans, and community organizations. Part of being a KDDP competitor involves supporting philanthropic endeavors, as well as winning races, racking up points, and increasing social media exposure for the organization.

Focus on philanthropy

"The drivers each usually focus on one major charity to raise money for," said Kristin. But as the #23 race car driver, "Levon decided to find 23 local charities and organizations to raise funds for by dedicating one of 23 races to each one, respectively." In keeping with the #23 theme, his goal was to raise a total of \$23,000 for local organizations, a goal he surpassed with the help of and for the benefit of the area community.

"I had the idea to go with the #23 theme and I started researching to find 23 local organizations we could raise money for," Levon said. "Once I had them identified, I had KDDP stickers made to put on the hood of our car with a different organization highlighted for each race. Then, we promoted the fundraising by asking people to give \$10 to get their name on the hood of my car for that race."

"I also got 23 local businesses to sponsor all 23 races, so they got some good PR each week on our social media, as well. This has been a real highlight for us this year, and we ended up raising over \$25,000 for our community, which I am very proud of," he said. "I am so thankful for all the generous donations, and it is a great example of a lot of people each doing a little to accomplish a lot."

Levon focused a lot of his fundraising on nonprofits that serve area kids - helping provide for their basic needs with fundraisers for Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) The Nest, Parkside Preschool, and the Chase Reichenberger Racers' Challenge (Chase is a three-year-old Appleton boy who has experienced health issues since birth, requiring

expensive hospitalizations, procedures, and treatment). He also advocated for the availability of healthy activities for area youth by raising funds for the Boys & Girls Club of Merrill, the Merrill Park and Recreation Summer Playground Program, MAPS Special Olympics, and the O'Tannenbaum Tour, and promoted youth mentorship with support for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Northcentral Wisconsin, the Optimist Club of Merrill, and the Slinger Bandos Mentorship.

Levon also fundraised for causes that affect individuals and families in our area - helping to provide shelter for the homeless and eradicate homelessness with support for the Merrill Area Community (MAC) Home; supporting families suffering as the result of domestic violence with fundraising for HAVEN in Merrill; helping address the issue of food insecurity with support for the Merrill Community Food Pantry and Tranquil Acres of Tomahawk; helping to address mental health issues and prevent suicide with support for Tyler's Playground and the Suicide Awareness Walk; and providing assistance for families of those fighting cancer with support for Jessi's Wish. Two fundraisers focused on programs for veterans, with Levon raising money for the Never Forgotten Honor Flight and Little Lakes Memories, while another fundraiser was about the animals, raising funds for the Lincoln County Humane Society.

Other organizations Levon raised funds for are all about developing the area

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| OBITUARIES |

George (Geo) Scott Gilkey



George (Geo) Scott Gilkey, age 49 passed away on Friday, October 11, 2024. He was born in Madison, WI, the son of Jane (Statz) Gilkey and George Robert Gilkey. He attended Midvale, Van Hise, West High School '94, and UW Whitewater in Communications.

He worked at Great Lakes Higher Education Loans, now Nelnet, and part time Home Depot in Janesville and Madison, where he enjoyed his position as Head Cashier, and

making so many wonderful friendships. Wherever he seemed to go, he met so many wonderful people and carried their friendships on even though they were separated by distance. He recently enjoyed his 30th High School Class Reunion. He also enjoyed Scouting in his early years achieving Eagle Scout Rank and attended Philmont Scout Ranch in NM. He and most of his friends were Star Wars fanatics, Metallica, Packer, UW Badger, and Brewer fans. He also shared his enjoyment of music (The Beatles), art, and comedy with his mom. And all the sports he shared with his father. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him.

He was a loving brother to Trina Cosgrove and brother-in-law, Peter Cosgrove. He was especially close to his niece, Katelyn, following most of her volleyball games and nephew, Jimmy who shared his love of Star Wars and digital games. Each summer he enjoyed trips around the state with them when they came to Madison. He enjoyed decorating his Home Depot apron on each holiday too. He was a collector of all Star Wars items and for Halloween and Christmas he brought out all the lights and decorations to celebrate.

He is survived by his parents Jane and George, sister Trina (Pete); niece Katelyn, nephew Jimmy; and multiple cousins. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Jane and Philip Statz of Madison, WI, and George and Edna Gilkey of Merrill, WI, four aunts Susan (Erling) Johnson, Judy (Gilkey) Peper Ullmer, Madge Gilkey, and Barbara (Gilkey) Zackert.

A special thank you to Mara Tarp, John Mach, and Pete Cosgrove; and to the staff, doctors, nurses at the Meriter ER.

In lieu of flowers, memorials can be made to the American Heart Association, Our Lady Queen of Peace, or to a charity of your choice.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Monday, November 4, 2024 at Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, 401 S Owen Drive, Madison with Fr. Jay Poster officiating. A visitation will be held on Monday at the church from 9:30 a.m. until the time of Mass. A private inurnment will be held at Resurrection Catholic Cemetery.

To view and sign this guestbook, please visit: www.ryanfuneralservice.com.

Ryan Funeral Home & Cremation Services 5701 Odana Road 608-274-1000

Donna Mae Forster



Donna Mae Forster, age 85, died on October 17, 2024 at Pine Crest Nursing Home in Merrill, WI under the care of hospice. Donna was born in Merrill, WI to the late Hubert and Ruth (Baumann) Messerschmidt.

On May 29, 1961 she married Alvin Forster. He preceded her death in 2023.

Donna graduated from Trinity Lutheran School and Merrill High School.

Donna was employed at Hanson Glove, Fox Point and

Mitchel Metal.

She was the proud mother of Gail (David) Kaminski, Jill Hoffmaster and Amy (Dale) Kohnhorst. She is further survived by her grandchildren: Dan (Megan) Kaminski, Nick (Tracie) Kaminski, Mike Blaubach, Michele (Marshall) Hulce, Joshua (Mandi) Kohnhorst, Ashley (Dustin Beekman) Waldburger and Adam (Jordyn) Kohnhorst, great-grandchildren: Drew, Mason, Layla, Kylie, Landan, Karson, Mariah, Mari, Mason, Mateo, Lacey, Allie, Bailey, Maddie, Luna and Parker, brother: Rodney (Kim) Messerschmidt, sister: Rosanne Kluck, sisters-in-law: Joyce Messerschmidt, Pat Messerschmidt, Iona Fleishman, Helen Leavitt, Delores (Luis) Heiser and Mary Ann Forster, brother-in-law: Walter (Mary Jane) Forster, and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, husband, in-laws: Albert and Minnie (Schulte) Forster, three brothers: Ronald, Roger, and Roy, three sisters: Bonnie (Raymond) Hill, Doris (Mike) Bernhardt and Lorraine (Ed) Hermanson.

A memorial service will be held on Friday, November 1, 2024 at 4:00 pm at Waid Funeral Home. Reverend Scott Gustafson will officiate. A Visitation will be held on Friday, November 1, 2024 from 2:00 pm until the time of service also at the funeral home. Private family inurnment will take place at a later date.

Honorary pallbearers include all her grandchildren, Dan Kaminski, Nick Kaminski, Mike Blaubach, Michele Hulce, Joshua Kohnhorst, Ashley Waldburger, and Adam Kohnhorst.

Family would like to thank Pine Crest Nursing Home and Interim Hospice and Palliative Care.

Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.waidfuneral.com

Karen I. Diels



Karen I. Diels, age 84, of Merrill, WI, passed away peacefully, while surrounded by family, on Friday, October 4, 2024. Karen, a beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, aunt, and friend was born on August 17, 1940, in Merrill, WI, to the late Herman and Ivy (Gartmann) Hoffman.

In her late teens, Karen met Allan "Butch" Diels, the love of her life, and they were married on October 11, 1958.

Together they raised two wonderful children, Tim and Scott. The family enjoyed a happy life in Merrill after relocating from Two Rivers, WI. Karen was employed at Lincoln Wood Products where she was the first female employee ever hired and she was very proud of that. Karen's quick wit and determination showed everyone that women could make it in a "Man's world". Karen started her employment with Lincoln Wood Products in 1967 where she worked until her retirement.

Although she was proud of her accomplishments throughout her career, Karen also dedicated herself to caring for her children and her family. It was important to Karen that she was close to her family. She would spend Friday nights going out to eat with her family, having craft days with her grandchildren, delivering her sugar cookies that everyone loved, calling her family on their birthdays so that she could sing "Happy Birthday" to them, creating themes for Christmas celebrations (she was willing to do anything that her grandchildren asked her to do), and hosting her famous annual "Farm Party" for over 30 years. It was rare that a day went by that Karen and Butch did not spend time with their children or grandchildren. Karen's legacy of love and the importance of family will forever remain in the hearts of those who knew her.

Karen leaves behind her husband, Allan "Butch" Diels; her children, Tim (Sherr) Diels, and Scott (Mary Jo) Diels, both of Merrill, WI; her grandchildren, Keith Diels, Kristina (Zach) Patterman, Courtney (Dan) Diels-Osness, Derek Diels, Hunter (Kaylin) Diels, and Chantelle (Zack) Anderson; and her great-grandchildren, Cayden Diels, Adein Diels, Kaylee Patterman, and Riley Patterman.

A celebration of life gathering will be held on Friday, November 15, 2024, from 2:00 PM to 7:00 PM, with a late lunch served at 3:00 PM, at the Agra Pavilion at 404 S. Park Street in Merrill. Generations Funeral Home & Crematory of Tomahawk is assisting the family. View Karen's obituary and leave online condolences at generationsfuneral.com.

Mark Johnson



Mark Johnson, 75, of Irma, WI passed away Monday, October 7, 2024 at his home. Mark was born June 14, 1949 in Merrill, WI, the son of Alfred and Laura (Smith) Johnson. He was united in marriage to Patricia Mitchell on December 4, 1987 in Irma.

Mark worked for and retired from the USPS as a rural mail carrier in Merrill for 33 years. Previously, he was a house painter for the family business. He was a current member of the Tomahawk Lions Club. He

enjoyed spending time with his family and friends, raising many pets over the years, Packer football, mallo cups, barbequing/smoking meats, shopping, gadgets of any kind, building model airplanes, and riding around on his 4-wheeler. He LOVED where he lived, "Johnson Park". Anyone who ever met Mark was blessed. He was a kind, funny, gentle, and loving man. We were lucky to have him as long as we did.

Surviving are his wife and best friend of 36 years, Pat; daughter, Dawn (Matt) Schumitsch, Kronenwetter; son, Samuel Smith, Henderson, NV; daughters, Keri; Turena Johnson (Joe); Rochelle; many grandchildren, and special ones to mention, Wyatt (Ann); Emma, Michael (Jazmyn); Kate, Hunter (Stephanie); special great-grandchild, Evie; and many more great-grandchildren; sister, Janet Beyer, Merrill; brother, David (Roxie) Johnson, Merrill; numerous nieces and nephews; special nephew, Dean Johnson and special longtime friend Barb Canne.

Mark was preceded in death by his parents and brother, John Johnson.

The celebration of life was held on Monday, October 21, 2024 from 3:00 to 7:00 P.M. with a special Remembrance at 6:30 P.M. at Krueger-Nimsgern Funeral Home, 101 N 2nd Street, Tomahawk, WI.

Online condolences for the family may be directed to www.nimsgernfuneralhome.com

Mary Kay Folsom



Born Mary Kathleen Bornhofen in Menominee, Michigan, on September 1, 1924, Kay grew up in Owen, Wisconsin, where she met the love of her life, William P. Hilt (Bill). She attended the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, graduating in 1947 with degrees in music and education. Kay married Bill, her childhood sweetheart, in June 1946, shortly after his return from service as a pilot in World War II. While Bill attended the Illinois School of

Optometry, Kay taught special needs children who could not attend school due to serious illnesses or disabilities. She became the first "homebound teacher" in her school district.

After welcoming two daughters, Kay and Bill settled in Merrill, Wisconsin, where they began their life together with the support of her parents. Kay introduced the homebound program to the local superintendent, leading to its implementation as the first program of its kind in Wisconsin in 1950. Together, they built a successful optometric practice.

Kay's life was characterized by a deep devotion to family. She cared for her loved ones throughout their later years and worked tirelessly to maintain connections between family members scattered across the country. Kay cherished the beauty of the seasons in northern Wisconsin, enjoyed early adventures flying to Canada for muskie fishing, and had memorable experiences boating on Lake Tomahawk. She delighted in attending Green Bay Packer games in the cold and flying with Bill in his Cessna 180 to various destinations, including Florida.

One of the family's cherished legends recounts a summer evening in the early 1960s when Bill surprised Kay by purchasing a 200-acre farm. Over time, he developed it into a recreational paradise, complete with a lake, stocked fish, hundreds of pine trees, and even five white-faced cows named after her best friends.

In their 50s, Kay and Bill sought a new chapter in their lives and discovered the natural beauty and sunny climate of Naples and Marco Island. With Kay's success and enjoyment working at Zita's and Cricket in Naples, Bill encouraged her to start their own store. In 1976, they opened their first boutique. In a joint effort with builder Bill Slocum, they later constructed the iconic pink flagship building. Kay envisioned a charming boutique that would offer stylish clothing for modern women. She cultivated her business through personal customer attention, beautiful styles, gracious service, and popular fashion shows. The annual Valentine Fashion Shows have attracted loyal customers and friends for over 46 years. After Bill's sudden passing, her daughter Jeane joined her in running the store. Together with Jeane's husband, Bill Seiple, they expanded the business to five locations across Naples, and in recent years, Jeane's son, Banks Seiple, joined the management team.

Despite her busy lifestyle, Kay remained deeply involved in community activities. A dynamic leader during her years in Merrill, she co-founded the Holy Cross Hospital Women's Auxiliary, helped establish the community's first swimming pool, and was a charter member of the Beta Sigma Phi Sorority. She also co-founded and actively participated in community theater. Upon relocating to Marco Island, she founded the Marco Players, supported the Marco Island Historical Society, and collaborated with Betsy Perdichizzi and many volunteers to start the Presidents' Wives re-enactment series. Kay loved singing with the San Marco choir, supported the San Marco Church Women's Auxiliary, and helped establish the first Marco Trolley.

Kay had a lifelong passion for music, possessing a professionally trained soprano voice that she shared in church choirs and community theater in both Florida and Wisconsin. She was dedicated to promoting the Gulfshore Opera and supporting the introduction of young opera singers through fashion shows. However, Kay's legacy extends far beyond her accomplishments. Those who met her encountered a woman with a warm, inviting smile and an open-hearted personality. The losses and challenges she faced were met with deep faith in God, resilience, and empathy for those facing their own struggles. Kay embodied grace, determination, and an indomitable spirit, always ready to embrace new challenges with boundless energy and generosity.

Kay was preceded in death by her parents, John and Maybelle Bornhofen; her husband, William P. Hilt (Bill), who passed away unexpectedly in 1984; her second husband, Howard Folsom, who died in 1990; her son-in-law, William Seiple; and many dear friends from Florida and Wisconsin.

She is survived by her daughter Jeane Hilt and her grandson Banks Seiple, who continue the family legacy of Kay's On The Beach. Her memory is also cherished by her daughter, Kathleen Ann Hilt Ponko; her son-in-law, William R. Ponko; her grandson, William B. Ponko; his wife, Rachel Hill Ponko; great-grandchildren Rory and Reese Ponko; and her granddaughter, Sarah Elizabeth Ponko.

A Memorial Mass will be held on Thursday, October 24, 2024 at 10:00 am at San Marco Catholic Church, 851 San Marco Rd, Marco Island, FL 34145.

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#23 race car driver, Levon Van Der Geest, with his parents, Kristin and Jay Van Der Geest. **Submitted photo.**

FUNDS from page 3

community, through service, cultural enrichment, and the creation of healthy outdoor spaces for individuals and families to enjoy. Toward this goal, he focused on fundraising for the Merrill Rotary Club and Merrill Lions Club, the Merrill Historical Society and the Merrill Area Concert Association, and the River District Development Foundation [focus on the River Bend Trail] and Friends of Council Grounds State Park.

In addition to raising money for these nonprofits, Levon also volunteered some of his time at a number of the organizations throughout the season.

"It's interesting because the more I found out about some of the local organizations, the more I realized I am connected to them in some way," Levon said. "Tranquil Acres of Tomahawk is a sprawling pay-as-you-can community garden that is run by Bill and Heather Smith, and Bill is my former bandolero crew chief. My mom was on the board for the Lincoln County Humane Society and HAVEN, so I had already been involved with fundraising for them in the past. [And] we raised a lot of money for the Never Forgotten Honor Flight, and greeting my Grandpa Chub Van Der Geest when he got back from the Honor Flight is something I will never forget."

KDDP pushes Levon to become better driver, better person

"I got involved in the Kulwicki Driver Development Program (KDDP) last year," Levon said. "I thought I was working really hard last year both on and off the track, but it was a wake-up call when I finished seventh out of seven last year. This year I, along with my crew, put everything we possibly could into it. The KDDP has a ranking system that includes your performance, both on and off of the track, which makes it really unique. As drivers, we are judged on our 15 best race finishes, the strength of the competition we raced against, as well as how well we represent Alan Kulwicki off the track in our speeches, our interviews, and through fundraising and community service. The program has definitely pushed me to become a much bigger part of my community, as well as improve as a race car driver majorly. I wouldn't be the person I am today without being in the program."

But Levon is quick to point out his development and growth, as well as this year's fundraising efforts, are part of a team effort made possible by his sponsors, racing fans and donors, and his race team, not just an individual achievement.

"My racing sponsors include The Friendship House, Zilisch Asphalt Paving & Maintenance, Breber Music Company, Custom Meats of Marathon, Wehrs Machine & Racing Products, Norman Electric, Central Sawdust, Images By Kelly, Lefthander Chassis, Ritchie Oil & Propane, and King's Campers," he said. "They provide monetary sponsorships, as well as food, racing equipment, and even haircuts in the race shop. We couldn't do this without their support, and their friendship is a great bonus."

"Our race team has worked so hard this year, and I really wouldn't be where I am without them," Levon said. "These guys work full time and were in our shop late into the night week after week. Their hard work and dedication to achieving this goal made me work even harder, and I am very proud of what we have accomplished."

Raised in racing world, role models foster a love for racing

You could very literally say that Levon was raised in the racing world. "I actually took my first steps in our



Levon Van Der Geest and his racing team celebrating a Golden Sands Speedway win. **Submitted photo.**

More photos online
merrillfotonews.com

race shop, because my dad was a local race car driver, so I basically grew up in our shop and at local tracks," Levon said. "My dad started the largest super late model race team in the state, which included himself as well as Chris Weinkauff and Jason Weinkauff, other local racers he had been racing with and became good friends with."

"Our family sponsored the Weinkauff brothers to race for Van Der Geest Racing, and I grew up watching them all race the local tracks as well as the ARCA [Automobile Racing Club of America] (now ASA) Midwest Tour," he said. "When I was seven years old, my dad bought me a dirt go-kart, and I raced my first few races at a track in Ringle, Wis. I quickly realized that dirt wasn't for me and began racing bandoleros the next year at State Park Speedway."

"At the end of my fourth year in bandoleros, I won the Championship and made the decision to race the Midwest Truck Series as my next step up the racing ladder," Levon said. "I had my breakout year in trucks my third year, winning five races and setting three track records on my way to taking the Championship. I ran one more year in the trucks after that, claiming three more track records, before making the next step up to super late models. This is now my fourth year in super lates, and I just finished second in the 2024 ASA Midwest Tour, as well as second in Golden Sands Speedway point standings."

Some of the accomplishments he is most proud of on this journey? "When I was 15 and racing in the Midwest Truck Series, I won the feature at the Milwaukee Mile, the oldest auto racing track in the world, and became the youngest driver to ever win a feature there, all before I even had my driver's license," Levon said. "Winning the Bandolero and Midwest Truck Series Championships were awesome accomplishments, too."

"I have so many role models in racing, and I have been lucky enough to meet most of them and even become friends with many," Levon said. "The list includes my dad, Chris and Jason Weinkauff, Dalton Zehr, Ty Majeski, and many more I grew up watching in the Midwest Tour. I have so much respect for an endless number of drivers that I have met and watched race over the years."

When it comes to real life mentors and influencers, "I have had some strong mentors in my life, but the number one mentor has been my dad," he said. "He has been the one who has taught me so much about racing and has made this whole racing journey possible."

"The three guys on my crew that have had the biggest influence on me and who have been my biggest supporters are Chris Weinkauff, Jason Weinkauff, and Jake Broesch," Levon said. "Outside of our crew, Dalton Zehr has been a big mentor for me, starting when I was in the Midwest Truck Series."

Of course, Alan Kulwicki, the namesake for the KDDP, was an inspiration for Levon in multiple ways, as well.

"I am following in Alan Kulwicki's footsteps and am pursuing a mechanical engineering degree at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee," he said. "I am in my Junior year and have been balancing a very busy racing schedule while also trying to maintain a decent GPA. I was the recipient of the Alan Kulwicki Memorial Scholarship, as well as several others that have helped fund my academics."

Working hard, encouraging kids, and learning life lessons

A very large part of Levon's life is focused on racing and

education right now, and he's working hard to achieve his goals in both. Racing would seem to be the more exciting adventure of the two, but becoming a success as a race car driver also involves a lot of hard work - and teaches a lot of important life lessons along the way. "There are countless life lessons to be learned from everything that is involved in racing," Levon said. "Setting up the car for a race involves physics, welding, geometry, aerodynamics, etc. Working with a crew involves communication, delegation, problem-solving, time-management, leadership, etc."

"Racing also involves producing content for social media, marketing, budgeting, public speaking, and writing," he said.

In addition, it provides Levon the opportunity to be a role model and mentor and to encourage younger kids. When asked what he would say to a kid who aspired to do what he's doing as a race car driver, Levon said: "I have spent some time mentoring younger race car drivers and would encourage any kid to go after it if that's what they dream about doing."

"Jason Weinkauff's son, Oliver, started racing my old bandolero, and it has been great watching him race," he said. "I would advise any kid who wants to get better at racing to just keep learning about how to set up a race car, pay attention to their favorite drivers and how they race, and to keep asking questions."

When not racing, fundraising, volunteering, attending classes, or studying, "I work on our family farm helping to raise beef and pigs," Levon said. "Last winter I earned my CDL license, so now I also drive semi for my dad's trucking company from time to time."

What's next for Levon? "Right now I am focused on finishing college and continuing my racing career and just seeing where things take me," he said.

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LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

DATE SIGNED: September 30, 2024
 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
 Probate Registrar

**STATE OF WISCONSIN,
 CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**
 IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
 ERIC JAMES NORTON
 DOD 09/24/2024
**Notice to Creditors
 (Informal Administration)**
 Case No. 2024 IN 36

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:
 1. An application for informal administration was filed.
 2. The decedent, with date of birth 06/24/1966 and date of death 09/24/2024, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 112 S Foster St., Merrill, WI 54452.
 3. All interested persons waived notice.
 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is 01/10/2025.
 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 East Main Street 2nd Floor, Merrill, WI, 54452 Room Probate Office.
 Dana Jane Wilson
 3911 Moen Lake Rd
 Rhinelander, WI 54501
 715-367-0094
 Published October 10, 17 & 24, 2024
 WNAXLP

Legals 7700

DATE SIGNED: October 10, 2024
 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
 Probate Registrar

**STATE OF WISCONSIN,
 CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**
**Notice to Creditors
 (Informal Administration)**
 Case No. 2024-IN-40

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
 VALENCIA GRUNENWALD

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:
 1. An application for informal administration was filed.
 2. The decedent, with date of birth March 29, 1928 and date of death August 9, 2024, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of N1297 Fairview Road, Merrill, WI 54452.
 3. All interested persons waived notice.
 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is January 26, 2025.
 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
 715-536-7185
 Bar Number: 1015178
 Published October 17, 24 & 31, 2024
 WNAXLP

NOTICE

SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL

Section 32-91, Code of Ordinance, City of Merrill

In accordance with the terms of Section 32-91 of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Merrill, any owner, occupant or person in charge of any parcel or lot that fronts upon or abuts any sidewalk shall keep the sidewalk clear of all snow and ice. In the event that snow accumulates on the sidewalks due to natural means and/or by any other means said sidewalks shall be cleared of all accumulated snow and/or ice within forty-eight (48) hours from the time the snow ceases to accumulate on said sidewalk. In the event that ice has formed on any sidewalk in such a manner that it cannot be removed, the owner, occupant or person in charge of the parcel or lot that fronts upon or adjoins said sidewalk shall keep the sidewalk sprinkled with material to accelerate melting or prevent slipping.

In addition to the removal of snow and ice as provided above, no person is permitted to push, shove or in any way deposit any snow or ice onto any public street, alley, sidewalk or public lands dedicated to public use, except that snow removed from a sidewalk in front of or abutting a premises may be deposited on a street.

Violation of Section 32-91 of the Code of Ordinances will subject the owner or occupant of the property to a forfeiture in addition to the costs of removal in the event that the City removed the snow or ice after notice to the property owner. The cost of the removal of the snow or ice shall be levied as a special assessment against the lot or parcel of land abutting the sidewalk in accordance with Section 66.0907(5), Wisconsin Statutes.

Dustin Bonack
Street Superintendent

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

LOCATION AND HOURS OF LINCOLN COUNTY POLLING PLACES

At the General Election to be held on November 5, 2024, in Lincoln County, the following are the designated polling places:

PRECINCT	POLLING LOCATION
Town of Birch	Birch Town Hall, W4762 County Rd H
Town of Bradley	Bradley Town Hall, 1518 West Mohawk Dr
Town of Coming	Coming Town Hall, N1569 State Rd 64
Town of Harding	Harding Town Hall, N3246 County Road E
Town of Harrison	Harrison Town Hall, N10095 County Road B
Town of King	King Town Hall, W4450 County Road A
Town of Merrill	Merrill Town Hall, W4594 Progress Ave
Town of Pine River	Pine River Town Hall, N1647 Deer Run Ave
Town of Rock Falls	Rock Falls Town Hall, W5895 Rock Falls Dr
Town of Russell	Russell Town Hall, N5369 State Road 17
Town of Schley	Schley Town Hall, W1696 County Rd C
Town of Scott	Scott Town Hall, N563 Lake Rd
Town of Skanawan	Skanawan Town Hall, N8506 County Road H
Town of Somo	Somo Town Hall, N12070 Fire Station Rd
Town of Tomahawk	Tomahawk Town Hall, Inter. Hwy 86 & Hwy. O
Town of Wilson	Wilson Town Hall, N10802 County Road CC

CITY OF TOMAHAWK	POLLING LOCATION
District 1, Wards 1-2	SARA Park Activities Center, 900 West Somo Ave
District 2, Wards 3-4	SARA Park Activities Center, 900 West Somo Ave
District 3, Wards 4-5	SARA Park Activities Center, 900 West Somo Ave

CITY OF MERRILL	POLLING LOCATION
District 1, Ward 1	Bierman Building, 303 N Sales Street
District 2, Ward 4	City Hall, 1004 E. First St
District 3, Wards 5, 14	Bierman Building, 303 N Sales Street
District 4, Wards 7, 9	Smith Center, 1100 Marc Drive
District 5, Wards 8, 10	Smith Center, 1100 Marc Drive
District 6, Ward 11	Bierman Building, 303 N Sales Street
District 7, Wards 6, 12, 13, 16	City Hall, 1004 E. First St
District 8, Wards 2, 3, 15	Bierman Building, 303 N Sales St

- Contact your municipal clerk if you have any questions concerning your polling place.
- All polling places will open at 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 October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

Notice of General Election and Sample Ballots

November 5, 2024

OFFICE OF THE LINCOLN COUNTY CLERK
TO THE VOTERS OF LINCOLN COUNTY

Notice is hereby given of a general election to be held in Lincoln County, on November 5, 2024, at which the officers named below shall be chosen. The names of the candidates for each office to be voted for, whose nominations have been certified to or filed in this office, are listed under the title of the office and under the appropriate party or other designation, together with any referendum questions submitted to a vote, in the sample ballot below.

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 and 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. Sample ballots or other materials to assist the voter in marking their ballot may be taken into the booth and copied. The sample ballot shall not be shown to anyone so as to reveal how the ballot is marked. 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. The selected individual rendering assistance may not be the voter's employer or an agent of that employer or an officer or agent of a labor organization which represents the voter. If a voter is unable to state their name and address, an assistant may also do so for the voter.

Voting for President and Vice President

A vote for candidates for President and Vice President is a vote for the presidential electors of those candidates. A write-in vote for President and Vice President must designate the name of a presidential candidate. A write-in vote for a candidate for President only will be counted. A write-in vote for a candidate for Vice President only will not be counted.

Where Optical Scan Voting is Used

The voter shall fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to the name of the candidate of their choice for each office for which they intend to vote. To vote for a person whose name does not appear on the ballot, the voter shall write in the name of the person of their choice in the space provided for a write-in vote and fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to the write-in line. When voting for President and Vice President, the voter shall fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to the set of candidates (ticket) for president and vice president for whom they intend to vote. To vote for a Presidential ticket that does not appear on the ballot, the voter shall write in the names of persons of their choice in the spaces provided and fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to the write-in lines. On referendum questions, the voter shall fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to "yes" if in favor of the question, or the voter shall fill in the oval or connect the arrow next to "no" if opposed to the question.

When using an *electronic ballot marking device* (Express Vote) to mark an **optical scan** ballot, the voter shall touch the screen or use the tactile pad to select the name of the candidate of their choice for each office for which they intend to vote. To vote for a person whose name does not appear on the ballot, the voter shall touch the screen next to "write-in" and type in the name of the person of their choice. When voting for President and Vice President, the voter shall touch the screen at the set of candidates (ticket) for president and vice president for whom they intend to vote. To vote for a Presidential ticket that does not appear on the ballot, the voter shall touch the screen next to "write-in" and type in the names of persons of their choice. On referendum questions, the voter shall touch the screen at "yes" if in favor of the question, or the voter shall touch the screen at "no" if opposed to the question.

Spoiling Ballots

If a voter spoils an **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. If the ballot has not been initiated by two inspectors or is defective in any other way, the voter shall return it to the election official who shall issue a proper ballot in its place.

After Voting the Ballot

After an official **optical scan** ballot is marked, it may be inserted in a security sleeve so the marks do not show. The voter shall then insert the ballot in the voting device or deliver the ballot to an inspector for deposit. If a central count system is used, the voter shall insert the ballot in the ballot box or deliver the ballot to an inspector for deposit. The voter shall leave the polling place promptly.

The following is a sample of the official ballot:

Official Ballot Partisan Office and Referendum November 5, 2024


 Christopher J. Marlowe, Lincoln County Clerk

A	Lincoln County	B	State of Wisconsin	C	November 5, 2024
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The ballot below is for Publication purposes only. This ballot includes all of Lincoln County's November 5th Political Races. All Lincoln County Ballots may be viewed on the county website at: <https://co.lincoln.wi.us/county-clerk/page/absentee-and-sample-ballots>. Your ballot specific to your address may be found at: <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/Whats-On-My-Ballot>.

Notice to voters: if you are voting on Election Day, your ballot must be initiated by two (2) election inspectors. If you are voting absentee, your ballot must be initiated by the municipal clerk or deputy clerk. Your ballot may not be counted without initials (see end of ballot for initials).

General Instructions	Congressional Cont.	Referendum	Official Ballot Partisan Office and Referendum November 5, 2024 for Lincoln County Town of Birch
<p>If you make a mistake on your ballot or have a question, ask an election inspector for help (absentee voters: contact your municipal clerk).</p> <p>To vote for a name on the ballot, fill in the oval next to the name like this: ●</p> <p>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: ●</p>	<p>Representative in Congress District 7 Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Kyle Kilbourn (Democratic)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Tom Tiffany (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>To vote in favor of a question, fill in the oval next to "Yes," like this: ●</p> <p>To vote against a question, fill in the oval next to "No," like this: ●</p> <p>State</p> <p>"Eligibility to vote. Shall section 1 of article III of the constitution, which deals with suffrage, be amended to provide that only a United States citizen age 18 or older who resides in an election district may vote in an election for national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum?"</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	
<p>When voting for President and Vice President, you have one of two choices:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vote for candidates on one ticket, or • Write in names of persons on both write-in lines <p>A write-in vote for only a vice presidential candidate will not be counted.</p>	<p>Legislative and State</p> <p>State Senator District 12 Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Andi Rich (Democratic)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Mary Felzkowski (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>Municipal Town of Bradley Wards 1-5</p> <p>"Shall the person holding the office of Town Treasurer in the Town of Bradley be appointed by the town board?"</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>Certification of Voter Assistance</p> <p>I certify that I marked or read aloud this ballot at the request and direction of a voter who is authorized under Wis. Stat. §6.82 to receive assistance.</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Signature of assistor</p>
<p>President / Vice President Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Kamala D. Harris / Tim Walz (Democratic)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Donald J. Trump / JD Vance (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Randall Terry / Stephen Broden (Constitution)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chase Russell Oliver / Mike ter Maat (Libertarian)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Jill Stein / Rudolph Ware (Wisconsin Green)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Claudia De la Cruz / Karina Garcia (Party for Socialism and Liberation)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Cornel West / Melina Abdullah (Justice For All)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. / Nicole Shanahan (We The People)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in: (President)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in: (Vice President)</p>	<p>County</p> <p>County Clerk Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chris Marlowe (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>Municipal Town of Harrison Wards 1-3</p> <p>"Shall the person holding the office of Town Clerk in the Town of Harrison be appointed by the town board?"</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>For Official Use Only</p> <p>Inspectors: Identify ballots required to be remade:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Overvoted</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Damaged</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Other</p> <p>If this is the Original Ballot, write the serial number here: _____</p> <p>If this is the Duplicate Ballot, write the serial number here: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>Initials of inspectors who remade ballot</p>
<p>Federal</p> <p>United States Senator Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Tammy Baldwin (Democratic)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Eric Hovde (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Phil Anderson (Disrupt The Corruption)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Thomas Leager (America First)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>County Treasurer Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Robbin Gigl (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>Town of Somo Prentice School District</p> <p>Shall the School District of Prentice, Price, Oneida and Lincoln Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$1,200,000 per year for four years, beginning with the 2024-2025 school year and ending with the 2027-2028 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of operational and maintenance expenses, including student programming, facility maintenance and staff salaries and benefits?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="radio"/> No</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Initials of inspectors who remade ballot</p>
<p>Congressional</p> <p>Register of Deeds Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Sarah Koss (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>County</p> <p>County Clerk Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chris Marlowe (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>County</p> <p>County Clerk Vote for 1</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Chris Marlowe (Republican)</p> <p><input type="radio"/> write-in:</p>	<p>_____</p> <p>Initials of inspectors who remade ballot</p>
<p>Congressional continues at top of next column.</p>	<p>Ballot continues at the top of next column</p>	<p>Ballot continues at the top of the next column.</p>	<p>End of sample ballot.</p>

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

LEGAL NOTICES

CITY OF MERRILL NOTICE OF 2025 BUDGET PUBLIC HEARING

Notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, November 12, 2024 at 7:00 p.m., a public hearing on the 2025 proposed budget will be held at Merrill City Hall, 1004 East First Street, Merrill, WI 54452. The proposed budget, in detail, is available for inspection at the Clerk's Office from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The following is a summary of the proposed 2025 General Fund Budget:

	2022 Year-end Actual	2023 Year-end Actual	2024 Annual Budget	2025 Proposed Budget	% Change From 2024 Budget
REVENUES					
Taxes	\$4,360,607	\$4,275,556	\$4,396,574	\$4,559,307	3.7%
Special Assessments	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Intergovernmental Revenues	5,249,308	5,208,313	5,690,642	5,777,766	1.5%
License and Permits	82,582	103,912	74,645	82,170	10.1%
Fines, Forfeitures and Penalties	105,746	129,411	117,077	101,000	-13.7%
Public Charges for Services	326,451	320,507	337,900	310,325	-8.2%
Intergovernmental Charges	2,247,270	2,261,014	2,312,428	2,326,661	0.6%
Miscellaneous Revenue	264,268	558,159	590,682	282,335	-52.2%
Other Financing Sources	-	-	-	-	0.0%
TOTAL REVENUE	\$12,636,231	\$12,856,872	\$13,519,949	\$13,439,565	-0.6%
EXPENDITURES					
General Government	\$1,719,028	\$1,666,453	\$1,827,696	\$1,851,784	1.3%
Public Safety	5,887,516	5,822,087	6,323,766	6,383,161	0.9%
Public Works	2,997,321	2,592,439	3,282,733	3,128,845	-4.7%
Health and Human Services	195,496	216,618	226,884	226,600	-0.1%
Culture, Recreation and Education	2,032,192	2,026,356	2,064,973	2,114,124	2.4%
Conservation & Development	20,200	20,200	17,500	17,500	0.0%
Other Financing Uses	118,280	26,945	26,945	26,945	0.0%
TOTAL EXPENDITURES/FINANCING USES	\$12,970,033	\$12,371,098	\$13,770,497	\$13,748,959	-0.2%
FUND SUMMARY					
	01/01/2025 Projected	Estimated 2025 Total	Estimated 2025 Total	12/31/2025 Projected	2024 Levy By Fund
General Fund	\$1,204,552	\$13,439,565	\$13,748,959	\$895,158	\$4,067,057
Landfill Fund	3,195	50,305	48,500	5,000	8,360
School Resource Officer Fund	7,495	179,484	176,979	10,000	67,209
Merrill Fair Grounds Fund	17,893	335,440	335,440	17,893	31,740
Community Development Loan Fund	656,610	118,200	118,200	656,610	-
Merrill Airport Fuel	29,842	76,000	93,025	12,817	-
Debt Service Fund	365,159	3,430,312	3,695,471	100,000	1,696,188
Capital Projects Fund	968,803	911,200	1,630,048	249,955	-
Total Funds	\$3,253,549	\$18,540,505	\$19,846,622	\$1,947,432	\$5,870,553

Dated this 21st day of October, 2024.
Emily Ley - Finance Director/Treasurer
Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC TEST

Notice is hereby given that public testing of the DS200 Tabulating Equipment machine and the Express Voting machine being used in the Town of Merrill for the November 5th, 2024 General Election is scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. on Monday, October 28th, 2024. The testing will be conducted in the Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Ave., Merrill, WI 54452.

Mitzi Flegner, Clerk
Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

TOWN OF BIRCH SNOW REMOVAL

THE TOWN OF BIRCH IS SOLICITING SNOW REMOVAL AND SAND/SALT APPLICATIONS AS NEEDED ON 21 MILES OF TOWN ROADS. FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT DAVID FOX AT 715-218-3690. PLEASE RESPOND BY WRITTEN/SEALED BID BY NOVEMBER 12, 2024 AT 7:00PM AT THE BIRCH TOWN HALL, W4762 CTY. HWY. H, IRMA, WI 54442 OR MAIL BIDS TO TOWN OF BIRCH, PO BOX 71, IRMA, WI 54442. TOWN OF BIRCH RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ACCEPT OR DENY ANY OR ALL BIDS BASED ON THE BEST INTEREST OF THE TOWNSHIP.

AUTHORIZED BY THE BIRCH TOWN BOARD
SUBMITTED BY CLERK MEGAN WEBB

Published October 10 & 24, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC TEST

Notice is hereby given that public testing of the DS200 Tabulating Equipment and the ExpressVote machines being used in the City of Merrill for the November 5, 2024 General Election is scheduled to begin at 9:00 A.M. on Thursday, October 31st. The testing will be conducted in the Common Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street.

Lori L. Anderson-Malm
City Clerk

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE OF REFERENDUM ELECTION November 5, 2024

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that at an election to be held in the several towns, villages, wards, and election districts of the State of Wisconsin, on Tuesday, November 5, 2024, the following questions will be submitted to a vote of the people pursuant to law:

2023 Senate Resolution 71 Enrolled Joint Resolution

To renumber and amend section 1 of article III; and to create section 1 (1) of article III of the constitution; relating to: eligibility to vote in Wisconsin (second consideration).

Whereas, the 2021 legislature in regular session considered a proposed amendment to the constitution in 2021 Senate Joint Resolution 32, which became 2021 Enrolled Joint Resolution 13, and agreed to it by a majority of the members elected to each of the two houses, which proposed amendment reads as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1 of article III of the constitution is renumbered section 1 (2) of article III and amended to read:

[Article III] Section 1 (2) Every Only a United States citizen age 18 or older who is a resident of an election district in this state is a qualified elector of that district who may vote in an election for national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum.

SECTION 2. Section 1 (1) of article III of the constitution is created to read:

[Article III] Section 1 (1) In this section:

- (a) "Local office" means any elective office other than a state or national office.
- (b) "National office" means the offices of president and vice president of the United States, U.S. senator, and representative in congress.
- (c) "Referendum" means an election at which an advisory, validating, or ratifying question is submitted to the electorate.
- (d) "State office" means the offices of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, state treasurer, attorney general, state superintendent of public instruction, justice of the supreme court, court of appeals judge, circuit court judge, state senator, state representative to the assembly, and district attorney.

SECTION 3. Numbering of new provision. If another constitutional amendment ratified by the people creates the number of any provision created in this joint resolution, the chief of the legislative reference bureau shall determine the sequencing and the numbering of the provisions whose numbers conflict.

Now, therefore, be it resolved by the senate, the assembly concurring, That the foregoing proposed amendment to the constitution is agreed to by the 2023 legislature; and, be it further Resolved, That the foregoing proposed amendment to the constitution be submitted to a vote of the people at the election to be held on the first Tuesday of November, 2024; and, be it further Resolved, That the question concerning ratification of the foregoing proposed amendment to the constitution be stated on the ballot as follows:

"Eligibility to vote. Shall section 1 of article III of the constitution, which deals with suffrage, be amended to provide that only a United States citizen age 18 or older who resides in an election district may vote in an election for national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum?"

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT AS TO THE QUESTION

The Wisconsin Constitution provides that "[e]very United States citizen age 18 or older who is a resident of an election district in this state is a qualified elector of that district." Wis. Const. art. III, § 1. That language is repeated in Wisconsin statute. Wis. Stat. § 6.02(1).

The referendum question would modify the language in Wis. Const. art. III, § 1 to provide that "only" a U.S. citizen 18 or older who resides in an election district may vote, and it would specify that only such individuals may vote in an election for "a national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum." It also would add definitions of what "local office," "national office," "referendum," and "state office" mean. 2023 Wis. S.J. Res. 71.

A "yes" vote would vote to modify existing article III, section 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution to provide that "only" a U.S. citizen 18 or older who resides in an election district can vote "in a national, state, or local office or at a statewide or local referendum."

A "no" vote would vote not to change Wis. Const. art. III, § 1 of the Wisconsin Constitution.

Done in the County of Lincoln,
on this 10th day of September, 2024.

Christopher J. Marlowe

Christopher J. Marlowe, Lincoln County Clerk

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC TEST

Notice is hereby given that public testing of the ExpressVote and DS-200 voting equipment being used in municipalities within Lincoln County for the November 5, 2024 General Election is scheduled from 8:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m. on Saturday, October 26, 2024 through Wednesday, October 30, 2024. All towns and cities in Lincoln County will be testing their voting equipment through the Municipal Clerk's Office within these times. For specific times pertaining to an individual municipality please contact the clerk for that municipality. Specific times will also be posted on all municipal bulletin boards and websites where available.

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP

NOTICE

WINTER PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Section 36-85, Code of Ordinance, City of Merrill

Winter Odd/Even Day Parking Restrictions

During December, January, February and March, no person shall park any vehicle on any street except on:

1. The odd-numbered side of any street on odd-numbered calendar days.
 2. The even-numbered side of any street on even-numbered calendar days.
- (some exceptions/exclusions apply re: Merrill Municipal Ord 36-85)

Winter Night Parking Restricted

It shall be unlawful for any person to park any vehicle on any City Street or traveled right-of-way from December 1 to March 31, inclusive, between the hours of 1:00 a.m. to 6:00 a.m.

Parking Prohibited During or After Snow Storm

No person shall park any motor vehicle or other apparatus upon any street within the City, during a declared snow emergency until the snow has been removed to the curb or curb line of such street. Snow emergencies may be declared by the Mayor, Public Works Director/City Engineer, Street Superintendent, or Police Chief when snowfall of two (2) or more inches has or is predicted to occur.

Removal of Vehicles

Any vehicle parked on any street or right-of-way in violation of this Section and in such a manner as to obstruct removal of snow from the street or right-of-way may be removed or caused to be removed to the Street Department facilities or other facilities designated by the Chief of Police or Public Works Director/City Engineer, or Street Superintendent, and the vehicle may not be recovered until the towing, any storage charges, and parking forfeitures as imposed by this Chapter, are paid.

Corey Bennett Dustin Bonack
Chief of Police Street Superintendent
City of Merrill City of Merrill

Published October 24, 2024

WNAXLP



MOVIES YOU GOTTA SEE

Smokey and the Bandit is a reminder that sometimes, being cool is the most important thing

BY JALEN MAKI

Jerry Reed sagely summarized the plot of the 1977 action comedy film *Smokey and the Bandit* in his absolute banger “Eastbound and Down”:

“The boys are thirsty in Atlanta/And there’s beer in Texarkana/And we’ll bring it back, no matter what it takes.”

Got that? Good. But just in case you don’t, here’s a rundown of one of the most breezy and fun movies of the ‘70s:

Smokey and the Bandit starts in Atlanta, where a couple of rich dudes from Texas – Big Enos Burdette

and his son, Little Enos – are sponsoring a driver in a race. The Enoses want to party it up after their guy wins, but they’re in a bit of a pickle: every good rager needs beer, and they’re currently dry. Enter Bo “Bandit” Darville (Burt Reynolds), who could best be described as a... legendary outlaw driver, I guess? How does one get that reputation, exactly? I’m not sure. Anyway, Enos and Other, Smaller Enos challenge Bandit to go to Texarkana, Texas, pick up 400 cases of Coors, and haul the bounty back to Atlanta within 28 hours. Everyone involved knows that transporting such cargo across state lines is

against the law, but if Bandit pulls it off, he gets \$80,000, which would be just shy of 415 grand in today’s money: A payday worth risking a few nights in the ol’ Crowbar Hotel for, in my opinion!

Enos Squared supply Bandit with a sick Pontiac Trans Am for the job, and he visits his old pal (and men’s fashion icon) Cledus “Snowman” Snow (Reed) to convince him to tag along. Bandit’s plan: Snowman will be in Bandit’s semi, hauling the trailer full of the bootlegged beer; meanwhile, Bandit will be driving the Trans Am as a “blocker,” distracting the cops from pulling Snowman over and

finding the illegal freight.

Bandit, Snowman, and Snowman’s trusty companion, a hound dog named Fred, cruise to Texarkana, load up the beer, and start to head back to Atlanta. All is going well until they run into a wedding gown-wearing woman named Carrie (Sally Field) standing

See **MOVIE** page 9



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:
TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCE
Lie. Deny. Deflect. Delay. Accuse. Insult. Lie more. Repeat.

It’s shocking that nearly half of Americans prefer an infamous self-glorifying leader who habitually and knowingly lies for his own gains.

Every American of voting age needs to realize the serious dangers that are present with a delusional and arrogant president who highly admires dictators, specifically our nemeses Putin and Xi Jinping.

It has been a common practice for each presidential candidate to have an interview with a news commentator of CBS 60 Minutes. One candidate backed out when discovering that there would be live fact checking. Does that not scream “I am Guilty”?

Don’t fall victim to the sham “If you keep telling them a lie, they will soon believe it.” Ask for the evidence. Insist on the proven truth and not the disturbing and misinforming nonsensical claims.

Before you exercise the most critical act of democracy by voting, remember the horrific, riotous, and overall highly unpresidential rhetoric of the candidate with 32 convictions, as well as the insurrection on our Capital on Jan. 6th.

Please vote with your head and your heart.
Respectfully,
– Dian Ritter
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.

Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar

- Oct. 25** - Merrill Park & Rec Halloween Hoopla at the MARC
- Oct. 25** - Haunted Sawmill: “Night of the Sawmill Dead”
- Oct. 25-27** - Grace & Sophie’s Pumpkin Patch
- Oct. 26** - “Fall into Fun” Vendor Fair at Bell Tower Assisi Hall
- Oct. 26** - Make a Difference Day - Leaf raking
- Oct. 26** - Haunted Sawmill Children’s Matinee

- Oct. 26** - Haunted Sawmill: “Buzz Buzz Clown’s Takeover Night”
- Oct. 26** - Happy Howloween Event at Apex Angels & Warriors
- Oct. 26** - Northwoods Skitchers at Sawmill Brewing Co.
- Oct. 27** - BINGO at VFW
- Oct. 30** - Halloween Trivia at Sawmill Brewing Co.
- Oct. 31** - Trick or Treating at Pine Crest from 3:30-5 p.m.

- Oct. 31** - Grace & Sophie’s Pumpkin Patch
- Oct. 31** - City of Merrill Trick or Treating from 4-7 p.m.
- Oct. 31** - Gleason Trick or Treating from 5-7 p.m.
- Oct. 31** - St. Stephens UCC Trunk or Trunk Treating
- Oct. 31** - Haunted Sawmill: “Vincent’s Halloween Bash”

- Nov. 2** - Free meal for Veterans at Northwoods Veterans Post
- Nov. 2** - Food For Kids “Love Your Neighbor” Banquet
- Nov. 3** - Gleason Lions Pancake Breakfast/Blood Drive
- Nov. 7** - Bingo at St. Francis School

For more information, go to: merrillchamber.org/events or contact the event sponsor.

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SATURDAY • 11am - Close
SUNDAY • 11am - 6pm

OCTOBER BOOZE OF THE MONTH
ALL CROWN WHISKEY
\$6.00 - Double Pint

FRI. OCT. 25TH
LIVE MUSIC BY: GEOFF LANDON
7pm-10pm

SAT. OCT. 26TH
MEAT RAFFLE
Open 11am, Start 1pm
LITTLE LEAGUE BASEBALL FUNDRAISER

SAT. NOV. 2ND
HALLOWEEN BINGO
Open 11am, Start 1pm
WEAR A COSTUME, & HAVE A CHANCE AT WINNING A BINGO PACKAGE!

SAVE THE DATE!
Saturday February 1, 2025
Time: 6 - 9 PM
Les & Jim’s Lincoln Lanes
1208 N Center Ave, Merrill

Rotary Club of Merrill
Uncorked

Enjoy a selection of wine and, craft beer from Sawmill Brewing Company, and heavy appetizers.
Music provided by pianist and solo artist Amanda Anderson.

Raffle prizes, games, wine pull, and your entry ticket will give you a chance to win a door prize!

Please contact Karen with any questions at kdkarow@gmail.com

Theme: Red, Black, & White
Proceeds will go to the St. John’s Daycare Expansion Project.

ST. PAUL’S 10th ANNUAL CRAFT FAIR
Saturday, Nov. 2, 2024
10 am - 2 pm
W2604 Cty. Rd. P, Merrill

Lunch and Bake Sale by St. Paul’s Ladies Aide

Handcrafted Items, Knitting, Crocheting, Chainsaw Art, Jewelry, Maple Syrup, Wood Working, Rope Baskets, Hand Painted Decor, Mittens And Much More!!

WEEKLY BRIEFING - OCTOBER 24th - 28th
THURSDAY - PRIVATE EVENT
FRIDAY - COD & WALLEYE
SATURDAY - PIZZA & FLATBREAD PIZZAS
SUNDAY - BROASTED CHICKEN
BINGO - TURKEY & GRAVY
MONDAY - CHICKEN CORDON BLEU
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\$5 Burger & Home Fries
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12 Noon-8pm

Friday
Fish Fry 12 Noon-8:45pm

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“FALL INTO FUN” VENDOR FAIR!

OCTOBER 26, 9AM - 3PM
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1500 O’DAY ST
MERRILL WI

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SEE YOU THERE!

COSMO Theatre
Main St. • Merrill
KIDS • \$5.00
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MOVIES AND SHOWTIMES
10/25/24 TO 10/31/24
Mondays All Seats \$5.00

VENOM: THE LAST DANCE
“PG13” (1HR 49MIN)
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

WHITE BIRD
“PG13” (2HR 1MIN)
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

SMILE 2
“R” (2HR 7MIN)
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

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LaBarge charged with attempted murder, obstructing, more

BY TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

Bradley LaBarge, age 31, of Merrill made an initial appearance in Lincoln County Court on Monday, Oct. 21, 2024. He is charged with five crimes, the most serious being one count of attempted first degree intentional homicide with the use of a dangerous weapon. He is also charged with one count of substantial battery, use of a dangerous weapon; one count of obstructing an officer; one count of criminal damage to property; and one count of disorderly conduct, use of a dangerous weapon. According to the Criminal Complaint on file, conviction of count one carries with it a prison term of up to 60 years plus an increase of up to 5 additional years for the use of a dangerous weapon.

Probable cause for the charges listed in the Complaint detail an alleged incident that occurred just after 8 a.m. on Saturday, Oct. 19, 2024, on Corning Rd. in the Town of Corning, involving a male victim who alleges LaBarge slashed his tires, smashed out his windows, "jacked" him in the face, and threatened to "cut him up and stab him" with a knife. The alleged victim called 911 and "told dispatch that Bradley pulled a knife and was chasing him." He identified



LaBarge

the weapon as a gray utility knife and said LaBarge had cut him with it "on the right side of his throat."

When law enforcement arrived at the scene, they observed the victim's shirt "below his neckline to be soaked in blood. Victim had a large laceration on the right side of his neck below his jaw line." The victim was subsequently transported to Aspirus Merrill Hospital where he reportedly received 11 stitches.

"Law enforcement observed what appeared to be blood on his hands," while detaining LaBarge. When questioned about it, law enforcement observed him "spitting on his hands and wiping them on the front of his pants."

A witness, who has two young children with LaBarge, was with the victim and had been with the victim for several hours prior to the incident, driving around with him,

according to the Criminal Complaint. The victim said he got a flat tire and pulled over to change the tire. LaBarge allegedly had called witness 30-40 times beginning at about 4 a.m. that day and tracked the victim and witness, who were together, using the "Find my iPhone" to locate the witness, arriving three or four minutes after the victim had pulled over to change the tire. LaBarge's one-year-old daughter and three-year-old son were in the vehicle with him when he "pulled up at a high rate of speed and stopped right next to" the victim's vehicle and "flew out of the car" before pulling his knife, damaging victim's vehicle, threatening the victim, ripping his shirt, threatening "to slit his throat, cut him up and throw him in the ditch in the middle of nowhere," and then lunging at him and cutting him on the right side of his throat with the knife.

LaBarge denied the allegations when questioned by law enforcement, but the Criminal Complaint said "Law enforcement observed damage to the victim's vehicle consistent with victim's statements" and "medical personnel expressed the penetrating trauma victim sustained was a small distance from his jugular vein or carotid

artery, which are life threatening injuries."

According to the victim, "he and witness have been talking for about eight or nine months" and approximately two months ago, LaBarge had called the victim and threatened "something along the lines of" that he would shoot him, shoot up his house, and shoot his child or shoot him in front of his child, but victim said he did not report this to law enforcement at that time.

LaBarge appeared in court by video from the Lincoln County Jail, and was represented by Tim Osicka, special attorney for LaBarge at his initial appearance. Osicka suggested the victim's injury was self-inflicted and that the victim had reason to lie and questioned the allegations; however, in light of the seriousness of the allegations and charges, Judge Galen Bayne-Allison set bail for LaBarge at \$200,000 cash. Should LaBarge post the bail and be released from jail, the Judge also set additional conditions, to include, but not limited to,

GPS monitoring of LaBarge and no contact with the victim or witness and staying 1,000 feet away from the residence or place of employment or education of both the witness and the victim in this case and that any visitation with the children must go through a

third party.

A preliminary hearing in the matter has been set for Nov. 7, 2024, at 10 a.m.

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

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MOVIE from page 8

on the road. Bandit picks her up, which draws the ire of Texas sheriff Buford T. Justice (Jackie Gleason). Carrie was supposed to marry Justice's dimwitted son, Junior, but she got cold feet and bailed on the ceremony. Justice and Junior learn that she's riding with Bandit and take off in pursuit, but they're unaware of the fact that they're chasing someone trying to pull off the Longest Beer Run in History. Meanwhile, Bandit is dumbfounded by Justice's doggedness because Carrie doesn't immediately reveal that it was Justice's kid that she left at the altar.

So, those are the bones of *Smokey and the Bandit*. A cross-Dixie chase occurs, hijinks ensue, and it's just an all-around good time.

I say this as a compliment and with nothing but adoration for this film: I have the impression that the entire idea behind *Smokey and the Bandit* was simply to find a cool guy (in this case, Reynolds) and have them do something cool (drive a cool car while wearing a cool hat). The plot, as fun as it is, feels secondary to the sheer spectacle of the action and having a star at the center of it all. At the end of the day, you gotta give the people what they want, and what they want is to see Bandit pull some

sweet 180 turns and maybe do a burnout or two. Toss in Field as a charming love interest, Reed as a wisecracking sidekick, and a slew of delightful oddballs to create a rich tapestry of characters and personalities, and boom, you've got a certified hit on your hands. What's the movie actually about? What are they doing, and why? Who cares? Did you see the part where Bandit jumped a dismantled bridge? That ruled!

Apparently, a prerequisite to be a truck driver in the 1970s was to have a quick wit. The movie is nonstop quips and banter, and for some reason it's at least 15% more effective when it's delivered via trucker-speak over CB radio. Another reason why *Smokey and the Bandit* rips: roughly half of the characters have an awesome handle. Case in point, a guy driving a hearse is called "The Grave Robber." I'll repeat that: the hearse guy is called The Grave Robber. That unequivocally rocks! Another trucker goes by "Silver-Tongued Devil"; also awesome, even if it seems like he might've given that handle to himself. If you've ever seen *Smokey and the Bandit*, you've probably put some thought into what your handle would be. I never had a true nickname growing up (people call me "Jay" for short, which doesn't really count), and I'm kind of thankful for

that; back in the day, if my friends had taken it upon themselves to give me a moniker, they almost certainly would've come up with something juvenile and horrifying to hear said in public. But, if I did have a handle, I'd like it to be a tribute to my Wisconsin roots. Maybe Badger? Or Brewer? Cheese? We'll workshop it.

While it's a blast watching Bandit, Snowman, and Carrie be a trio of rule-of-law-disrespecting jokesters, it's Gleason who steals the movie as Justice. Our three protagonists are having a grand old time as they traverse the back roads of the American South; meanwhile, Justice is perpetually irritated, not only by Bandit, but also by Junior and pretty much every other person he comes into contact with over the course of the several-hundred-mile pursuit, and it's absolutely hysterical. If someone's not saying something stupid or annoying to him, they're contributing to the destruction of his police cruiser – a top-notch visual bit is how his car starts out in pristine shape, but as the movie goes along, it gets more and more demolished until it's barely even recognizable as an automobile by the time the credits roll.

What Justice endures emotionally isn't dissimilar. Gleason captures the essence of an old Southern

See MOVIE page 15

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2024 DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL:

Authorized for 22 sworn personnel, 3 non-sworn, plus 4 adult crossing guards and 1 K9 officer

ADMINISTRATION

- Corey Bennett, Chief of Police, Instructor
- Dale Bacher, Captain, Training Coordinator
- Jenny Thorson, Administrative Assistant, Property/Evidence Manager
- Christine Brahos, Administrative Assistant, Property/Evidence Manager
- Marci Rankin, Administrative

Assistant/Desk and CVR primary contact

INVESTIGATIONS

- Don Seubert, Lieutenant/Instructor
- Jamie Jaeger, School Resource Officer
- Nicole Cimino, Detective
- Wyatt Pufall, Detective

PATROL

- Pete Borchardt, Lieutenant
- Tyler Tesch, Lieutenant/Instructor/Drug Recognition Expert

- Matt Drabek, Lieutenant
- Robert Caylor, Lieutenant/Instructor
- Brad Becker, Police Officer
- Dane Mathwich, Police Officer, DARE Officer, Instructor
- Josh McCaskill, Police Officer, K9 Handler
- Bryan Allen, Police Officer
- Christina Doering, Police Officer
- John Stubbe, Police Officer
- Jonathon Sass, Police Officer

- Trevor Asmundsen, Police Officer
- Brandon Lor, Police Officer
- K-9 Dasty
- Alex Shimanski, Police Officer
- Dawson Zibton, Police Officer
- Vacant-soon to be filled- Police Officer

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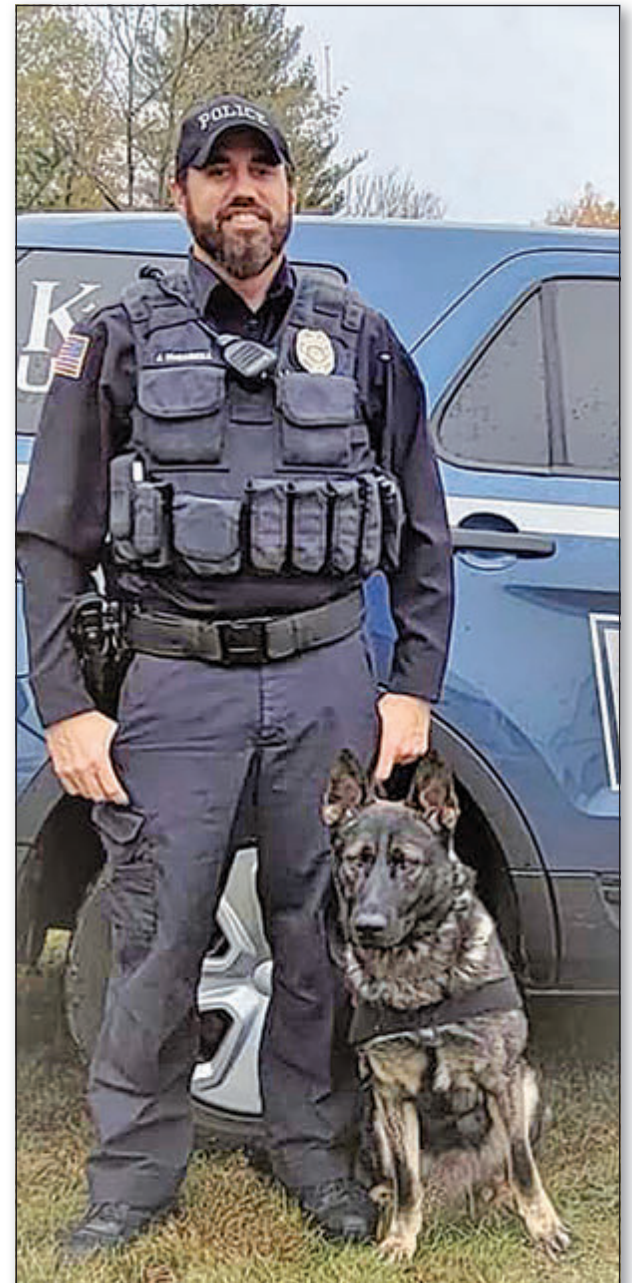
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Merrill K9 Dasty with her handler, officer Josh McCaskill. Photo courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

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Merrill Fire Department 2024

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MFD took delivery of a new ambulance (Med-61) in March 2024. Photo courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.

The Merrill Fire Department proudly provides fire protection and rescue service to an area spanning approximately 142 square miles, including the City of Merrill and Town of Merrill, Town of Scott, and most of the Town of Rock Falls. The Department provides ambulance service to an area spanning approximately 520 square miles, including the City of Merrill, Town of Merrill, and the Towns of Corning, Harding, Scott, Pine River, Schley, Rock Falls, Russell, and part of the Town of Harrison.

The Merrill Fire Department is the only full-time career Department in Lincoln County, Merrill Fire Chief Josh Klug said.

Each member of the Department is cross-trained for EMS (EMT Basic, EMT Intermediate, and Paramedics) and firefighting. Also members are state certified inspectors, state certified driver/operator pumper, and aerial. Many are also state certified Fire Officer 1 and Instructor 1. In addition, members of the Merrill Fire Department frequently undergo specialized training, including ice rescue, swift water rescue, trench rescue, collapse rescue, confined space rescue, hazardous materials operations level training, vehicle extrication, mass casualty incident, rescue task force (active shooter), wildland fire training, and EMS Paramedic level service.

In December 2023, Pastor Michael Southcombe started as the new chaplain for the Department, replacing Pastor David Szeto.

"We took delivery of a new ambulance (Med-61) in March," Klug said. Department apparatus consists of Engine-61 & 62, 63-Truck, Tender-65, Brush-66, Car-60 & 67, Utility & UTV-68, Boat-69, and Meds-61, 62, & 63.

And once again, the Department had record calls for service in 2023 with 2,322 calls for service for the year, Klug said.

Firefighter/Paramedic Teetzen retires

After 20 years of dedicated service to the Merrill community, Firefighter/Paramedic Thomas Teetzen retired from the Merrill Fire Department (MFD) on May 4, 2024.

Tom is a 1987 graduate of Shawano High School and continued his education at Fox Valley Technical College



L to R: Chaplain Rev. Mike Southcombe, Firefighter/Paramedic (FF/P) Kyle Banaszak, Battalion Chief (BC) Phil Skoug, FF/P Corey Nowak, FF/P Eric Trempe, FF/P Dylan Schielke, Fire Chief Josh Klug, FF/P Dave Graveen, Fire Inspector Joe Bozinski, FF/P Ross Witucki, FF/P Josh Grovogel, BC John Kraegenbrink, FF/P Nick Phelps, FF/P Ryan Dunn, FF/P Matt Bathke, FF/P Paul Peterson, BC Jon Leiskau, FF/P Kendall Nelson, and FF/P Daylan Enkers. Missing from photo: FF/P Jason Hendricks, FF/P Tyler Mueller, FF/P Jacob Aumann, FF/P Scott Gomoll, and FF/EMT Rick Sparks. Stacy Literski photo.



Rev. Michael Southcombe was installed as Chaplain at Merrill Fire Department in December 2023. Stacy Literski photo.

2024 DEPARTMENT STAFF

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| Fire Chief: Josh Klug | Eric Trempe | Daylan Enkers |
| Battalion Chief: Phil Skoug | Ross Witucki | Scott Gomoll |
| Battalion Chief: Jon Leiskau | Josh Grovogel | Jason Hendricks |
| Battalion Chief: John Kraegenbrink | Tyler Mueller | Ryan Dunn |
| Fire Inspector: Joe Bozinski. | Dylan Schielke | Kendall Nelson |
| | Dave Graveen | Rick Sparks (EMT) |
| FIREFIGHTERS/PARAMEDICS: | Jacob Aumann | |
| Corey Nowak | Kyle Banaszak | ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Jana Johnson |
| Nick Phelps | Matt Bathke | |
| Paul Peterson | | CHAPLAIN: Rev. Mike Southcombe |

and earned his Associate Degree. While in college, he was a cadet for the Appleton Fire Department. In 1989, he started working as an EMT for the Shawano Ambulance Service and joined the Shawano Area Fire Department a year later. Throughout his career, Teetzen earned multiple certifications and licenses.

Teetzen was hired by former Fire Chief Norm Hanson on April 4, 2004, and was a valuable member of the MFD team until his retirement. During his 20 year career, he has been part of many significant events/responses in the community; many of them have garnered thank you letters and appreciative emails from past patients. He was part of the group of MFD members who upgraded to EMT-Paramedic in 2006.

Teetzen oversaw the Department's air packs and

portable radios. In addition, Tom assisted off-duty with fire department events like the MDA Softball Tournament and Adopt-A-Highway cleanup.

In addition to his service with the Merrill Fire Department, he facilitated the Shawano division of Brandt Extinguishers.

Tommy T., T-Bone, Station Mouse, Tornado, and Bert are a couple of the nicknames used by his co-workers at the fire station. Regardless of the name used, Tom was a hard worker, good teammate, and important mentor to MFD new members. He was the guy everyone could and wanted to work with.

In his free time, Teetzen enjoys snowmobiling, traveling, and spending time at his uncle's cabin in Pickerel. He also enjoys taking trips down south during the winter or

spring. About a year ago, Tom married his finance, Stacey Bartz. The two are excited to spend additional time together now that he is retired.

The Merrill Fire Department would like to congratulate Firefighter/Paramedic Tom Teetzen on his well-deserved retirement and wishes him all the best in all his future endeavors. The MFD held a retirement reception at the fire station on May 14 and, as a small token of their appreciation, presented Tom with a custom embroidered Carhartt winter jacket.



L to R: Fire Chief Josh Klug congratulates Firefighter/Paramedic Tom Teetzen on his retirement. Photos courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.



L to R: Fire Chief Josh Klug and Firefighter/Paramedic Tom Teetzen pose for a photo together at Teetzen's retirement ceremony. He retired from the Merrill Fire Department on May 4, 2024. Photos courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.

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Hamburg Volunteer Fire Department

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Hamburg Volunteer Fire Department. Photo courtesy of Hamburg Volunteer Fire Department.

FIRE DEPARTMENT STAFF

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Chief: Ryan DeBroux, President, MABAS Division 130 | Firefighter: Jeff Artus | Firefighter: Cory Leistikow |
| Deputy Chief: Kevin Borchardt | Firefighter: Mark Bloch | Firefighter: Matthew Leistikow |
| Captain 1: Brad Borchardt | Firefighter: Roger Borchardt | Firefighter: Tyler Leistikow |
| Captain 2: Chris Blaubach | Firefighter: Craig Carlson | Firefighter: Dennis Paulson |
| Lieutenant: Troy Modrzejewski | Firefighter: Scott Haig | Firefighter: Bill Rauhen |
| Safety Officer/EMR: Udell Passehl | Firefighter: Richard Holm | Firefighter: Troy Sadler |
| Secretary: Sarah Blaubach | Firefighter/EMR: Jackie Jankowski | Firefighter/EMR: Maddie Strand |
| Treasurer: Amber Westfall | Firefighter: Mike Jankowski | Firefighter: Maddie Sturm |
| Training Officer: Coleton Bloch | Firefighter: Dan Klockziem | Firefighter: Riley Westfall |
| | Firefighter/EMR: Craig Klumppyan | Firefighter: Mike Wiederhoeft |
| | | Firefighter: Will Zick |

The Hamburg Volunteer Fire Department protects the Town of Hamburg and, by contract, portions of the Towns of Rib Falls, Berlin, and Stettin. Automatic Aid agreements are in place with the Town of Corning, Harding, Berlin, Rib Falls, Rietbrock, and Stettin, as well. Including these automatic aid agreements, they cover 345 square miles. They provide structure fire and wildland fire suppression, rescue and extrication, operational level hazardous materials response, and emergency medical response to a first-due area that is 101 square miles.

"In this large response area, we have no

hydrants available to us, so our response capacity includes two water tenders to haul the required water needed for fires to our engine. Our apparatus consists of two engines, two tenders, a utility vehicle that carries all of our turnout gear on it to the scene, a brush truck, a tracked UTV for wildland fires and off-road personnel rescue, as well as a command/rehab trailer," said Hamburg Volunteer Fire Department Chief Ryan DeBroux.

Their roster consists of firefighters and emergency medical responders, some of whom are cross-trained and perform both duties.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONDERS

- | | | |
|--|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| EMS Captain: Karri Moodie | EMR: Jennifer Jahnke | EMR: Tom Napierala |
| EMS Lieutenant: Udell Passehl | Firefighter/EMR: Jackie Jankowski | EMR: Paula Paulson |
| Secretary/Treasurer: Nicholle Modrzejewski | EMR: Cindy Klockziem | Firefighter/EMR: Maddie Strand |
| Training Officer: Jennifer Borchardt | Firefighter/EMR: Craig Klumppyan | EMR: Cindy Wasmundt |
| EMR: Elliott Gomez | EMR: Tiffany Luckey | EMR: Mark Wasmundt |
| | EMR: Bryan Moodie | |

Town of Corning Volunteer Fire Department and First Responders

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The Corning Fire Volunteer Department is a single station 100% volunteer Fire Department providing fire protection to the Towns of Corning and Harding which total 218.6 square miles. The dedicated volunteers who serve as firefighters and EMTs give many hours of their time to attend meetings, drills, weekly maintenance nights, and of course calls.

Department apparatus consists of 1 Engine, 2 Tenders (Tankers), 1 Utility Truck, 1 Brush Truck, 1 6-wheeled Brush Unit, and 1 Rescue Truck.

First Responders

The Corning First Responders proudly provide the residents and visitors of the Town of Corning with pre-hospital emergency medical care. Each First Responder must complete rigorous training and have a valid license to practice in the State of Wisconsin. Each First Responder carries with them a Basic Life Support kit to assist in their duties. Items in this kit include an automated external defibrillator (AED), digital pulse oximeters, multiple bandages and dressings, oxygen therapy equipment, and basic airway adjuncts.

First Responders play a vital role in the EMS community by assessing, stabilizing, and beginning treatment of patients before an ambulance arrives.

DEPARTMENT STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

- Chief: Dave Hoff - 19 years
- Assistant Chief: Jared Semling - 24 years
- Safety Officer, Firefighter, EMS: Jason Bondioli - 18 years
- Captain, Equipment: Kyle Kudick - 16 years
- Lieutenant, Firefighter: Josh Kohnhorst - 20 years
- Lieutenant, Firefighter: Bob Giese - 15 years
- Secretary, Firefighter: Mark Woller - 31 years
- Treasurer, Firefighter: John Kudick - 22 years
- Firefighter, Equipment Officer: Matt Prebeg - 26 years
- Firefighter, Maintenance Officer: Matt Radke - 14 years
- Firefighter, Training: Brian Literski - 7 years
- Firefighter: Brian Klebenow 38 years
- Firefighter: Stan Wendt - 38 years
- Firefighter: Joel Oelke - 11 years
- Firefighter: Michael Brewer - Less than a year
- Firefighter, EMS/First Responder: Jody Geiger - 17 years
- Firefighter, EMS/First Responder: Jason DeRizzo - 2 years
- Firefighter, EMS/First Responder: Cassie LaCrosse - 1 year
- EMS/First Responder: Jessie Ryan-Geiger - 17 years
- EMS/First Responder: Sue Dickerson - 5 years
- EMS/First Responder: Wendy Bear - 3 years



A new Tender for the Corning Fire Department was placed into service at the end of March 2024. This truck was purchased with funds obtained from a generous donation from a local family foundation and the remaining funds provided by the Town of Corning. Photo courtesy of Corning Fire Department.

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715-536-5652

Thank You

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Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

1104 E. 1st St., Merrill, WI 54452

Emergency: 911 • Non-Emergency: Merrill area 715.536.6272 • Tomahawk area 715.453.5747



The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office now has just one K9 officer serving with the department. K9 Nina serves with partner Sgt. Investigator Sam Steckbauer. K9 Poncho retired when Deputy Prahm resigned from the department earlier this year, and K9 Poncho passed away shortly thereafter.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Police Dept.

Municipalities covered: Patrol Deputies are responsible for patrolling all portions of Lincoln County. Dispatch provides services to: Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Merrill Police Department, Tomahawk Police Department (on overnights and weekends), and handles all 911 calls Countywide. Additional agencies dispatched include: Fire Departments: Corning, Merrill, Pine River, Russell, and Tomahawk. EMS: Merrill EMS, Tomahawk EMS, Corning First Responders, Pine River First Responders, Russell First Responders.

Equipment utilized: In order to reach the entire County through ever-changing weather conditions, the Sheriff's Office uses sedans as well as four-wheel-drive SUV's for patrol work. Each patrol unit is equipped with a mobile data computer that provides call information and digital mapping of the entire County. The Rec. Deputy is equipped

with a four-wheel-drive pickup truck, an ATV, a boat and diving equipment, along with a snowmobile, to provide services on the County snowmobile trails. The Search and Rescue Team (SRT) utilizes a mobile command trailer, a four-wheel-drive pickup truck to tow it, and a Bearcat.

Specialized training: We endeavor to recruit new employees who have the best training and experience. Members of the Sheriff's Office who, through their job performance or interest in a field may go on for additional training or assignments, include DARE officers, SRT members, investigators, drug unit, emergency vehicle operator course (EVOC) instructor, traffic safety specialist, field training officers, firearms instructors, honor guard, or other unit-specific training.

What agency is most proud of: The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office employees

strive to serve the community through effective and professional law enforcement. We recognize that we must always have the public's trust in order to truly be effective. Over the last few years, we have been able to use our proactive approach to reduce fatalities on the roadways and make arrests for operating a motor vehicle while impaired. Our drug unit continues to diligently and aggressively address the manufacture and sale of illegal drugs in Lincoln County. The dive team has been expanded to three personnel, making us more effective in prompt responses to water-related emergencies. With strong leadership and a determined group of employees, this agency continues to provide effective response and handling of incidents throughout the County as we work with fellow emergency service agencies and the public to provide a safe and secure environment.

DEPARTMENT STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

SWORN STAFF

- Sheriff Ken Schneider - 34 years
Chief Deputy Tyler Iverson - 18 years
911 Lieutenant Grant Peterson - 31 years
Patrol Lieutenant Andy VanderWyst - 20 years
Patrol Lieutenant Blade Mikula - 10 years
Patrol Lieutenant Michael Remington - 9 years
Patrol Lieutenant Thomas Tollefson - 3 years
Detective Lieutenant Brian Burkhardt - 5 years
Sergeant Investigator Kevin Orzech - 24 years
Sergeant Investigator Roger Sir - 15 years
Sergeant Investigator, K9 handler Samuel Steckbauer - 14 years
Sergeant Investigator Logan Lange - 7 years
Court Security Deputy Reed Lazarz - 22 years
Deputy Michael Sundquist - 20 years
Recreation Deputy Travis Watruba - 18 years
Deputy James Gehris - 12 years
Deputy Holly Steckbauer - 11 years
Deputy Corey Brehmer - 8 years
Deputy Conner Monk - 5 years

- Deputy Ethyn Van Camp - 3 years
Deputy Mariah Vogel - 3 years
Deputy Ashtin Zunker - 3 years
Deputy Zachary Irish - 3 years
Deputy Bradley Weeks - 2 years
Deputy Samantha Bartch - 2 years
Deputy Jake Spoehr - 2 years
Deputy Jevin Budzynski - 1 year
Deputy Damian Hardt - New Hire
K9 Nina - 7 years

CORRECTIONS

- Jail Administrator Nicholas Hoeft - 12 years
Corrections Sergeant Jodie Wilhelm - 22 years
Corrections Sergeant Jason Meister - 20 years
Corrections Sergeant Michael Tuley - 7 years
Corrections Sergeant Rebecca Krohn - 2 years
Corrections Officer Timothy Kurtz - 15 years
Corrections Officer Tara Howard - 5 years
Corrections Officer Thomas Laiter - 5 years
Corrections Officer David Tinker - 3 years
Corrections Officer Payton Miglieri - 1 year

- Corrections Officer Haydn Fischer - 1 year
Corrections Officer James Zimmerman - New Hire
Corrections Officer Jorge Pacheco Palacios - New Hire
Corrections Officer Adam Danielski - New Hire
Corrections Officer Cheyanna Beyer - New Hire
Corrections Officer Dane Schoenenberger - New Hire
PT Corrections Officer Ivy Janak - 15 years
PT Corrections Officer Julie Remington - 6 years
PT Corrections Officer Kaylin Kasten - 3 years
PT Corrections Officer Elicia Seliskar - New Hire
PT Corrections Officer Gabrielle Krueger - New Hire
PT Corrections Officer Tyler Kopetzky-Skidmore - New Hire

DISPATCH

- Dispatcher Christine Turner-Meilahn - 22 years
Dispatcher Rhonda Bacher - 17 years
Dispatcher Kyla Brunett - 3 years
Dispatcher Jerrica Dengel - 3 years

- Dispatcher Justine Steckbauer - 2 years
Dispatcher Jennifer Lau - 2 years
Dispatcher Leonna Spoehr - 2 years
Dispatcher Myranda Heier - 1 year
Dispatcher Shannon Thorn - New Hire

CLERICAL STAFF

- Office Assist. Julie Strassman - 8 years
Office Assist. Jessica Allen - 2 years
Office Assist. Christine Baumann - 2 years

TRIP TEAM

- Randy Osness - 14 years
Dale Knapp - 11 years
Mike Hamman - 5 years
Mark Heckendorf - New Hire

TACTICAL INSTRUCTOR

- Instructor Michael Ratkovich - 13 years

New Hire indicates less than 1 year of service

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Heavenly Father, Bless those who are our First Responders, protect them from harm and danger. Thank you for calling them to the position they hold, and may they find joy in performing this service you have given to them. When they are afraid, give them courage, and strength when they are weak. We are blessed to have them serve and protect us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen. ST. JOHN LUTHERAN CHURCH & SCHOOL MERRILL, WI

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To all our first responders THANK YOU You are valued & appreciated! CHIPS HAMBURGERS. Celebrating over 50 years! HOME OF THE "BLUEJAY BURGER". Open Daily at 10am. Drive-Thru. Ice Cream. 1203 E. 3rd Street, Merrill • 715-536-6532. www.chipshamburgersmerrill.com

Thank You

To All Who Serve & Protect Our Community!

Town of Pine River Volunteer Fire Department & First Responders

N1622 Range Line Rd., Merrill, WI 54452

Emergency: 911 • Non-Emergency: 715.539.3255



DEPARTMENT MEMBERS WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

- | | |
|---|----------------------------|
| Chief: John Uttech - 19 years | Todd Roman - 19 years |
| Asst. Chief: Tony Hartwig - 19 years | Carl Uttech - 19 years |
| Captains: Mike Caylor - 19 years | Lori Wendt - 13 years |
| Jeff Zettler - 19 years | Gene Williams - 19 years |
| Lieutenants: Doug Sann - 19 years | Marilyn Zastrow - 17 years |
| Brad Hartwig - 16 years | T. J. Brunett - 5 years |
| Safety Officer: Ryan Lofink - 6 years | Jarek Evens - 1 year |
| Maintenance Officer: Gene Emmer - 19 years | Dan Gaus - 1 year |
| Training Officer: Kevin Georgeson - 5 years | Riley Humphrey - 1 year |
| | Brendan Leder - 1 year |
| | Macy Wesbrock - 1 year |
-
- | | |
|----------------------------|---|
| FIREFIGHTERS | FIRST RESPONDERS |
| John Deering - 19 years | EMS Director - Sharon Reichelt - 17 years |
| Andrew Grawien - 4 years | Mike Caylor - 17 years |
| Nick Krzanowski - 19 years | Andy Grawien - 4 years |
| Dustin Meunier - 19 years | Mark Handlin - 17 years |
| Dave O'Brien - 19 years | John Uttech - 17 years |
| Maxine Schuetze - 12 years | Marilyn Zastrow - 17 years |
| John Spohn - 13 years | Valerie Caylor - 8 years |
| John Rainville - 19 years | |

Municipalities covered: Town of Pine River
 Equipment Utilized: A 2019 Pierce Enforcer pumper, a 1993 Pierce pumper, two tankers, a brush truck, a six-wheeled off-road rescue vehicle, a heavy-duty rescue truck, and a utility truck for manpower transport and fill-site operations.

Training: Each member of the department is certified Firefighter 1; many have gone on to become Firefighter II certified. We utilize our own in-house training program and have three certified instructors on our roster. We also use the NTC Merrill Campus to keep our members up to date on the latest training advances in fire service and work with the Towns of Texas and Hewitt quarterly.

What your department is most proud of: "We enjoy

a strong commitment from both our members and our town residents to keep the Department well-staffed and adequately equipped. This past October 5 we had our annual open house and once again saw record crowds. We sincerely appreciate the community support and the support of all of our sponsors. Funds raised at this event are used for equipment purchases, such as the new/used engine we bought this summer to replace our Seagrave pumper. This December we are looking forward to holding our third annual Santa in the Firehouse, which is becoming a very popular holiday event and gives us a chance to give back to the community and hopefully garner interest in the Fire Department among the youngsters. They are our future after all.



Photos courtesy of Pine River Fire Department.

Town of Russell Volunteer Fire Department



The Town of Russell Fire Department poses with their newest addition, Engine 4-23. Town of Russell Fire Department photo.

N5369 State Highway 17, Gleason, WI 54435

Emergency: 911 • Non-Emergency: 715.873.4033

The Town of Russell Fire Department is a volunteer Fire Department that proudly protects the Townships of Russell, Schley, Birch, and the southern portion of Harrison, as well as Lincoln Hills School and Copper Lake School in Lincoln County. The Department also serves the Townships of Summit, and Parrish in Langlade County.

Equipment utilized: Eng. 7 & 23, 1500GPM Pump; Eng. 6 1500 GPM pump with compressed air foam; Tender 8 holds 3000 Gal with 500GPM pump; Tender 5 holds 3000gal with 500GPM pump; Truck 3 4-door Utility 4X4 pickup, Truck 3 1-Ton 4X4 Brush Truck; Rescue 1 Polaris UTV with Tracks. The Town of Russell Volunteer Fire Department's newest engine, dedicated to the memory of Gary Preuser [last call 8-13-93], entered into service on May 28, 2022.

Town of Russell First Responders

N5369 State Highway 17, Gleason, WI 54435

Emergency: 911 • Non-Emergency: 715.218.2585

The Town of Russell First Responders is a volunteer Emergency Medical Responder organization. They proudly support Antigo Ambulance, Merrill Ambulance, Oneida County Ambulance, and Tomahawk Ambulance within their service area. They currently serve the Towns of Birch,

Harrison, Russell, and Schley in Lincoln County, and Parrish, Summit, and Vilas in Langlade County. "We are truly blessed to serve our surrounding communities."

FIRST RESPONDER STAFF

- | | |
|---------------|-----------------|
| Tricia Maas | Andrew Headings |
| Tim Steinfest | Michelle Last |

DEPARTMENT STAFF

- | | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| Fire Chief: Robert P. Kressel | FIREFIGHTERS | Greg Lange | Adam Schenk |
| Assistant Chief: Mike Hoffman | Cody Bergman | Christian Lee | Tina Schenk |
| Captain: Marcel Rusch | Travis Gerdes | Keith Maas | Elise Schuler |
| 1st Lieutenant: Cody Bergman | Dave Heller | Jeff Miller | Samuel Schuler |
| 2nd Lieutenant: Keith Maas | Tony Hillskotter | John Mooneyham | Keith Stoney |
| Secretary: Kristy Isbemer | Mike Hoffman | Rosaleta Pahnke | Jason Yanke |
| Treasurer: Jamie Rusch | Kristy Isbemer | Tim Ronis | Jamie Hillskotter |
| | Timothy Klimmek | Jamie Rusch | Gunnar Kressel |
| | Robert P. Kressel | Marcel Rusch | Jerzie Rusch |

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NO KID HUNGRY

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MOVIE from page 9

blowhard's browbeaten exasperation in such a distinctly funny way that I find it hard to compare to anything else. The man is on an all-time heater for the entire movie, chewing up scenery every chance he gets. Everything about Gleason's performance - his line deliveries, his timing, his facial expressions, his physicality - it's all absolute gold, and it never fails to make me laugh. It's one of my favorite comedic performances.

Someday, when aliens land on Earth and demand to see our species' most acclaimed and cherished works of art, will the powers that be consider showing them *Smokey and the Bandit?* Probably not. But should they? Maybe! Look, I won't pretend to know what an extraterrestrial could learn about humanity from staring at the Mona Lisa or reading *The Grapes of Wrath*, but what I can tell you is that if they want to get an idea about what it means to be cool in America, then *Smokey and the Bandit* is a key text. And, on top of that, it's one of mankind's most inspirational stories: In the end, despite the odds, they do what they say can't be done.

Jalen's columns, "Movies You Gotta See" and "The Free Play," can be found online at medium.com/@jalenmaki.

MAPS accepts July donations

The following donations were approved and/or accepted at the July 17 Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) Board of Directors meeting:

A check from the Merrill Lions Club valued at \$385 for new equipment for the Merrill Tennis Team;

a monetary gift from Associated Bank valued at \$250 for the MAPS Youth Soccer Program; and, funds from Bob & Janet Grunenwald (as part of the State Farm Matching Program) - \$1,500 for the baseball team and \$1,000 for the cross country team.

Aquatic Center seeks sponsors to purchase additional chairs

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The Merrill Area Park and Recreation Department is seeking sponsors to purchase additional chairs to be used poolside/at the Bierman Family Aquatic Center at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex (MARC). The cost is \$125 per chair, and chairs can be sponsored by a group, organization, business, or individual. A plaque listing all of the sponsors will be put up at the Aquatic

Center. To sponsor a chair, send payment of \$125 for each chair sponsorship to Katie Paez, N2688 State Rd. 107, Merrill WI 54452. Be sure to include your name or business name and address, phone number, and email, along with how you would like your donor name shown on the sponsorship plaque.

For more information or to get a sponsorship form, email Dawn.Smith@ci.merrill.wi.us or call 715.536.7313.



The Lincoln County Humane Society wants to thank Sarah and Bristol who recently brought in some items for the cats at the shelter. Submitted photo.

MERRILL Foto News
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FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/merrill.fotonews

Pet of the Week

This handsome boy is **Toby!** Isn't there someone that needs a sweet older man in their life!? **Toby** is looking for that special someone to call his new family! **Toby** is a very nice boy who is great with people and has been around other dogs. **Toby** is going to need a home that is cat free since he does not get along with them.
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.
SPONSORED BY **Dave's County Market**
300 E. First St. Merrill, WI

MERRILL FOTO NEWS
Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is Chelsea Wengeler
Daughter of Shannon Dellenbach and Steve Wengeler
Chelsea is in the 6th grade at St. John Lutheran School. She was nominated by Mrs. Burtman.
What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
Art, because I enjoy painting.
What is your favorite part of school? Why?
Hanging out with my friends, and I like all the lunches.
What would you like to do/become someday? Why?
An electrical engineer or a ballerina.
Chelsea has been putting forth great effort in both Math and World History. In addition to her conscientious schoolwork, she is also eager to participate in class. Chelsea is always willing to help a classmate that might need help. She is such a pleasure to have in class.
~ Mrs. Burtman
Student of the Week Sponsored by:
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(715) 536-5400

The Hanging Flower Basket Committee gratefully acknowledges all individuals, organizations and businesses for their support of the 2024 Hanging Flower Basket Project.

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Fraternal Order of Eagles

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Merrill City Band
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Sid & Eva Sukow
Bruce & Jean English

VFW Post 1638 Auxiliary
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Wisconsin Phi Master
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Nancy Strand
In Memory of Judy Steinagel Don Evans
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In Memory of Ron Nicklaus
Dave & Sue Pyan
Carol Plautz
XI Alpha Nu
Memory of Judy Steinagel
Gene & Karleen Bebel
Dee Olsen
Dave & Theresa O'Brien
OUR THANKS FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT! THE COMMITTEE
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Ginny Drew
Marcy Barney
Nancy Dabbert
Darrel Dengel

Also, our special thanks for assistance from the Merrill Street Department, Park and Rec Department, The Chamber Foundation, Cheryl Skoug, High Ground Tree Farms, and OUR WATERERS, JERRY BURNETT & GREGORY RADKE

CLASSIFIEDS

General Employment 7110

RETAIL OPPORTUNITY
I am looking for person(s) to assist me in liquidating our sewing machines, vacuum cleaners, sewing furniture & supplies from our recently closed retail business after over 30 years. Have a large inventory to work with by displaying, online, & other areas to sell our inventory. For the right person(s) would be very profitable. Call Doug at Tomahawk Sew N Vac for details at 715-224-3401.

Health Care 7115

CNA Wanted for In Home Care. Variable shifts available. Immediate start. Must have references. At least 2 years of experience and must be able to pass a background check. Starting pay \$20/hr (weekly pay in cash). Located in Merrill. Call Michele 715-921-0790

Professional and Technical 7135

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Announcements 7005

FLORIDA BOUND EMPTY TRUCK. Can move household & Cars - CHEAP! Local 414-520-1612

LABORER WANTED: Someone to remove brick chimney from older home. Aniwa area. Call 715-449-2504. Leave a message and we'll call you back.

Announcements 7005



Merrill Girls Basketball Youth Sign Up: Scan the QR Code, go under "teams" to find "youth traveling teams" and sign your girls up for basketball and let's have some fun! Grades 3rd-8th. <https://sites.google.com/maps.k12.wi.us/merrillgirlsbasketball/teams/youth-traveling-teams>

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

Miscellaneous Merchandise 7266

For Sale: Big & Tall men's clothing: flannel & summer shirts, new winter jackets, T-shirts, sizes 4XLT to 5XLT; also jeans: 42x32, 44x32. Call 715-581-5352

Wanted to Buy 7268

COLLECTIONS OF OLD BASEBALL & FOOTBALL CARDS. From the 1950s, 60s, 70s & older. Vintage sport memorabilia autographs bobbleheads & Packers/Braves items. Check your attic, basement & closets. We pay in CASH call Jeff 608-438-7702

WANTED: Old drum sets, snare drums, cymbals from the 1920s through 1970s. Also interested in pro level drum equipment and electronic drums from 1980s to present. Call 615-485-8611 or email me at: yourolddrumz@gmail.com

Cats 7270

Snowshoe & Siamese Kittens: 8 wks to 5 mos. \$300.00 neg. 715-421-3667

Dogs 7272

AKC GOLDEN RETRIEVER PUPS. Shots Vet ck'd. Wormed. \$700 Can deliver 715-255-2661 (#269146) 10/21

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- Or go to www.indeed.com to search vacancies

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APPLICATIONS AVAILABLE IN GLASS BULLETIN BOARD AT W4594 PROGRESS AVENUE AND AT--www.townofmerrillwi.gov or call Chairman-Mike Hass with questions at 715-218-7821

MERRILL STREET DEPARTMENT

Applications are now being accepted to fill a mechanic position within the Street Department.

Applications can be found at the City Clerk's office or online at <http://www.ci.merrill.wi.us/employment>.

Auctions 7282

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Superintendent's Corner ...

A sad end of an era for Merrill

At the end of this school year, the Wendorf family will be retiring from the school bussing business after 65 years of transporting generations of families - which is a sad end of an era for MAPS and our entire community.

Merrill has always had a somewhat unique bussing arrangement. Years ago there were several bus companies serving our students, schools, and community, each with their own territory or part of the district that they served. Over time, as one family and company decided to retire, one of the others would buy them out. When I started in Merrill 20 years ago, Bushar, Peterson, and Wendorf all ran bussing companies in our district, which meant MAPS designed the routes, ran the dispatch, oversaw the overall bussing operations, etc. While that arrangement is unique, it worked here for many years. Several years ago, Bushar retired, followed by Peterson a few years later, which left

Wendorf with the entire district for the past several years.

The nice thing about our bussing operations here is that we have had great consistency in drivers over the years, both on the local routes and on extracurricular trips. It was very common for the same driver to have the same route for years. The same drivers would take every wrestling trip, every girls basketball trip, etc. This meant that the students and athletes enjoyed consistent relationships with their drivers and the drivers took a great interest in our students and athletes. In many ways, we've been spoiled here when it comes to our bussing.

However, like many things, the bussing business has grown more and more challenging over the years. Regulations are ramped up, training and certification requirements have grown, driver shortages persist. All those things combine to make things very challenging for the

small, local bus companies.

As we transition to next school year, many things will change when, for the first time in many years (if not the first time ever), we begin soliciting bids from companies from around the state to provide bussing services for our district. I'm confident we will be successful in bringing in a good one; however, this will lead to changes in the services we have grown to expect over the years - changes that are yet to be determined.

In the meantime, however, I look forward to working with Dave, Sara, Rachel, and the entire Wendorf Bussing crew for the remainder of this year, as they have been as steady and dependable as any I have heard of. We have appreciated the relationship we have shared over the years and wish them the best as they plan for their retirement from the bussing industry.

Shannon Murray
Superintendent



Thank you to Van De Weerd family for donating money to the animals at the Lincoln County Humane Society from their Weerdapalooza family reunion. Submitted photo.

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Jesse Boyd, Chair of the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors, spoke at the formal part of the Lincoln County Sesquicentennial celebration in Merrill on Oct. 19, 2024. Joseph Frederick photo.



Live music under the tent helped set the stage for a celebration. And with food trucks on site, it was a great place to grab a beer, eat, relax, and enjoy everything Lincoln County's 150th birthday celebration in Merrill had to offer. Joseph Frederick photo.



History loving diners enjoy breakfast in Tomahawk to kick off Lincoln County's Sesquicentennial Celebration! Submitted photo.



With games and prizes and face painting and bouncy houses, there were lots of activities for kids. Joseph Frederick photo.



The St. John Old-fashioned Carnival was a great success at the Merrill Fairgrounds, and proceeds will be used to help build a new, expanded childcare facility in Merrill. Joseph Frederick photo.



Lots of fun and excitement playing the carnival games. Joseph Frederick photo.



Volunteers serve up a hearty celebratory breakfast in Tomahawk. Submitted photo.

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The Merrill Bluejays Varsity Football Players and Dance Team make an entrance, with the football players in special pink jerseys for breast cancer awareness.
Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.



Now that's a kick!

Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.

Merrill Varsity Football: A loss and a win, qualifies the team for playoffs as #7 seed

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Saturday, Oct. 12, 2024, the Merrill Varsity Football Team hosted Tomahawk's team in an afternoon of fall football, but Tomahawk took away the win.

"For the second week in a row the Bluejays fell just short in a one-score game," said Merrill Varsity Head Football Coach Jason Wadzinski. "They lost a wet and chilly matchup Saturday against Tomahawk. We didn't win the battle at line of scrimmage on Saturday and that cost us dearly."

Tomahawk picked up the only touchdown score in the first quarter (kick) and Merrill made a touchdown on a three-yard run (failed two-point conversion) in the second quarter, so the score at halftime had Tomahawk up by one point: 7-6.

In the third quarter, Tomahawk made a near repeat performance of their first quarter and picked up another 7 points, while Merrill managed a 27-yard field goal for 3. In the fourth quarter, Tomahawk was again first to score, picking up a 25-yard field goal of their own. Merrill picked up two points on a safety at the end of

the game, but it wasn't enough to make a difference.

"We're sitting at 4-4 on the season and looking to finish strong this Friday up in Rhinelander in efforts to clinch a winning season and a playoff berth," Wadzinski said.

Box Score
Tomahawk 17 @ Merrill 11

The Merrill Varsity Football Team hit the road last Friday night, Oct. 18, to play the Rhinelander Hodags, and they did indeed finish up strong enough to nudge them into the playoffs.

The Merrill Bluejays scored first in the game against the Hodags, landing a touchdown with a two-point conversion in the first quarter, to put eight points on the scoreboard.

In the second quarter, Rhinelander made a touchdown, but failed in their two-point conversion attempt, and then the Bluejays landed another one in the endzone but also failed at their two-point conversion attempt. That put the score at Merrill 14-Rhinelander 6 going into halftime.

See FOOTBALL page 19



Young dancers and possible future Dance Team members helped cheer at the game, an annual Merrill tradition at one special game per year.
Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.

2024 Merrill High School Fall Sports Schedule

Boys Football (Varsity, JV, and JV2)
Fri. Oct. 25 WIAA Playoffs-Onalaska (Varsity) Away 7:00 pm

Cheer Team (Varsity & JV)
Fri. Oct. 25 Onalaska (Varsity) Away 7:00 pm

Girls Swim & Dive (Varsity and JV)
Thurs. Oct. 24 Wausau West (Varsity & JV) Home 5:30 pm
Tues. Oct. 29 Stevens Point (JV) Away 5:30 pm
Thurs. Oct. 31 WI Rapids (Varsity) Away 5:30 pm

Girls Volleyball (Varsity, JV, and JV2)
There are no scheduled events for this week • Sections Sat. Nov. 2nd

Boys Soccer (Varsity and JV)
Thurs. Oct. 24 Shawano-Regional's Away 7:00 pm

Girls Cross Country (Varsity and JV)
Fri. Oct. 25 Colby-Sectionals (Varsity) Away 4:15 pm

Boys Cross Country (Varsity and JV)
Fri. Oct. 25 Colby-Sectionals (Varsity) Away 5:00 pm

For More Information On Playoff Schedules & Brackets
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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Marissa Miles, a Sophomore at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week for the week of Oct. 24, 2024. Marissa is on the Merrill High School Varsity Swim Team where she competes individually and as part of relay teams. Her favorite event is the 100-yard butterfly, and this year she set a new personal record of 102:48 in this event. Last year she was named Conference Champion in the 100-yard freestyle event. Marissa has been swimming since she was young, and competitively since age seven, first as part of the Tomahawk Swim Club and, afterward and still, for the Merrill Aqua Jays where she started when she transferred to the MAPS District four years ago. Marissa has also been playing softball since she was seven and generally plays outfield or second base. She started for the Tomahawk City League and now plays for the Merrill High School JV Softball Team. Since she was four years old, she's also been in dance, first at Terry Bucaro Fine Art Studio and now at Brooke's School of Dance where she takes hip hop, pointe, and tap. At school, Marissa is on Student Council and her favorite classes are math and science. In her free time, Marissa sometimes works for Bein' Crafty making t-shirts for local businesses. She enjoys shopping, hanging out with friends, camping with family and friends, going up north and to Door County, "just chilling in the lake," tubing, water skiing, and any water sports. The daughter of Rick and Dani Miles of Tomahawk, Marissa has a 3.6 GPA. After graduation, she plans to pursue a career in the sports medicine field.



Marissa Miles

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FOOTBALL *from page 19*

In the third quarter, Merrill made a touchdown on a one-yard run with a two-point conversion, putting Merrill up 22-6, but the rest of that quarter remained scoreless.

In the fourth quarter, Rhinelander tried for a comeback from behind, landing a touchdown on a one-yard run of their own (failed two-point conversion), but Merrill wasn't letting up and they scored another touchdown, this time on a 19-yard run, with another good two-point conversion, bringing the score to Merrill 30-Rhinelander 12. The Hodags didn't give up and managed to score another touchdown on a 13-yard pass (two-point conversion failed), but it just wasn't enough.

"The Bluejays won the 100th matchup between Rhinelander and Merrill Friday night," Wadzinski said. "Aiden Lonsdorf eclipsed 1,000 yards passing on the season, and Callum Wheeler had 144 on the ground with 2 touchdowns."

"Carson Brooks scored from the offensive line with a hook n' ladder play in the second quarter," he said.

Wadzinski summarized the game as "A great all-around team win for the Jays."

"With that win, the Jays qualify for the playoffs as a #7 seed," he said. "They will travel to Onalaska on Friday night, Oct. 25. This is the second time in three years that Merrill has been playoff eligible."

Box Score
Merrill 30 @
Rhinelander 18

#2 EJ Weix has the ball for Merrill.
 Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.



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