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WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2024 ■ VOLUME 40 ■ ISSUE 51 ■ 715.384.4440 ■ MARSHFIELD, WI **FREE**

Remains found in field in Marshfield

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD--On Saturday, Dec. 7, 2024, the Marshfield Police Department responded to a call regarding the discovery of human remains in a field adjacent to W. McMillan St, near N. St. Joseph's Ave in the City of Marshfield.

Upon arrival, officers secured the scene and initiated an investigation. The individual's identity was able to be determined, however, will not be released pending notification of their family. Preliminary information suggests that no foul play was involved, diminishing any concern for the public's safety at this time. The investigation is ongoing.

MMC Announces Holiday Break for Printed Editions

MMC will not publish a printed edition of this paper between December 26 through January 1. This will allow our employees to enjoy quality time with their families during the holiday season. This publication will resume publishing on its regular day after the new year begins. Thank you for your understanding, and we wish you a joyous holiday season!

Patrick Wood - Publisher



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Cruise for a Cause donates \$175,700 to Marshfield Clinic Research Institute for breast cancer research

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD – Pittsville native Dan Neve and his family are all too familiar with breast and other cancer diagnoses.

In 2010 while his wife, Linda, was undergoing treatment for breast cancer, he decided to combine his passion for cars and desire to fight back against breast cancer. Cruise for a Cause was launched. Traveling the country in his Mustang Shelby GT 500 to car shows, auto races, and countless other events, Neve has raised more than a \$1.3 million for cancer research. Dan himself underwent kidney cancer surgery in February just three weeks prior to attending his first event in Tennessee.

Last week, Dan and Linda met with more than 100 researchers, physicians and scientists at Marshfield Clinic Research Institute and presented a \$175,730 check to fund cancer research within Marshfield Clinic Health System. He said that Cruise for a Cause's mission statement of "Delivering hope where we go" also relates to them.

"Delivering hope should be in each of your job descriptions, because I truly believe that is what you do," Dan Neve said. "You give others hope with the jobs that you all do. You gave Linda and I hope 14 years ago. You gave hope to Linda's two sisters

who lost their fights with breast cancer and you give hope to her youngest sister who is undergoing chemo treatments as she begins her journey with breast cancer."

Cruise for a Cause's biggest event of the year is the annual Fall Ford Fest held the first weekend in October and features a car show, car parade, auction, golf outing and other activities in Wisconsin Dells. The event draws thousands of Ford lovers and people who want to continue the fight against breast cancer.

"Cancer touches everybody, and we will continue to fight cancer one patient at a time, one family at a time," said oncologist/hematologist Dr. Adedayo Onitilo, who is one of the leading cancer researchers in Wisconsin.

Marshfield Clinic Research Institute Executive Director and Chief Research Officer Dr. Jennifer Meece said critical cancer research takes place in Wisconsin communities that can benefit cancer patients across the world.

"The latest treatment options for cancer, research studies and clinical trials are being worked on by our physicians and scientists in Marshfield, Weston, Minocqua Eau Claire and other communities," Meece said. "The fight against cancer is taking place in our backyard and Marshfield Clinic



Cruise for a Cause donated \$175,730 to Marshfield Clinic Research Institute to support cancer research. Pictured from left to right, Tiffany Halan, Director of Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation Operations; Linda Neve and Dan Neve, Cruise for a Cause founders; and Dr. Jennifer Meece, Marshfield Clinic Research Institute Executive Director and Chief Research Officer.

Research Institute is a key component."

"Dan and Linda Neve have an unparalleled passion for fundraising and providing hope to all affected by cancer," said Tiffany Halan, Director of Marshfield Clinic Health System Foundation Operations. "We are incredibly grateful

to them and their generous supporters for their local support of cancer research."

Learn more about Cruise for a Cause and its many events and fundraisers across the country at <https://cruise4acause.org/>.

DNR seeking public comment for environmental review of Marshfield safe drinking water loan program project

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced the city of Marshfield is an applicant for funding through the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program to improve its public drinking water system.

The project includes the replacement of both public and private lead service lines throughout the city of Marshfield.

Activities related to this project are minor actions under Chapter NR 150, Wis. Admin. Code,

for which no environmental analysis is required; however, following the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program federal requirement 40 C.F.R. §35.3580, an environmental review must be conducted before funding this project.

The Safe Drinking Water Loan Program has determined that the project will not result in significant adverse environmental effects, and no further environmental review or analysis is needed before proceeding with funding the project.

The public is encouraged to submit comments regarding this decision and the potential environmental impacts of this project. Submit comments by Dec. 25, 2024 to:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
C/O Michelle Brietzman, Community Financial Assistance, CF/2 101 S. Webster St. P.O. Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707

DNRCFELEnvironmentalReview@wisconsin.gov

Based on the comments received, the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program may prepare an environmental analysis before proceeding with the funding process. The analysis would summarize the DNR's consideration of the project's impacts and reasonable alternatives.

Officer involved death investigation in Township of Grand Rapids

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) is conducting an officer involved death investigation in the Township of Grand Rapids, Wood County, Wis. that occurred on the evening of Dec. 8, 2024.

At approximately 11:40 p.m., a Township of Grand Rapids police officer responded to a check welfare call at a residence in the 7500 block of Kellner Road in the Township of Grand Rapids, Wis. Upon arrival, the Township of Grand Rapids police officer encountered an uncooperative female and law enforcement officers with the Wisconsin Rapids Police Department and Wood County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene to assist. The female was taken into custody and

became unresponsive on the scene shortly after. The female was transported by ambulance to a local hospital and was pronounced deceased at the hospital. No firearms were discharged during this incident.

Involved law enforcement officers are on administrative duty, per agencies' policies. Involved law enforcement officers were wearing body cameras during the incident. DCI is leading this investigation and are assisted by a DCI Crime Response Specialist. All involved law enforcement are fully cooperating with DCI during this investigation.

DCI is continuing to review evidence and determine the facts of this incident and will turn over the investigative reports to the Wood County District Attorney's office when the investigation concludes.

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Celebrate 125 years of the Wisconsin State Park System in 2025

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is previewing a year-long celebration of the quasiquintennial anniversary of the Wisconsin State Park System in 2025.

The public is invited to participate in the 125th anniversary celebration of the Wisconsin State Park System by spending time on public lands, attending commemorative events throughout the year and learning about the park system's history.

"More than 20 million people visit Wisconsin's state parks and forests every year to enjoy the great outdoors," said Steve Schmelzer, DNR Parks and Recreation Management director. "Wisconsin is a recreation destination, and we are excited to provide a special experience to our visitors this year."

Over the last 125 years, the state park system has shown commitment to natural resource stewardship and providing high-quality outdoor recreation opportunities to the people of Wisconsin. A broad spectrum of property types, including state parks, forests, recreation areas and trails, provide scenic, accessible and affordable spaces for visitors to recreate and enjoy the outdoors.

In 1899, the Wisconsin state legislature approved an act providing funds to acquire land for what is today Interstate Park. The state park was established in 1900, with land acquisition beginning in September of that year. The establishment of Interstate Park also marks the founding of the Wisconsin State Park System, which has since grown to include state parks, forests, trails and recreation areas comprised of over 307,000 acres of public land.

"This anniversary celebration is not only a chance to acknowledge the contributions the Wisconsin State Park System has made to natural resource stewardship and outdoor recreation tourism over the last 125 years. It's also an opportunity to look to the future and highlight the investments that we are making to expand access to public lands and maintain a state park system that serves



Photo by Wisconsin DNR

the health and wellbeing of the people of Wisconsin long-term," said Diane Brusoe, DNR Fish, Wildlife and Parks division administrator.

Since 1900, Wisconsin has established 50 state parks, 44 state trails, 15 state forests, 9 state recreation areas and 8 river and resource areas. Today, the DNR continues to invest in programs and initiatives that ensure this statewide system of outdoor recreation properties remains an accessible connection to Wisconsin's natural resources for visitors.

Over the next 125 years, the Wisconsin State Park System will prioritize investments in programs that:

Provide relevant and innovative enhancements that benefit the customer experience, planting of native species and integration of web-based technologies such as the online pass sales platform.

Maintain and improve public access and recreational facilities on DNR-managed lands throughout the state.

Expand access to public lands and outdoor recreation through universal and adaptive recreation equipment and amenities, community-based partnerships like the Check Out Wisconsin State Parks At Your Library program and a focus on beginner-friendly skill-building programming from industry experts.

The DNR will commemorate the 125th anniversary with celebrations and special events led by state park system staff and partners. Visitors are encouraged to visit the DNR Events calendar to find details on events happening throughout the year. Contributions by Friends Groups, volunteers and community partners are vital to the success of event offerings. Learn more about how to get involved on the DNR's Volunteer Opportunities webpage.

Wisconsin State Park System visitors are invited to try something new in 2025. Equipment rentals allow customers to participate in outdoor recreation activities that require extra gear, such as kayaking, canoeing or bicycling, without needing to buy equipment. This is an excellent option for beginners or those looking to develop their skills.

The public is encouraged to participate in the 125th anniversary celebration by purchasing their 2025 Wisconsin state park and forest vehicle admission pass early in the year. Both daily and 12-month vehicle admission and trail passes are available for purchase online. Customers who order their 12-month vehicle admission pass online will have it shipped directly to their preferred address. In 2025, the 12-month state park and forest vehicle admission passes will be valid until the date marked on the pass rather than expiring at the end of the year.

Over the last several years, interest in camping in state campgrounds has remained high. More than 6,000 Wisconsin State Park System campsites offer a range of camping experiences, including standard, group, backpack and water access sites; accessible campsites and cabins for persons with disabilities; indoor group camps and equestrian campgrounds.

All Wisconsin State Park System campsites require a reservation. The DNR recommends customers make reservations for the 2025 season early, as reservations are subject to availability. The reservation site's "notify me" feature can alert customers when a site meeting their selected criteria becomes available.

Single vehicle crash leaves driver deceased

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD--On Dec. 7 at 11:31 p.m., the Wood County Dispatch Center received a report of a single vehicle crash on Millcreek Drive, west of Hwy 10 in the Township of Cameron. Law Enforcement personnel and First Responders arrived on scene and found a single male operator/occupant of the vehicle, Chad Lamar Delaney (49) of Marshfield. Life saving measures were administered to Delaney. These attempts were unsuccessful, and he was pronounced dead at the scene. Initial on scene investigation indicates the vehicle was traveling westbound on Millcreek Drive at a high rate of speed. The vehicle left the roadway, overturned and crashed. The Wood County Sheriff's Department was assisted at the scene by the Marshfield Police Department, Marshfield Ambulance Service, Cameron Fire Department, Hewitt Fire Department, Wood County Dispatch Center, Dave's Service Center and the Wood County Coroner.

Suspect arrested in Neillsville stabbing

FOR CITY TIMES

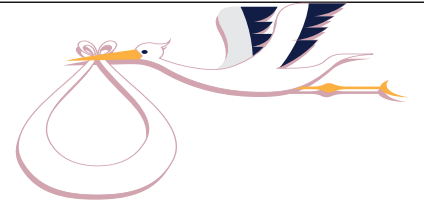
WOOD COUNTY--Officers from the Neillsville Police Department responded to a stabbing at a home in the 20 block of Grand Avenue in Neillsville at 2:37 p.m. on Dec 7, 2024. The victim of the stabbing, done with a kitchen knife, spoke with officers and was treated for non-life-threatening injuries. Police identified Cedric Riggins as the suspect in the stabbing. Riggins was taken into custody at around 4:30 p.m. the same day without incident. Riggins was booked into the Clark County Jail on charges of substantial battery and disorderly conduct.

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| BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT |

On Dec. 6, 2024, Tabitha Krukowski and Joseph Alfuth welcomed their new baby boy, Jaxson Alfuth. Jaxson was born in Stevens Point, Wisconsin.



INFORMATION SYSTEMS TECHNICIAN



The purpose of this position is to provide technical support for the Water Works and Lighting Commission's and the City of Wisconsin Rapids computer information systems and SCADA environment. The work is performed under the direction of the Information Systems Administrator. This is an exempt (non-union) position.

The minimum training and experience required to perform the essential job functions are an Associate's Degree in Computer Science or related field, two years system administration and networking experience, or any combination of education and experience that provides equivalent knowledge, skills and abilities.

Working knowledge of Microsoft operating systems and software as well as virtual environments. Must have ability to troubleshoot networking and workstation problems. Desired skills would include knowledge of SCADA systems, cloud environments, and cyber security.

WW&LC offers a full benefit package including competitive wage, health and dental insurance, paid holidays, vacation, and participation in the Wisconsin Retirement System. Selected candidate must successfully pass a physical including drug screen and a reference and background investigation.

An application packet is available at the Water Works and Lighting Commission office at 221 16th Street South, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin or online at www.wrwvlc.com. All questions should be directed to Matt Stormoen at 715.422.9053.

A completed application, resume, and a cover letter must be submitted in a sealed envelope and must be received by 12:00 Noon on January 10, 2025. This position will remain open until the position is filled.

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OBITUARIES



CHARLES WEIS

Charles Reinhold Weis (Charlie), age 83, of Marshfield, formerly of Loyal, passed away peacefully on Sunday, December 8th, 2024 surrounded by the love of his family.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 am on Monday, December 16th, 2024, at Our Lady of Peace, where a gathering for family and friends will be from 10:00 am until service time. Father Douglas Robertson will officiate. A visitation will be held

from 2:00 pm to 6:00 pm on Sunday, December 15th, at Rembs Funeral Home, Marshfield, where the Knights of Columbus will conduct a Rosary Service at 5:30 pm.

Charles graduated from Loyal High School in 1959. On October 3, 1959, he married the love of his life at Corpus Christi Church in Bakerville. Together, they began their life on the family farm located a mile and a quarter east of Spokeville. There, they raised their family, instilling values of love, a strong work ethic, and Christian faith.

Charlie had a deep appreciation for the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman. Alongside farming, he built a successful career as a Seed Corn Dealer, which afforded them to travel extensively, visiting countries around the world and all 50 states.

After retiring from farming in 1999, Charles and Grace built a home in Bakerville, continuing their passion for travel. They especially enjoyed the freedom of exploring 49 of the 50 states by motorcycle. In his retirement, Charlie's love for the outdoors led him to work part-time in the sporting goods department at Walmart for seven years.

Charles was a true family man. He loved spending time with his children, grandchildren, and the "Greats" who jokingly called him Grandpa Goat. Dinners and holidays were great family gatherings. Cribbage and Sheep Head were among some of his favorite card games to play with family and with his friends at the Senior Citizen Center.

Charlie is survived by Grace, his life-long love of 65 years, and their three daughters, Angel (Peter) Scheckman of Loyal, Victoria (Leon) Piech of Marshfield, and Lisa Pipkorn (Matt Gilles) of Ridgeway. He is also survived by ten loving grandsons Joseph (Nicole) Haebig, Joshua (Theresa) Haebig, Matthew (Kim) Scheckman, Ryan (Kehly) Scheckman, Cody Scheckman, Tyler (Lindsay) Weis, Richard Lowe, Maxwell Pipkorn, David Pipkorn, Alexander Pipkorn, and 11 great grandchildren: Wyatt, Whitley, Paisley, Jaxon Haebig, Jordan, Abagale, Joselyn Haebig, Daelyn, Kilyn Scheckman, Adalynn and Killian Scheckman.

Charles is further survived by his sister Eleanor (Melvin) Johnson of Marshfield, Gertrude Jicinsky of Stratford, and Sylvester (Janie) Weis of Chili.

Charles was preceded in death by parents Reinhold and Lorraine Weis, his daughter Pamela Haebig, and his son Christopher Weis, brother-in-law Robert Jicinsky, son-in-law Brian Pipkorn.



CHARLES MALECHA

Charles William Malecha, Pittsville, WI died Monday December 9, 2024 at Aspen Acres Assisted Living in Hayward.

A Funeral Service will be held for Chuck at 11am Tuesday, December 17, 2024 at the Buchanan/Rembs Funeral Home in Pittsville with Pastor Gary Markworth officiating. Visitation will be from 9:30am until time of service. He will be buried at 11am Wednesday at the Northern Wisconsin Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Spooner, Wisconsin with military honors performed there.

He was born on June 25, 1933 in Rice County, MN to Joseph and Marie (Kohout) Malecha. Chuck was a 1951 graduate from Northfield High School in Northfield, MN. He enlisted in the Navy in September 1951. He served during the Korean War in the 7th Pacific Fleet on the Destroyers USS Nicholas, USS Epperson, and USS Phillip. He was honorably discharged in August 1955. A special occasion of Chuck's took place on May 13, 2013. He took a trip of a lifetime and went to Washington DC on the Never Forgotten Honor Flight. A day he said he would never forget.

He married Margaret Mulligan in February 1956 in Minnesota. They later divorced. He later married Leah (Ritter) Kalepp on January 28, 1977 in Prescott, Wisconsin.

He worked as a boiler operator for 19 years at Koch Refining in Pine Bend, MN. He also worked for many years as an AODA Counselor and then as a truck driver for Tritz Transport, Roehl Trucking, and Kasner Trucking. He semi-retired in 1996. He was a member of the VFW and was active for many years in the Civil Air Patrol. He loved raising Arabian horses and also enjoyed camping, fishing, bowling, & hunting.

He is survived by two sons: Charles L (Chip) and Dean J Malecha and two daughters: Debra (Larry) Kinter, and Cindy Cole; 2 stepchildren Dan (Sue) Kalepp of Spencer, WI and Deena (Howard) Johnson of Hayward, WI. He is further survived by 7 grandchildren and 8 great-grandchildren, his brother Harold (BJ) Malecha of Oregon and by many other loving family and friends.

He is preceded in death by his parents, wife Leah, siblings: Donald, James, Agnes Kalina, Glen, Bernice Malecha, and Janice Angill.

The family wishes to extend a special thank you to the wonderful staff at Aspen Acres Assisted Living and Hayward Regional Hospice Services for their loving care.

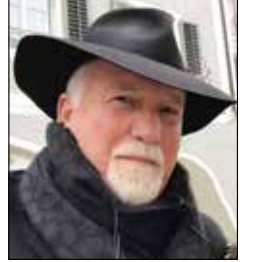
Condolences may be sent online at www.rembsfh.com

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

A New Year With New Beginnings

Dear Reader,

As the calendar turns to another New Year, we find ourselves at a familiar crossroads, a time for renewal and reflection. It's a time when we take stock of our lives, weighing the good against the bad, and consider the impact we've had on the world around us. The New Year offers a chance to set new goals and make resolutions in the hopes of becoming the best versions of ourselves.



Yet, as many of us know, the resolve we feel on January 1st can be fleeting. How often do we revisit our resolutions a year later, only to find they've been forgotten, buried under the weight of daily routines and unexpected challenges? Despite our best intentions, life has a way of diverting our focus, and those grand plans can slip away unnoticed.

But perhaps that's okay. The beauty of the New Year lies not just in our ambitions but in the grace we grant ourselves when we fall short. It's a time to acknowledge our humanity, to understand that growth is not always linear, and that the journey itself—full of missteps and lessons—is what truly matters.

So as we step into this New Year, let's embrace the opportunity to dream, to set intentions, and to strive for better. But let's also be kind to ourselves when we stumble, and remember that each new day brings with it the possibility of renewal.

Wishing you a joyous New Year, full of hope, reflection, and the endless potential of new beginnings.

PATRICK J. WOOD
Publisher

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

Gov. Evers seeks applicants for Wood County Circuit Court

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--Gov. Tony Evers announced that he is seeking applicants for the Wood County Circuit Court – Branch 1. The appointment will fill a vacancy created by Judge Gregory J. Potter's retirement. The new judge will complete a term ending July 31, 2025.

To apply, please email a completed application form and supporting materials to GOVJudicialAppointments@wisconsin.gov. Applications must be submitted by 5 p.m. on Fri., Dec. 27, 2024. The application can be found on the "Apply to Serve" page on Gov. Evers' website at: www.evers.wi.gov.

Applicants with questions about the judicial selection process may contact the Governor's Office of Legal Counsel at (608) 266-1212.



Delta Dental of Wisconsin recently traveled to the The Family Center in Wisconsin Rapids to donate pajamas, books, and toothbrushes. Brush, Book, Bed is an American Academy of Pediatrics program with a message for parents and guardians: each night, help your child(ren) brush their teeth, read a favorite book, and get to bed at a regular time. The program is intended for kids six months to six years old and aims to improve oral health at home by linking oral health information with messages about early literacy and sleep, and establishing a regular nighttime routine that includes two minutes of brushing (two times a day – not just at night.) DDWI collects pajamas and books for newborns up to 14 years old.

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Stuff the Bus receives Green Bay Packers Foundation Grant



CEO-Tari Jahns, Former Green Bay Packer-Dorsey Levens, and Community Engagement Director-Ben Eberlein at the Green Bay Packers Foundation annual grant distribution event.

FOR CITY TIMES WISCONSIN RAPIDS--The Green Bay Packers Foundation distributed \$1.5 million in annual grants to hundreds of organizations throughout the state in Nov., including a \$3,000 grant to United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties Stuff the Bus initiative.

This year's grant cycle focused on organizations that will direct funds toward the need areas of arts and culture, athletics, and education. The grants

awarded by the Foundation are not recurring and must be used for the specific program or initiatives for which Stuff the Bus applied.

Stuff the Bus is an initiative of United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties. This initiative helps local students, 4K through 12th grade, get a backpack full of free basic school supplies needed to start off the school year right and succeed. "With the increase in students who have needed help over the last couple of years, this grant makes a huge

difference. School supply costs continue to increase and providing the basics for almost 1,000 students means every dollar matters, so it is a huge relief to know we have some extra support for the 2025 Stuff the Bus." Said Community Engagement Director Ben Eberlein.

City now accepting sealed bids for the sale of ash tree logs



FOR CITY TIMES MARSHFIELD--The City of Marshfield will accept sealed bids for the sale of ash tree logs until 4:00 P.M. on Dec. 30, at City Hall, 207 West 6th Street, Marshfield, Wisconsin. The said bids will be opened immediately thereafter and publicly read in the Public Conference Room, at City Hall.

The ash logs are located in the central part of Braem Park. Entrance will be

marked on E. Grant St. following an access road to the north. Bids will be on a "per pile" basis, and logs must be removed by the end of the day on Jan. 31, 2025. Cutting of logs in the park will not be allowed. Conditions of the Sale and Bid Form may be obtained at City Hall or the Street Division at 407 West 2nd St.

If you have any more questions, please call City Hall at 715-486-2034 or the Street Division at 715-486-2081.

Police Calls

On Dec. 12 a caller in Arpin reported their daughter missing and last seen the night prior around 11:00 p.m. The caller described finding foot prints headed toward their neighbor and then the road and informed dispatch that their daughter did not have a phone.

On Dec. 12 at 4:00 in the morning a caller from Wisconsin Rapids reported that while the car was driving, their friend attempted to jump out of the moving vehicle, kicked

the steering wheel, and bit the callers arm.

On Dec. 10 at 8:50 a Saratoga caller told dispatch that it appeared that their camper showed signs of a break in.

On Dec. 10 a caller in Saratoga reported a suspicious looking vehicle that was parked in the road, waited for another vehicle to pull up, where the drivers conducted some kind of exchange. The

See POLICE page 7

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In observance of the holidays, our office will be closed
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and
January 1st, 2025

Advertising deadline for the December 25th edition is
Thursday, Dec. 19th at 10:30 am

Please note: We will not be publishing a paper the week of January 1st, 2025!

Our next paper will be January 8th, 2025.

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Aspirus Stanley holds mass casualty exercise

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD--Hospital emergency departments can have uneventful days, but they can quickly turn into a high-pressure test of coordination, medical expertise, and teamwork when larger scale or "mass casualty" events occur.

Aspirus Stanley Hospital and Clinic held a planned mass casualty training exercise

on Dec. 10. Local EMS units from Stanley, Boyd, Thorp and Owen-Withee also took part in the exercise which the hospital had been preparing for weeks.

The scenario was set: a workplace incident at WB Manufacturing in Thorp. Eleven simulated patients, each with different injuries and medical needs, were to be triaged, treated, and transported as part of a complex drill aimed at testing

the hospital and community EMS partners readiness for a real disaster.

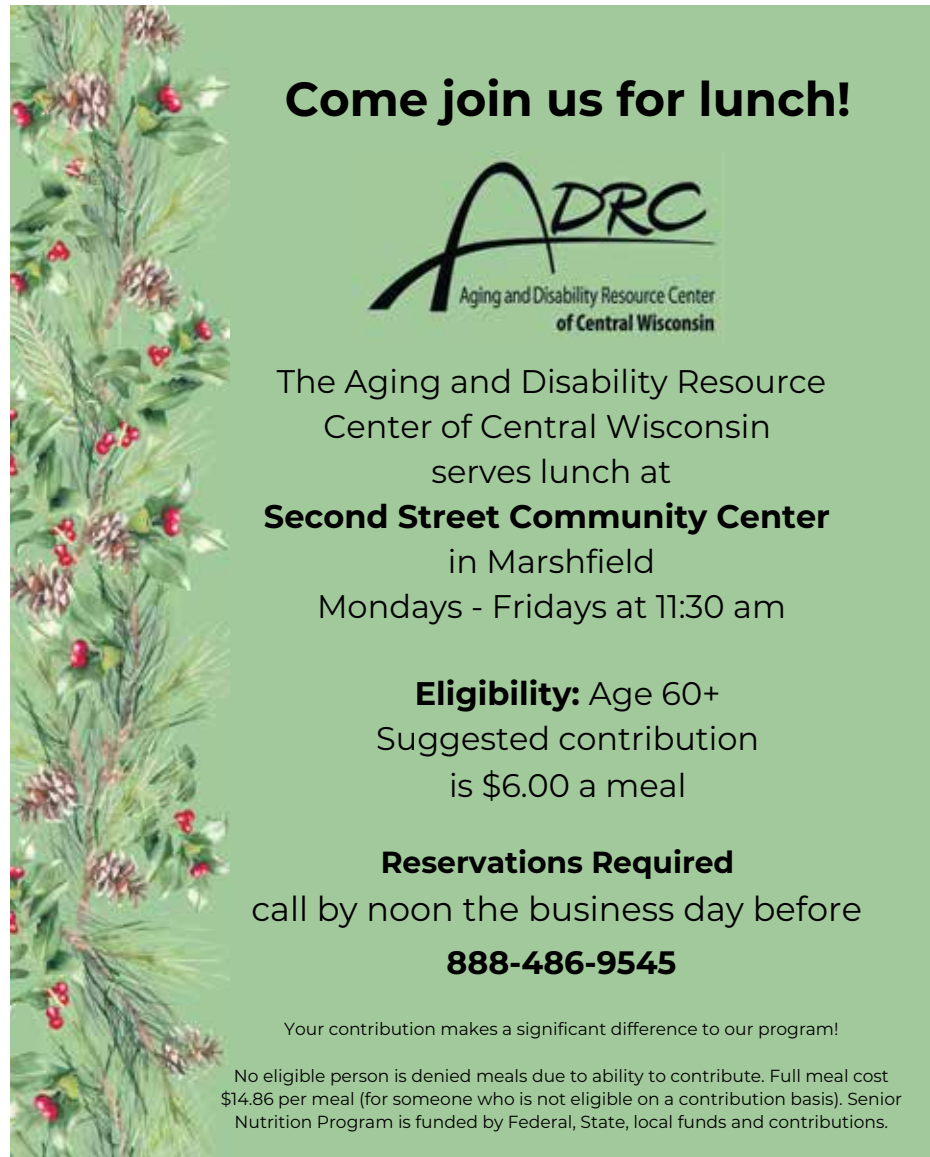
Each patient was assigned to a team of doctors and nurses, while others began to prepare for what could be a stream of patients.

"During a mass casualty exercise one of the things we test is our ability to ensure that the most critically injured are seen first, while those with less severe injuries are quickly triaged and placed in appropriate treatment areas for more targeted care," said Spencer Hager, RN, Aspirus Stanley Hospital.

As the exercise progressed, it became clear that the hospital's ability to work together in the face of unknown challenges was the real test. Emergency medical teams, paramedics who transported patients,

as well as support staff all contributed their unique skills to keep the operation running smoothly. Outside the Emergency Department, the incident command center was ready to provide further coordination with EMS units, other hospitals and preparing for potential evacuations or patient transfers if the situation worsened.

"This was an important event for Aspirus Stanley Hospital to coordinate with the support of our community EMS partners," said Anne Sadowska, Chief Administrative Officer. "We received valuable information on what went well and areas for improvement. Real life events like this can be intense, but through it all, the teamwork was exceptional."



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DNR accepting grant applications to grow Wisconsin's fishing community

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now accepting applications for the Angler Recruitment, Retention and Reactivation (Angler R3) grant program. Funding from the grant program is used to help grow the number of anglers in Wisconsin and expand angling activities.

Past recipients have used this grant to support in-depth angler education programs at schools, fly fishing classes for women and veterans, training for people promoting accessible fishing and to expand fishing programs at camps for children. Community and recreation centers also are good fits for these programs.

Programs for adults who never learned how to fish as well as youth programs that go beyond one-day events will also be considered.

Grant cycles are for two years, and

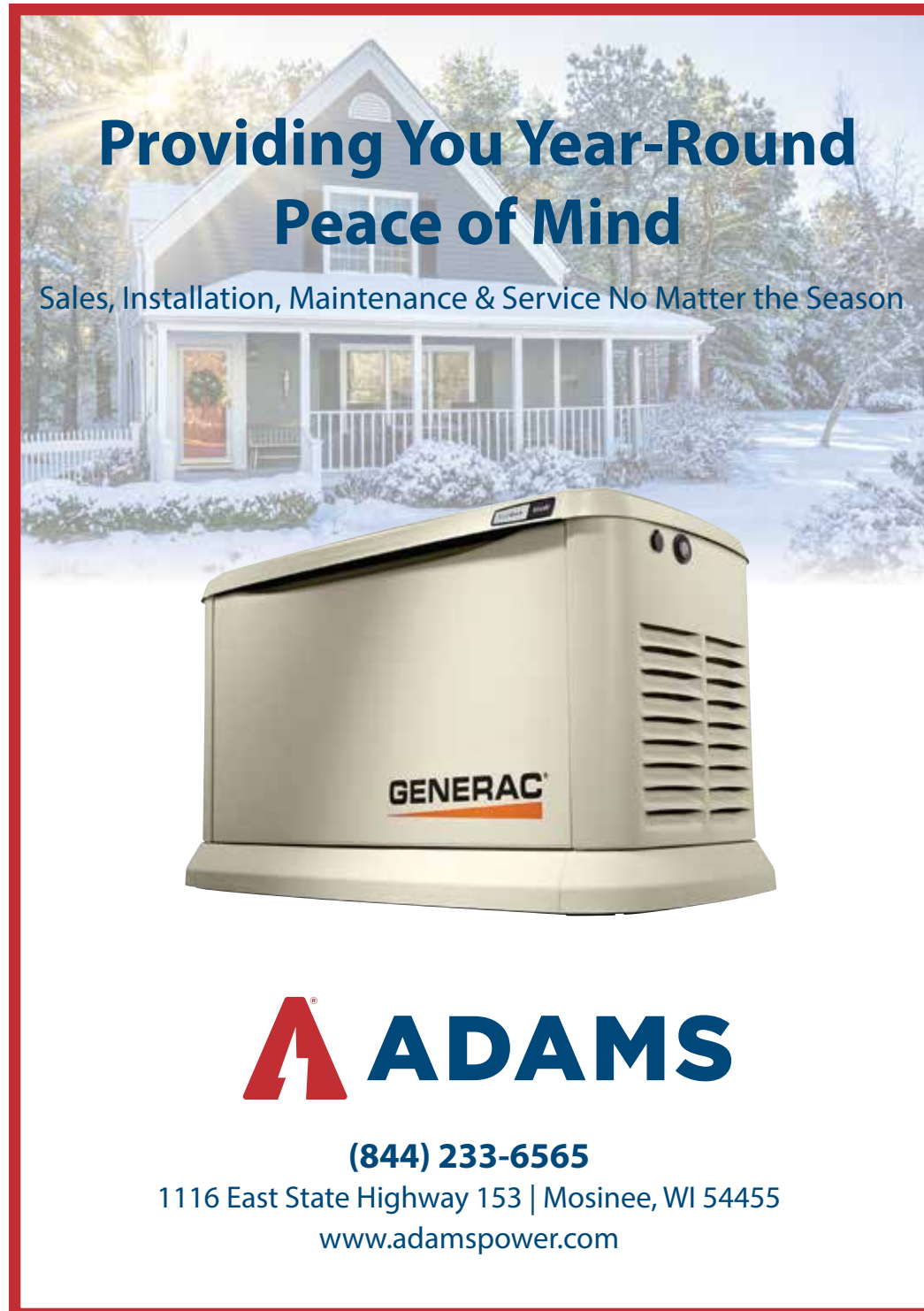
funding will become available to the recipient once a grant agreement is signed by all parties, approximately one year after the application is submitted.

As a reimbursement grant, only expenses incurred after the grant agreement is signed will be covered. A total of \$30,000 is available for projects, with individual grant awards up to \$5,000.

This grant is supported by the federal Sport Fish Restoration fund, which is generated by an excise tax on fishing equipment and motorboat fuel.

Application materials are available for download through the DNR's Angler R3 Grant Program webpage. The deadline to submit grant applications is 11:59 p.m. CST on Tuesday, Feb. 18, 2025.

Applicants are encouraged to carefully review the guidance document to submit a successful grant application.



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Reduce, reuse and recycle waste this holiday season

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is offering tips to help families save money, reduce waste and keep recycling and trash workers safe during upcoming holidays.

"We know recycling can be confusing," said Jennifer Semrau, DNR waste reduction and diversion coordinator. "But there are some basic tips people can use to make tackling holiday waste less overwhelming. Knowing the right thing to do with things like batteries and light strings can prevent damage to recycling facilities and keep workers safe."

What Should Go In Your Recycling Bin

Many items can be recycled anywhere in Wisconsin. These items, which the state bans from landfills, include:

- Cardboard – Flatten boxes before putting them in carts or bins so that recycling equipment can handle them properly
- Newspaper
- Magazines
- Office paper
- Plastic #1 and #2 containers
- Aluminum cans
- Steel (tin) cans
- Glass bottles and jars

Be sure containers are empty of liquids and excess gunk and give them a quick rinse. They don't need to be spotless, but they should be mostly clean. Don't crush or flatten cans or bottles going into a curbside recycling cart or container – this makes it harder for equipment at recycling facilities to recognize and properly sort things like aluminum cans.

Some recycling programs accept wrapping paper that can be torn and doesn't have any glitter, foil, ribbons or other adornments, but others don't accept any wrapping paper because of the risk of contamination from non-recyclable coatings and decorations. Most communities accept junk mail and other mixed paper, such as cereal boxes.

Check locally for a complete list of what your program accepts, and don't rely on packaging labels. Keep in mind that what you can recycle at a relative's home may be different than what you can recycle at your own.

What Should Not Go In Your Recycling Bin

Some items can cause serious problems at recycling facilities that aren't designed to handle them, including a risk of fire and worker injury. Many of these can be recycled at drop-off sites but should not go in curbside recycling bins or carts. These include:

Holiday light strings, cords and other

"tangles." At modern recycling facilities, these wrap around equipment, meaning a facility has to be shut down for workers to cut the material loose. Some retailers, electronics recyclers and communities offer seasonal recycling programs for light strings. If that's not an option, put broken lights in the trash.

Plastic bags, plastic film and wrap. These also get tangled in recycling equipment. In addition, bagged recyclables cause problems because workers can't be sure what's inside, meaning recyclables in bags will likely end up in the trash. If you collect cans, bottles and other recyclables in a bag to reduce mess, empty the bag into your bin or cart and then put the bag in the trash. You can take many types of clean, dry plastic bags and wrap to store drop-off locations. Learn more about reducing, reusing and recycling plastic bags and wrap on the DNR's Recycling Plastic Bags webpage.

Batteries and electronics. Recycling facilities that manage cans, bottles and cardboard and waste facilities that manage household garbage aren't set up to handle batteries and electronics. Rechargeable batteries can cause fires in collection trucks and facilities if they are damaged by equipment, and many electronics contain hazardous materials. Find more on how to recycle batteries and electronics, including drop-off site locations, on the DNR's Electronics Recycling webpage.

Tissue paper. While not a hazard, the fibers in this type of paper are too short to be recycled and reused again.

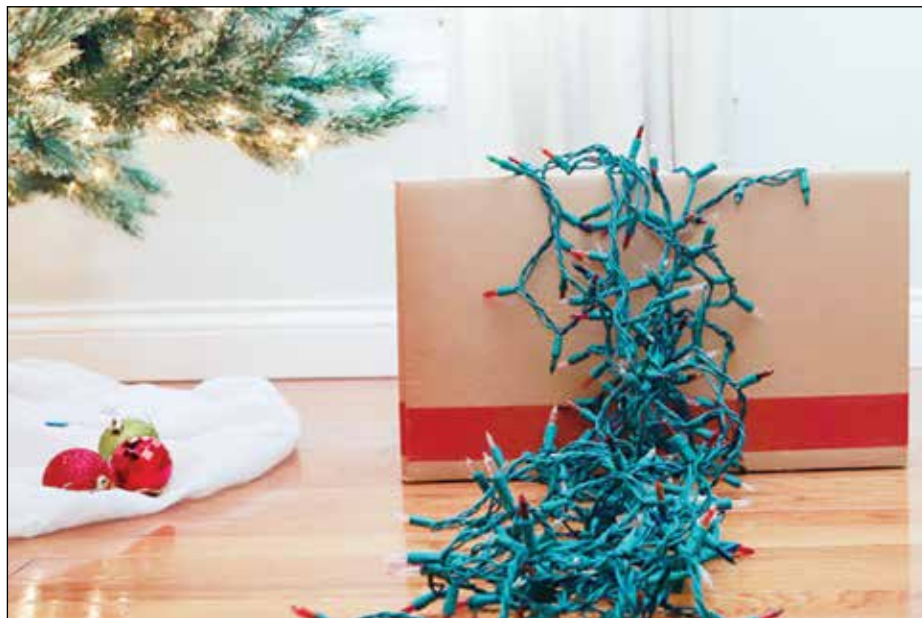
Photo cards and cards that play music, light up or have glitter or ribbons. These cards may contain batteries, which are a fire risk, or nonrecyclable material that contaminates other paper.

Save Money With Food Waste Prevention Tips

The organization ReFED estimates that on Thanksgiving alone, 316 million pounds of food is wasted in the United States. This represents more than \$556 million of groceries thrown away in a single day.

When this wasted food decomposes in landfills, it will release nearly 5,000 metric tons of methane, a potent greenhouse gas. This is similar to what's emitted by powering 26,000 homes' electricity for a year.

Understand date labels and when food items are actually unsafe. Date labels are not regulated by federal law and do not indicate food safety, with the exception of infant formula. Manufacturers provide dates to help consumers and retailers decide when food is of peak quality. The U.S. Department of Agriculture advises



A string of Christmas lights in a box of Christmas decorations

Robin Gentry

consumers to examine foods to determine if the quality is sufficient for use. Relying on your eyes and an old-fashioned sniff test can be a better indicator of whether food is good to eat and help you avoid disposing of healthy and safe food. That jar of nutmeg from last year is most likely still good, so you might be able to avoid repurchasing some special holiday food items.

Shop with a plan and prepare for gatherings. Buying more food than what is needed often leads to more food waste. You can reduce this problem by taking inventory of what you already have, planning meals and making detailed shopping lists. Save the Food's free portion planner, The Guestimator, can help you estimate how much you need to prepare for gatherings. You can share leftovers by

having containers on hand to send guests home with their favorites.

Store food to extend its life. Proper food storage can reduce waste and save the time and money associated with additional grocery store runs. Save the Food's Store It Guide gives ideas on how to organize your fridge and offers tips and tricks for storing food.

Freeze before you toss. Consider putting your holiday leftovers and surplus ingredients in the freezer before it's too late. Freezing food is like hitting the pause button and preserves the food until you are ready to eat it. Extra eggs can be removed from their shell and frozen. Vegetable scraps, extra meat and bones can be frozen and used later for soup stock.

Be festive and frugal as you deck the halls this year

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY — As you deck the halls, don't overload your outlets...or your energy bill. These simple tips will help you enjoy a festive, frugal and fire-free holiday season.

Make a list and check it twice. Use the holiday lighting cost calculator on Wisconsin Public Service's (WPS) website to compare your options this season and get an idea of what to expect on your energy bill.

Hanging 25,000 twinkle lights? Switch

to LEDs. They use less energy compared to old incandescent lights and can last up to 20 years.

Timing is everything. Put your holiday lights and powered outdoor decorations on a timer. That way, there's no risk you'll forget to turn them off when you go to bed.

Reflect on your options. Rather than adding more lights to your tree, brighten existing lighting with tinsel, mirrored ornaments and other reflective items.

Simplify and save. Consider using

See **FESTIVE** page 11

POLICE

from page 5

caller informed dispatch that this has been occurring at this location for weeks.

On Dec. 10 around 8:00 in the evening, a caller reported a house fire in Saratoga. The flames were reported to be coming from the second floor as residents of the home were vacating.

On Dec. 9 at 9:00 in the morning a Pittsville caller reported his jacket had been stolen from his car or his home.

On Dec. 9 extra patrol was requested to the Dollar General parking lot due to a male who loitered in the parking lot, making employees feel uncomfortable when coming in or out of the store.

On Dec. 9 an Auburndale caller complained of manure being spread in a field that ended up on the road and was not cleaned up.

On Dec 9 at 10:20 in the

morning a caller reported they had a gun pulled on them in Wisconsin Rapids. The caller was also punched in the face by the same individual.

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• Jimmy Dean Pork Sausage Crumbles, 9.6 oz. (Case of 6, \$9.10) \$1⁶⁵	• Oscar Mayer Beef Bologna 1 lb. (Case of 6, \$10.75) \$1⁹⁵
• Farmland Cubed Ham, 1 lb. (Case of 12, \$24.75) \$2²⁵	• On The Border Tortilla Chips 22.25 oz. \$3⁶⁵
• Wild Caught Pacific Cod Fillets 2 lbs. \$8⁸⁵	• Cape Cod B.B.Q. Kettle Chips 12 oz., 6 pack \$1⁹⁵
• Lloyds B.B.Q. Baby Back Pork Ribs, 2.5 lbs. \$5⁹⁵	• Original Velveeta Cheese 20 oz. (Case of 12, \$32.45) \$2⁹⁵
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A weekly feature highlighting school news from around the area!

MARSHFIELD AREA SCHOOLS SCHOOL NEWS



Sophomore students at MHS recently had the opportunity to hear from current students and alumni about the various Career-Based Learning programs offered at the school. Through personal stories and insights, students gained a deeper understanding of how these programs help develop valuable work and employability skills while also allowing students to explore their individual interests. The session highlighted five key opportunities: Health Career Connections, Future Teacher Internship, Work-Based Learning I and II, Youth Apprenticeship, and Sports Medicine. This experience gave students a clearer sense of how these programs can support their future career goals and personal growth.



The Marshfield FFA Forestry competed in the National FFA Forestry competition held at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis. The team placed 17th in the nation with individuals Wyatt D. placing 12th, Carson K 28th, Blake M. 112th and Riler S. 113th in the national contest. Congratulations Marshfield FFA Forestry team on a great performance!



Members of the Family, Career, and Community Leaders of America (FCCLA) once again prepared the dressing for the Marshfield Community Thanksgiving dinner. This year, they made 50 pounds of dressing, providing a wonderful opportunity to give back to the Marshfield community.



Marshfield High School's Marshfield Columbus Leadership Alliance (MCLA) group hosted a Pour it Forward event, providing students with free hot chocolate as they started their school day. MCLA works to promote a positive school atmosphere and positive mental wellness. The theme this year is "Be Kind to Your Mind".

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A weekly feature highlighting school news from around the area!

MARSHFIELD AREA SCHOOLS SCHOOL NEWS



As the winter season approaches, students and staff in the MHS musical program have been hard at work spreading holiday cheer, both within the school and throughout the Marshfield community. From participating in local community tours to hosting their popular dinner and a show event, the musical program brings festive joy to all. In addition, the winter concerts for band, choir, and orchestra showcase the incredible talent of these students and their dedication to their craft. These performances not only provide an opportunity for students to shine, but also bring people together, creating lasting memories for families and community members. The efforts and talents of the MHS musical program are deeply appreciated by many, and their contributions continue to make the holiday season in Marshfield a little brighter.



On November 4th the School District of Marshfield Technology Education Department hosted the SkillsUSA District 2 Regional Competition. Students from Marshfield and surrounding area school districts competed in various technical areas such as welding, carpentry, cabinet making, automotive and power equipment, 3D printing/design, drafting, and team problem solving. Students completed various tasks in each competition which included written knowledge exams, hands-on procedures, and other project-based operations. These smaller district competitions allow students to learn more about SkillsUSA and to practice their skills with feedback from competition judges.

Congratulations to Marshfield FFA members Emma B., Taylor K., Faith B., Isaac K., Carter G., Brittany B., and Macy K. (not pictured) on earning their American FFA Degrees at the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis earlier this fall. This is the highest degree of membership that an FFA member can achieve, and it is awarded to less than 1/2 of one percent of all FFA members. Seven is, by far, the most Marshfield FFA members achieving this honor in one single year, and one of the highest levels in any chapter in the nation this year! This prestigious achievement is a testament to their hard work, dedication, and passion for agriculture. They have not only demonstrated exceptional leadership and commitment to their community but also inspired those around them. As they continue their journey, they will continue making a difference in our community.



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Invasive Species Council announces nominations open for 21st Annual Invasive Species Action Awards



Recognize an individual, group or organization that's been working to prevent the spread of invasive species here in Wisconsin. Photo by Wisconsin DNR

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council is accepting nominations for the 21st annual Invasive Species Action Awards now through Feb. 16, 2025.

Award recipients are Wisconsin residents and organizations that have made significant contributions to preventing, controlling or eradicating invasive species that harm Wisconsin's native wildlife, wetlands, forests, prairies, lakes and rivers. Nominees can be individuals, groups or organizations that have demonstrated exemplary efforts to address issues surrounding terrestrial and aquatic invasive species.

The Wisconsin Invasive Species Council, an advisory council to the DNR, presents Invasive Species Action Awards for both volunteer and professional categories. A panel of judges selected by the council will review the nomination

materials and select the award winners. All nominators and winners will be notified in April, followed by an award recognition ceremony in June to celebrate Invasive Species Action Month.

To submit a nomination, download and fill out the form available on the Wisconsin Invasive Species Council's webpage. The deadline for submissions is midnight on Feb. 16, 2025.

Invasive species are nonnative plants and animals that cause ecological or economic harm, and some can affect human health. Once an invasive species is established in an area, it can be challenging to control.

Wisconsinites are encouraged to protect native plants and wildlife from invasive species by avoiding moving them or the materials that might harbor them to new places. To learn more about preventing the spread, visit the DNR's Invasive Species Prevention webpage.

Stay back from snowplows to avoid crashes this winter season

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin State Patrol urges caution as we head into winter, to ensure snowplow drivers are able to clear roads safely throughout the season. Highway departments spend hours working to clear the roads for safe travel after every snowfall, plowing nearly 115,000 miles of roads across the state.

Crews are often working when other drivers are also on the roads, which can lead to dangerous conditions. There were nearly 300 crashes involving snowplows in Wisconsin last year.

Wisconsin state law requires vehicles to stay back from a working snowplow at least 200 feet on a road with a posted speed limit more than 35 mph, 75 feet on a road with a posted speed limit under 35 mph.

The December Law of the Month is a reminder that these important protections are in place to keep all motorists safe in winter, including snowplow operators.

"This law is designed to save lives. It creates a safety zone to make sure drivers following a snowplow have enough time to stop without causing a crash. We all know it's harder to control a vehicle when roads are slippery, so drivers need to slow down and be patient. Give plow crews extra room to do their important work that will ultimately keep all of us safe," Superintendent Tim Carnahan said.

Snowplows must travel slowly to clear the roads, but passing a plow is generally discouraged. Plows often create a cloud of snow that can obscure visibility. Plus, road conditions ahead of a plow are likely worse.

Use extra caution if you do decide

to pass and keep as much distance as possible. The snowplow's wing blade can extend up to 10 feet beyond the width of the truck. Many snowplow wing blades are hit each season by vehicles attempting to pass a snowplow.

Winter weather contributed to nearly 19,000 crashes in Wisconsin last season (Oct. 2022 to May 2023). Those incidents led to 39 deaths and 3,799 injuries. Most of those crashes happened in Dec. and Jan., when winter conditions typically begin to ramp up.

The State Patrol recommends the following winter driving tips:

Know before you go. Before heading out, check 511wi.gov for road conditions or incidents along your route. Consider postponing your trip if conditions are dangerous. Allow extra travel time.

Snow means slow. Many winter crashes and slide offs are caused by drivers going too fast in hazardous conditions. Speed limits are set for when roads are clear and dry, so it may be too dangerous to drive the speed limit in slippery conditions.

Increase following distance. Stay farther back from all vehicles to allow more time to stop if needed. Don't be overconfident in four-wheel or all-wheel-drive vehicles. All vehicles require additional time and distance to stop in adverse conditions.

Keep an emergency kit in your vehicle. Have a fully charged phone and charger for emergencies.

Stay buckled up in your vehicle and call for help if you get stranded or slide off the road. Getting out of the vehicle is very dangerous, especially in winter weather.

Alzheimers support group offering monthly meeting

FOR CITY TIMES

WISCONSIN RAPIDS--The Alzheimer's caregiver support group meets monthly, offering a time for participants to share their experiences, ask questions and take time for themselves.

Join other caregivers from 9:30am to 11am the second Wednesday of the month at the Brehm Conference Room in Centralia

Center, 220 Third Ave. S., Wisconsin Rapids. There is no charge to attend. The meeting is confidential and open to anyone who is a caregiver for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or other type of dementia.

The group is sponsored by the Alzheimer's Association. Go to alz.org or call 800-272-3900 for more information or to register.

Mid-State to host Regional SkillsUSA Competition at AMETA Center

FOR CITY TIMES

WISCONSIN RAPIDS - Mid-State Technical College will host high school and middle school students from across the state to compete in the Regional SkillsUSA® Competition on Friday, Jan. 17. This year's competition will be held at Mid-State's Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship (AMETA™) Center.

Participants will utilize the AMETA Center's classrooms and labs when competing in 14 different career and technical education events. Events include Job Interview, Prepared Speech, Welding Sculpture, Precision Machining and more.

"This is the third year Mid-State has hosted the regional competition and the first time it's being held at the AMETA Center," said Ryan Kowski, dean of the School of Applied Technology. "We are excited for local middle and high school students to witness the AMETA Center's cutting-edge technology, and we look forward to continuing the tradition of offering career and technical education opportunities in our community."

The AMETA Center is a facility training the next generation of Wisconsin's



A local high school student participates in the Precision Machining event at the 2024 Regional SkillsUSA® Competition on Mid-State Technical College's Wisconsin Rapids Campus. This year's event will be held Friday, Jan. 17, at Mid-State's Advanced Manufacturing, Engineering Technology, and Apprenticeship (AMETA™) Center.

workforce. It is home to ten academic programs and five apprenticeships. Located in the Stevens Point Industrial Park, the AMETA Center is uniquely situated among central Wisconsin's top manufacturing leaders.

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Goodwill NCW ready to meet the need of holiday shoppers looking to stay on budget



FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The National Retail Federation (NRF) forecasts that holiday spending is expected to reach record levels again this year, between \$979.5 billion and \$989 billion in total during the winter holidays. NRF's latest holiday survey conducted by Prosper Insights & Analytics found consumers plan to spend a record \$902 per person on average on core holiday items including gifts, decorations, food and other holiday-related purchases this year.

This year, 92% of consumers plan to celebrate the winter holidays. If you're attending get-togethers with friends and co-workers Goodwill North Central Wisconsin (NCW) gives shoppers budget-friendly options for holiday sweaters,

cocktail attire and cozy accessories.

Then there are the presents. The top toys include Legos, Hot Wheels and Barbie. In addition, with 49% of consumers hoping to receive clothing and accessories for gifts this year, things can start to add up. Goodwill NCW can keep consumers on budget.

"Goodwill is a great place for unique one-of-a-kind finds and gifts." Goodwill NCW Director of Retail Operations Emily Stadtmueller said. "From nostalgic toys to décor that exhibits the holiday spirit, our stores are stocked with items that are as special as the people you're shopping for."

Shoppers at Goodwill NCW not only find one-of-a-kind gifts, but they can also feel good about their holiday

purchases. Goodwill NCW store sales support the nonprofit's mission of Elevating People by Eliminating Barriers to Employment. On average, 90 cents of every dollar in store sales is reinvested back into local communities to provide pathways that lead to sustained employment and improved financial stability.

Early ice covers unsafe, DNR warns

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) urges the public to practice early-winter ice safety on all of Wisconsin's waterbodies and remember that no ice is safe ice.

The temperature swings that mark the final weeks of every year can create ice covers.

"After we have the first cold nights, we start to see the early ice. It may look solid to the naked eye, but it's not," said Lt. Jacob Holsclaw, DNR Off-Highway Vehicle Administrator. "There can be, and often are, cracks and changes in the ice thickness that you will not see."

The ice covers hide the currents, debris and underground springs still feeding lakes and rivers. "These factors and more are why no ice is ever considered safe - no matter the month," Holsclaw said.

The DNR does not monitor ice conditions, but they are monitored locally. Local fishing clubs, outfitters and bait shops are the best sources for local current ice conditions.

However, the best idea for safe winter fun is to

enjoy outings without travel over ice. If the outing does involve travel over a waterbody, remember every waterbody has its own characteristics. Check if the lake has inlets, outlets or narrows, is spring-fed or has currents, which can thin the ice.

Some smaller lakes can have aerators that are run throughout the winter either covering a large area towards the center of the lake or may have smaller aerators placed by private property landowners adjacent to their shore and/or piers.

Equally as important is to stay alert for pressure ridges or ice heaves. These can be dangerous due to thin ice and open water and often are created, move or grow with changes in temperatures and high winds.

Here are more safety tips:

Carry a cell phone, and let people know where you are going and when you'll return home.

Wear proper clothing and equipment, including a personal flotation device or a float coat to help you stay afloat and to help slow body heat loss.



Ice covers hide the currents, debris and underground springs still feeding lakes and rivers. Stock Photo

Take an extra pair of mittens or gloves so your hands can remain dry and warm.

Wear creepers attached to boots to prevent slipping on clear ice.

Carry a spud bar to check the ice while walking to new areas.

Carry a couple of spikes and a length of light rope in an easily accessible pocket to help pull yourself - or others - out of the ice.

Do not travel in unfamiliar areas - or at night.

Have a plan in place noting where you will be and when you plan to return. Along with leaving a written note of your plans,

it is also recommended to keep a charged cell phone.

If the worst happens and you happen to fall in, here's what to do:

Carry a couple of hand-held spikes and a length of light rope in an easily accessible pocket or inside your sleeves to help pull yourself - or others - out of the ice.

If you fall in, remain as calm as possible and while attempting to assist yourself out of the water, call for help as soon as you can. Anyone who attempts to rescue you also is recommended to use a rope or something similar to avoid falling through as well.

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FESTIVE
from page 7

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Foster families needed in central Wisconsin

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--Foster families are desperately needed around the state of Wisconsin to provide treatment-level foster care. Treatment foster care is home-based care for children and adolescents with moderate to high emotional, behavioral, physical or medical needs.

At any given time, as many as 7,000 kids need temporary foster care in Wisconsin. As the largest nonprofit child welfare agency in the state, Children's Wisconsin plays a big role in providing temporary homes so kids can eventually reunify with a biological family member.

In central Wisconsin, families licensed in treatment foster care have declined nearly 50 percent in the last three years. There are approximately 700 youth in Wisconsin requiring treatment level foster care every year.

The treatment-level foster care program through Children's Wisconsin offers specialized treatment services and additional support, beyond the scope of general foster care. Treatment foster care offers supportive services around trauma-informed care and child well-being.

"We are facing a dire need for treatment-level foster families," said Maria McDermott, director of Out of Home Care for Children's Wisconsin. "We have seen our applications decline, which in turn means less people are being licensed. Foster care can be such a rewarding experience for families willing to answer the call and helps to ensure that each child placed in care can grow and develop to their fullest potential."

One Stevens Point family answered the call. Stevens

Point couple Erin Degner and Cole Ringer, known as Big Cole, are both social workers who recognized the need for licensed treatment foster care families within their work. In 2021, Erin and Cole bought a house and became licensed treatment foster care parents. Their first placement of two siblings followed shortly after. Since then, they like to help the kids in their care live typical kid lives by taking them on vacations, to trampoline parks, going to movies and visiting festivals and community events. Erin and Cole are also very invested in keeping kids connected to their biological families and to their culture. They will host siblings in their home, visit with relatives and work to maintain communication with biological family as well as learning about their culture and making sure the children are exposed to their roots. Erin and Cole have experienced many challenges with treatment foster care but also many rewards. Erin said of treatment foster care, "There are so many good moments. You do it because you love the kids and they deserve to have someone on their side."

The foster care team at Children's Wisconsin provides all foster families with support services available around the clock, seven days a week. Families who are licensed for treatment-level foster care are provided with additional support and training as well as more frequent check-in visits to make sure the needs of the children and families are being met.

The goal of foster care is to provide a temporary home so that eventually kids can reunify with a biological family member. Fostering provides the family some time to make changes needed for their child to safely return home.

Approximately 60 percent of children in foster care are able to return with family members, but if a child cannot, a foster parent may be asked if they can adopt a child who has been in their care.

Some requirements to become a treatment foster parent include:

- Must be at least 21 years old.
- May be single, married, partnered, dating or any relationship status.
- May be a renter or homeowner with a minimum of two bedrooms.
- Must be able to financially support oneself with monthly income exceeding monthly expenses and documented forms of income.

Generally good health with any physical or mental health conditions controlled with treatment.

For more information on becoming a foster parent or applying to become one, please visit the Children's Wisconsin website. Children's Wisconsin offers Zoom or phone information sessions and members of the foster care team are available for phone inquiries. No family is committed to becoming a foster care family by inquiring.

DPI receives \$10M grant to improve youth mental health services

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY — The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction was recently awarded federal grant funding to help meet the growing mental health needs of Wisconsin students by increasing pupil services staffing capacity in schools.

The five-year, \$10 million grant was awarded by the U.S. Department of Education through its 2024 School-Based Mental Health Professionals Grant Program and supports school districts in building mental health staffing capacity. The DPI was one of 22 grant recipients across the nation to receive grant funding.

"With this significant investment from the Biden-Harris Administration, Wisconsin is poised to make a meaningful impact on youth mental health and meet the growing needs of our students," State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly said. "I am grateful for the administration in recognizing

the urgent need to improve mental health services in our schools. Together, we will work to ensure every student has access to the support they need to thrive."

Funds will increase the recruitment, retention, and diversification of school counselors, school psychologists, and school social workers.

This grant award builds on the DPI's previous success as one of six states selected to pilot the federal 2020 School Based Mental Health Professionals Grant Program. To date, this pilot project successfully reduced the ratio of students to school-based mental health professionals by 14 percent in participating local education agencies, leading to the hiring of more than 348 school-based mental health professionals since the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, enrollment in nine University of Wisconsin graduate pupil services certification programs has surged by 487 new students over the last two years because of this initiative.

DNR seeking public comments on proposed deer management unit rule

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources announced the start of a public comment period for a draft rule that would rework portions of the state's deer management unit boundaries. The public comment period runs until Jan. 10.

This draft rule would allow the DNR to carry out the deer management unit boundary changes being proposed as part of this year's deer management unit review process. Generally, the draft rule proposes a return to habitat-based deer management units in the Northern Forest Zone and adjusts a portion of the Central Forest Deer Management Zone boundary and select Metropolitan Sub-unit boundaries.

The DNR is also hosting a virtual public hearing on Jan.

8 at 5 p.m. in order to give the public another opportunity to provide a formal comment on the draft rule.

The public is encouraged to visit the DNR's Proposed Permanent Administrative Rules webpage (under the Wildlife Management section) for a link to the draft rule and details on the public hearing. Submit comments by Jan. 10, 2025 to:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
 C/O Scott Karel, DNR Policy and Regulations Specialist
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 DNRAAdministrativeRulesComments@wisconsin.gov

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Plan a winter free fishing weekend clinic on Jan. 18-19

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources invites clubs and organizations to host free fishing clinics on Winter Free Fishing Weekend, Jan. 18-19, 2025.

On Free Fishing Weekend, residents and nonresidents can fish most waters of the state without a fishing license or a stamp for trout or salmon (see exceptions regarding trout waters below).

Please submit the event registration and materials request forms by Jan. 8. The clinic will be promoted, and educational materials will be sent. Anglers ages 15 and under may fish without a license any day of the year. Therefore, organizers are encouraged to also welcome adults new to ice fishing.

No ice is safe ice. A strong ice safety message is recommended to be stressed at every clinic. The DNR does not monitor ice conditions, but local bait shops and fishing clubs may have current information. Download the brochure Know Before You Go for facts about ice and tips to prepare for a safe outing on the ice. If the lake chosen

for the clinic doesn't freeze over, anglers can cast from shore into open water.

Clinic plans should include anglers with limited mobility. Many state properties and community partners have accommodations or equipment to make the outdoors accessible for all. Learn about the available accommodations at state-managed properties on the DNR's Accessible Recreation webpage and other options from partner organizations.

Clinic hosts are advised to consult the trout regulations when planning clinics and outings to ensure that the body of water is open to fishing. While most trout streams are open during the catch-and-release season on Free Fishing Weekend, there are trout streams, spring ponds and lakes that are closed to fishing. Check with your local DNR fisheries biologist if you have questions about specific waters. For open trout streams, only artificial lures are allowed, and anglers must release all trout caught.

All other fishing regulations, including bag limits, size limits and species restrictions, remain in effect.



Host a fishing clinic this upcoming Free Fishing Weekend and help share the joy of angling with others. Photo by Council To Advance Hunting And The Shooting Sports

DNR releases 2024 air quality trends report

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) released its annual air quality trends report. This year's report covers 20 years of state air monitoring data for air pollutants regulated under the Clean Air Act, including ground-level ozone, sulfur

dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide, particle pollution and lead. The report presents data from the 2023 calendar year, including the historic 2023 Canadian wildfire smoke events.

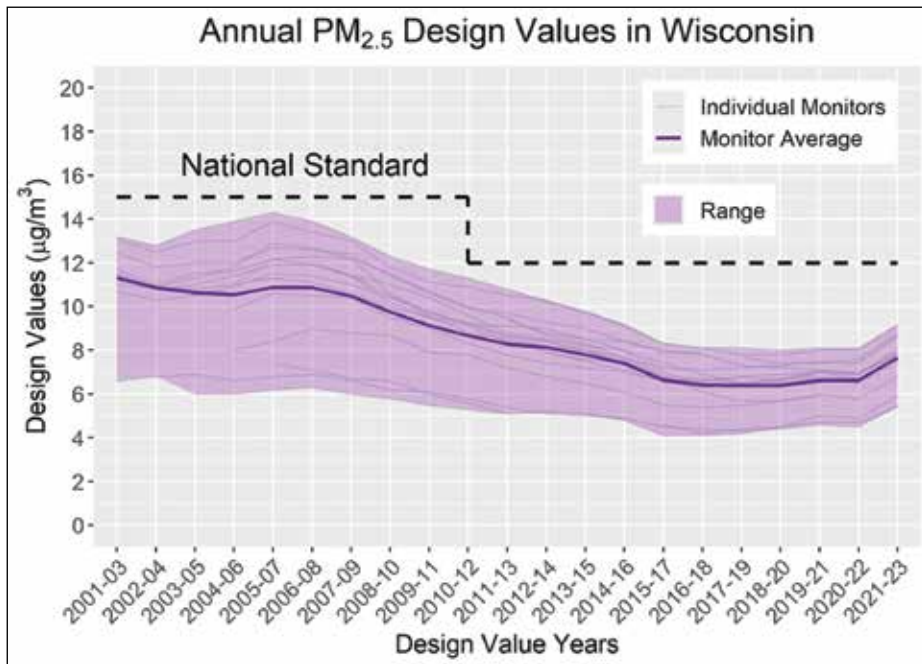
According to the Canadian Interagency Forest Fire Center, 15 million hectares (about two million acres larger than the state of Wisconsin) burned in 2023 - more than six times the annual average in Canada.

"Five percent of the entire Canadian forest burned last year," said Gail Good, DNR Air Management program director. "During the multi-day air quality advisory in late June of last year, the air monitoring network measured some

of the highest PM2.5 concentrations ever recorded in the state."

Wildfire smoke events in 2023 resulted in the DNR issuing 15 PM2.5 air quality advisories - almost five times higher than the average over the previous 12 years. PM2.5 advisories are issued when air quality has reached or is expected to reach the orange "unhealthy for sensitive groups" level on the Air Quality Index (AQI).

The design values used to assess PM2.5 concentrations are calculated over a three-year period. This year's Trends Report shows an increase in PM2.5 concentrations for the most recent period (2021-2023). Despite the jump caused by 2023's



wildfire smoke, overall, PM2.5 concentrations have decreased 25% in the last 20 years, and all monitors measured concentrations below the 2012 federal air quality standards.

The report shows that over the last 20 years, statewide ozone concentrations have decreased by 15%. For decades, ozone concentrations have been dropping across the state. However, that trend

has slowed. Last year's wildfire smoke contained ozone-forming pollutants, which, combined with recent warmer-than-usual summers, contributed to increased ozone concentrations.

As a result, the Lake Michigan shoreline area, including the Milwaukee area and parts of Sheboygan and Kenosha counties, continues to fall short of meeting the 2015 ozone standard. Wisconsin

has implemented many programs that have reduced emissions of ozone-causing pollutants from power plants, industry and transportation in the state. However, these emission reductions have not resulted in the attainment of the 2015 ozone standard because most ozone-causing emissions are transported across state boundaries and are outside Wisconsin's control.

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MARSHFIELD HUB CITY Times
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Mid-State brings workforce and adult education services to rural communities

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY – Mid-State Technical College announces its Tailored Solutions for Adults and Employers Roadshow, an event series designed to bring personalized workforce and adult education services directly to rural communities.

The series of events begins in Jan. and wraps up in June with stops in Granton, Auburndale and Pittsville. At each stop, Mid-State workforce and adult education experts will be on-site to provide customized guidance.

Sierra Van Rixel, workforce and professional development consultant, will work closely with employers through one-on-one workforce consultations. Sierra can help businesses tackle key workforce challenges, offering strategies for employee development, training opportunities and business growth solutions.

Zach Edwards, adult outreach coordinator and pathway navigator, will also be available to guide adults through personalized career consultations, helping to explore education options, career changes or advancement opportunities. Zach provides tailored advice on getting started at Mid-State, finding the right programs and building a path to career success.

Tailored Solutions for Adults and Employers Roadshow dates:

Wednesday, Jan. 8, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the Granton Community Library

Wednesday, Feb. 5, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at the Auburndale Village Shelter

Wednesday, March 5, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Paulie's Diner in Pittsville

Wednesday, April 2, from 12:30 to 2 p.m. at the Granton Community Library

Wednesday, May 7, from 8:30 to 10 a.m. at Paulie's Diner in Pittsville

Wednesday, June 4, from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Auburndale Village Shelter

To learn more about the Tailored Solutions for Adults and Employers Roadshow and opportunities on the Marshfield Campus, visit mstc.edu/right-here.



Aspirus Health advises against puffy coats in car seats

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY--As winter approaches and temperatures drop, parents and caregivers are prioritizing warmth and safety for their children. However, a common winter staple—puffy coats—may pose unexpected dangers when combined with car seats.

Jaime Oswald, MD, Aspirus Family Medicine Physician and Safe Kids Wisconsin (SKW) provides essential guidance for securely bundling and buckling children during the colder months.

“While puffy coats are designed to keep kids warm, they create extra space between your child and the car seat straps,” Dr. Oswald warns. “Even if you think you’ve cinched the straps tightly, there may be a significant gap due to the bulk of the coat.”

According to SKW, a puffy coat can add up to four inches of slack to car seat harness straps. This extra space increases the risk of a child sliding around in their seat during a car accident, undermining the primary purpose of car seats.

To ensure warmth without compromising safety, Dr. Oswald recommends parents opt for lighter, thinner layers such as sweaters that maintain a snug fit with the car seat straps. Additionally, hats, gloves, boots, and blankets can be used for added warmth once the child is securely strapped in.



“A practical rule of thumb is to dress your child in what you’re wearing, plus an extra layer,” Dr. Oswald suggests. For example, if a parent wears a jacket, the child can wear a jacket along with a hat, ensuring both warmth and safety.

Aspirus Health also recommends SKW’s simple coat check method. After strapping the child into the car seat with their coat on, parents can remove the coat without adjusting the straps and then place the child back in the seat. “If the straps still fit snugly, the layer is safe. But if the straps become significantly looser, the layer is too thick and poses a risk,” Dr. Oswald adds.

By adopting these alternative clothing options and following recommended safety measures, parents can ensure their little ones remain securely fastened and protected from winter’s chill and the hazards posed by puffy coats in car seats.

Incidental take notice for wind energy and cave bats

FOR CITY TIMES

WOOD COUNTY – The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) proposes to issue a broad incidental take permit/authorization for the incidental taking of rare cave bats, which may occur as a result of wind turbines throughout Wisconsin as well as adjusting the cave bat maternity roost period. Incidental take refers to the unintentional loss of individual endangered or threatened animals or plants that does not put the species’ overall population at risk.

The proposed Broad Incidental Take Permit/Authorization for Wind Energy and Cave Bats recognizes the importance of wind energy in Wisconsin but also acknowledges the detrimental impact wind turbines may have on the state’s cave bats (tricolored bat, northern long-eared bat, little brown bat, big brown bat).

This broad incidental take permit/authorization creates conservation measures for wind energy that are shown to be an effective strategy in minimizing impacts on cave bats. As part of these updates, the existing Cave Bat Broad Incidental Take Permit/Authorization will also be updated to refer

to the new wind energy document and to adjust to the cave bat maternity period.

The disturbance caused by wind turbines may still result in some mortality; however, take will be minimized by following conservation measures. The DNR concludes that the proposed project will minimize impacts to the species by adhering to conservation measures; is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence

or appreciably reduce the likelihood of the survival and/or recovery of the state population of the species or the whole plant-animal community of which they are a part and the habitat that is critical to their existence; and has benefit to the public health, safety or welfare that justifies the action.

Conservation measures to minimize the adverse effect on cave bat species will be incorporated into the proposed Broad

Incidental Take Permit/Authorization. Copies of the jeopardy assessment and background information on the cave bats are available by visiting the DNR Incidental Take Public Notices webpage or upon request from DNR Conservation Biologist Stacy Rowe at 608-228-9796 or Stacy.Rowe@wisconsin.gov.

The public is encouraged to submit written comments regarding project-related impacts to cave bats by Jan. 2, 2025, to:

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
c/o Stacy Rowe, DNR Conservation Biologist
2514 Morse St.
Janesville, WI 53545
Stacy.Rowe@wisconsin.gov or 608-228-9796

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| SPORTS |

Columbus girls basketball kicks off start to their season

FOR CITY TIMES

MARSHFIELD--The Columbus Catholic Girls Basketball Team is enduring some growing pains and are working on team chemistry as they begin the 2024-2025 basketball season. They are a young team with only two players who have extensive varsity experience and a few others with minimal experience returning from last year. Varsity consists of one senior, four juniors, two sophomores and four freshmen.

Their first four games saw them traveling the Highway 13 corridor. First, they headed north until turning off on Hwy 102 to take on Rib Lake. The Dons held off a charging Rib Lake team in the second half winning a high scoring game 68-66. The Dons were up by five at the half. Clutch free throw shooting toward the end helped them stave off a defeat. Sophie Wilczyk and freshman Izzy Holz each scored 16 points with Hailey Hargraves, Abby Wojcik and Kate Casperson each scoring 8 points.

Their next Hwy. 13 trip took them to the



Cranberry Classic in Wisconsin Rapids. Unfortunately, their first opponent on Friday was the highly ranked Assumption Royals returning a number of starters from last year. The Lady Dons stayed with them in the first half, trailing 25-18. In the second half, Columbus struggled getting into its offense as the Royals used a stifling

defense causing numerous Dons turnovers. Assumption started the second stanza with an 11-0 run doubling up on the Dons, 36-18. Columbus continued to struggle while the Royals had a 21-0 run, later stretching their lead to 57-18.


Gracie and Sophie Wilczek, and Chayse Blenker each scored 6 points. The final score was 66-31. On Saturday, the Dons came out firing on all cylinders, spotting Nekoosa the first two points of the game, the Dons jumped out to 25-6 lead at the half. They continued to score at will, pushing the final score to 51-11. Sophie Wilczek and Izzy Holz led the team in scoring with 16 and 14 points respectively. Hailey Hargraves added six points and pulled down a team leading 15 rebounds. Wilczyk and Holz were named to the all-tournament team. Maddie Bernick was named to the Junior Varsity all tournament team.

The Dons' final Hwy. 13 trip was the short drive to Spencer to take on the Rockets in the dome. Both teams struggled scoring, staying close until Spencer pushed

the lead to 14-9 at half time. Columbus Catholic opened up an eight point lead with 4:44 left on the clock. The Rockets battled back, trailing by 3 with 56 seconds left. With 15 seconds left, Izzy Holz hit two free throws putting her team up by five. Spencer did manage a three pointer to make the final score 37-35. Gracie Wilczyk led the Dons with 10 points. Sophie Wilczyk (9), Hailey Hargraves (8), Izzy Holz (7) and Kate Casperson (3) rounded out the scoring.

Neillsville is the team to beat in the Eastern Cloverbelt Conference and they showed why as they spoiled the Dons' home opener. The Dons did stay close for awhile, but the Warriors did what they always do. Pressuring the Dons into numerous turnovers, Neillsville pulled out to a half time score of 29-13. They continued to pour it on, ending the game with a 61-24 win. Kate Casperson and Izzy Holz each scored 6 points to lead the way for the Dons. Gracie Wilczyk (5), Abby Wojcik (3), Sophie Wilczyk (2) and Chayse Blenker (2) rounded out the scoring.

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