

# Figure Skating Across the Galaxy is this weekend

The Merrill Ice Reflections Figure Skating Club will present Skating Across the Galaxy, their annual show this weekend, on Saturday, Feb. 8, at 6 p.m. and Sunday, Feb. 9, at 1 p.m. at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex. Tickets are \$10, and children 3 and under are free, and tickets are available at the door, in advance at the Merrill Chamber of Commerce, or online at merrillskate.org. “Everyone is welcome to join us and watch our skaters showcase their talents,” said Kelly Kraegenbrink, a member of the Merrill Ice Reflections Board.

The Merrill Ice Reflections Figure Skating Club has 86 members, two professional figure skating coaches—Montana Grabowsky and Brooklyn Kraegenbrink, and three junior coaches—Madison Altman-Wendt, Chloe Belant, and Leah Freyer. The club also has one intern coach, Korina Kraegenbrink.

Established in 1995 as a non-profit organization in association with U.S. Figure Skating, the club holds weekly lessons on Wednesday evenings for Basic Skills and on Sunday evenings for Advanced Skaters. Private coaching is also available to members.

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Firefighters and moms stand with dancers holding signs before they head out of town bound for the State Competition. In center from L to R: Heather Wallace, Merrill Dance Team members Emma Wallace, Molly White (the star of the show), Tatianna Anderson, and Vanessa Wolfe holding signs, and mom, Erin White, just before Molly, Emma, Vanessa, Heather, and Erin left for LaCrosse Saturday morning. Submitted photo.

## White named All State Champion in solo dance at WACPC State Dance Competition

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Amelia “Molly” White, a Senior at Merrill High School, went to the Wisconsin Association of Cheer/Pom Coaches (WACPC) State Dance Competition this past weekend, Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025.

Last Tuesday, Jan. 28, at the Boys Varsity Basketball game, Molly’s Dance Teammates and the crowd helped celebrate Molly’s impending trip to State, and on Saturday morning, some of her Dance Teammates came out to cheer her on and see her off. The Merrill Police Department and Fire Department provided her with an escort out of town as Molly and her family and a small group of supporters left in the morning, bound



Molly White celebrates her All-State Solo Dance Championship win on Saturday, Feb. 1, 2025. Submitted photo.

for LaCrosse.

Molly was announced as a qualifier at the Regional event held the previous weekend at DC Everest and went to State as a competitor in the D4 Solo Dance Routine Competition where she competed with her routine against 19 other soloists. The top 10 performers were announced as All State Champions, and Molly earned a spot in the top 10 as a member of this year’s All State Team.

“Congratulations Molly! We are very proud of you! We wish you all the best in your continued success as you begin your next adventure in College in the fall!” Coaches Amanda White and Coach Sarah Fuchs said in a celebratory Facebook post on the Merrill Dance Team Facebook page.

Mom, Erin White, couldn’t be prouder and had a hard time trying to take photos because she

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## Merrill girl holds cupcake fundraiser in memory of little brother

12-year-old Julia Skaar hopes to bake 1,000 cupcakes to raise funds for area charities

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Julia Skaar had a little brother she loves and continues to miss dearly. In her own words, “Three years ago, my family was in a fatal car crash. We were hit by a drunk driver. Everyone was devastated. In that crash, my best friend went to heaven.”

On Sept. 17, 2022, Julia’s little brother, 8-year-old Ian Skaar, died in that crash, Julia’s mother sustained

serious injuries from which she later recovered, and Julia and her father sustained minor injuries. In an instant, the family’s entire world changed, but their faith and their family has continued to draw strength as they cling closer to one another. Faith and family holds them up.

“As a family, we lost a part of our hearts in 2022,” said Leah Skaar. “As a family, we continue to love, support each other, and walk with each other through this season of pain.”

Three years ago, in 2023 just months after losing her brother, Julia decided to hold a cupcake fundraiser to raise money for charity, in memory of her little brother, Ian. She called it “Julia’s Little Cups Fundraiser... In Loving Memory of Ian Thomas Skaar”



Julia Skaar shown with a batch of her cupcakes from her 2024 fundraiser. Submitted photo.

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CUPCAKE  
from page 1

and started taking orders for and baking cupcakes.

“It was on Julia’s heart to create ‘Julia’s Little Cups Fundraiser ... In Loving Memory of Ian,’” Leah said.

“I want to spread the word of Jesus and how some choices have a bigger

and deeper impact than other choices,” Julia said.

In her first year of the fundraiser, Julia baked more than 900 cupcakes, raising \$4,641. She divided the funds equally among some of her favorite charities: Aspirus Merrill Hospital, Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Marshfield Children’s Hospital, Town

of Russell Fire Department, Town of Russell First Responders, Merrill Fire Department, and Luther Memorial Church.

The next year, she did it again. That was in 2024, and Julia made 750 cupcakes to meet the demand, raising \$3,450. She divided the funds equally, making donations to: Luther Memorial Church, Aspirus Wausau Hospital, Aspirus Merrill Hospital, Marshfield Children’s Hospital, Merrill Fire Department, Aspirus Medivac, Merrill Wrestling, St. John Lutheran Church & School, Town of Russell First Responders, and Town of Russell Fire Department.

A new goal to sell  
1,000 cupcakes

This year, as 12-year-old Julia begins her Third Annual Julia’s Little Cups Fundraiser in loving memory of her brother, she has raised the bar even further and is prepared to bake even more cupcakes.

“She writes out her fundraiser business plan each year,” Leah said. “I know she’d like to crush the last two years’ orders and do more.”

When asked specifically, Julia said her goal is to sell 1,000 cupcakes.

“She is selling Vanilla, Chocolate or Strawberry Love cupcakes, 4 cupcakes for \$15,” a Facebook post said. “Buy some for yourself and for your Valentine!”

Meeting this goal would raise \$3,750 in cupcake sales, and Julia often gets additional donations from people who don’t



A collection of pictures of Julia Skaar with her little brother, Ian Skaar. Submitted photo.

necessarily need cupcakes but just want to support her cause. This year Julia plans to donate the funds she raises to the D.A.R.E. Program in Lincoln County, Merrill Wrestling, and the Gleason First Responders.

In her own words, Julia wrote in her business plan: “I chose the D.A.R.E. Program because I find a (sic) importance in teaching others about drugs. Also on how drugs effect (sic) life. I also chose Merrill Wrestling because Ian’s life is all about wrestling and I never want to see wrestling stop. And I am also going

to give to the Gleason First Responders because they helped me and my family in knowing what to do.”

Supporting  
Julia’s Little Cups  
Fundraiser ... In  
Memory of Ian  
Thomas Skaar

Cupcakes must be ordered in advance, and orders are being accepted now through Feb. 13, 2025. Call or text Julia’s mom, Leah Skaar, at 715.551.9096 to place an order and specify your choice of flavors. Checks should be made payable to Leah

Skaar.

Cupcake pickup will be on Saturday, Feb. 15, from 12 noon to 4 p.m. at St. John Lutheran School, 1104 E. Third St. in Merrill.

For those who wish to donate but do not want to purchase cupcakes, donations can be sent via Venmo to: @tom-skaar-2 or by mail to: Leah Skaar, N5177 St. Rd. 17, Gleason WI 54435.

“Thank you for reading and for taking part in healing Julia’s broken heart. Much love, Tom, Leah & Julia” the fundraiser post on Facebook ended.

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News

Patrick J. Wood  
Publisher  
publisher@mmclocal.com

Tim Schreiber  
General Manager  
tschreiber@mmclocal.com

Rachel Crockett  
Graphic Designer

Tina L. Scott  
Editor  
tscott@mmclocal.com

Jennifer Gartmann  
Sales Consultant  
jgartmann@mmclocal.com

Heidi Schult  
Front Office Manager/CSR

Heidi Griebel  
Customer Service  
Representative

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

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

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CIRCULATION  
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**WHITE**  
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was crying. “Her dad and I are so incredibly proud of her—her dedication, resilience, and hard work, and we can’t wait to see what comes next!” Erin said.

“There’s no other feeling like being on that podium!” Molly said of her win. “It was a great way to end my four years with Merrill Dance Team!!”

Heather Wallace, mother of Emma Wallace and Vanessa Wolfe, two members of the Dance Team, was one of the



The Merrill Dance Team was super excited to be sending Molly White (center bottom row holding flowers) off to State Competition for Solo Dance.  
Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.

**Merrill Ice Reflections**  
**Figure Skating Club**  
*Presents*  
**Skating Across the Galaxy**  
*Saturday, February 8, 2025 • 6 pm*  
*Sunday, February 9, 2025 • 1 pm*  
*At the MARC Smith Center*

Tickets are \$10 and may be purchased at the Merrill Chamber of Commerce office during regular business hours or Wednesdays at the MARC from 5:30-9:30 pm or at the door the day of the show.

**Children 3 and under are FREE**

**WELCOME TO**  
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**Merrill Area Public Schools**  
**2025-2026 Kindergarten**

Parents/Guardians:

Merrill Area Public Schools recently mailed a letter and postcard to the parents and/or guardians of Kindergartners for the 2025-2026 school year asking if their child will be attending public, private or another school setting. To be eligible for kindergarten, your child must be 5 on or before September 1, 2025.

If you did not receive a mailing from Merrill Area Public Schools, please contact Sarah Fuchs at 715-536-4581, Ext. 10007 or [sarah.fuchs@mapsedu.org](mailto:sarah.fuchs@mapsedu.org) and she will include your child in the census and put on our kindergarten roster. Thank you.

supporters who went to LaCrosse with her daughter to cheer Molly on. “Molly was one of the Team Captains this year and the only Senior on the Team,” Heather said. “Molly took our girls (the only Freshmen on the Team) under her wing, and they

both respect and admire her.”

“The energy at the LaCrosse Center was electric,” Heather said. “So many talented dancers who’ve worked for years just to be able to compete at the State level, all hoping to leave with a place or title. ...

**Pet of the Week**

Meet **Joost!** He is just the best boy! **Joost** adores people and loves to play! He loves to go for walks and is good around most other dogs from what we are told. **Joost** is about 2 years old and ready to find his forever!

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

**MERRILL FOTO NEWS**  
**Student of the Week**

**This Week's Featured Student is**  
**Oliver Weinkauff**  
**Son of**  
**Jason and Beth Weinkauff**  
Oliver is in the 6th grade at Trinity Lutheran School. He was nominated by Mrs. Hartwig.

**What is your favorite subject in school? Why?**  
My favorite subject in school is PE because I like running around and playing games while working my body. I also like social studies because it's not too complicated and it's kinda fun.

**What is your favorite part of school? Why?**  
Recess and lunch. Usually at the middle of the day I am hungry and recess is a long time and I like playing outside.

**What would you like to do/become someday? Why?**  
An NFL player cause I have a lot of fun playing football and it is a lot of fun to watch and I like tackling!

I would like to nominate Oliver Weinkauff for Student of the Week. Oliver is exceptionally bright, consistently follows instructions, and puts considerable effort into every assignment. He is kind to his peers and diligently strives to be a positive role model for those around him.

~ Mrs. Hartwig

**Student of the Week Sponsored by:**  
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The best moment of the day for me was hearing Molly’s name as they announced her placement on the All State Team. She truly deserves it and it was a privilege to be a small part of her journey this year.”

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Gavin Wroblewski

**Here’s what Gavin has to say about our club:**

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For more information, please contact the school office at 715-536-7264 or email [schooloffice@stjohnmerrill.org](mailto:schooloffice@stjohnmerrill.org)

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OBITUARIES

Thomas George Sazama



Thomas George Sazama, age 93, passed peacefully into eternal life on January 30, 2025, surrounded by his loving children.

Tom was born on November 21, 1931, to Francis and Josephine (Rosenthal) Sazama in Watertown, WI. After graduating from high school in 1949, he attended Northwestern College in Watertown from 1949-50 and Marquette University from 1950-51. As a true patriot, Tom enlisted in the United States Navy during the Korean War, and he proudly served our country for four years. He played football for the Navy during his two years stationed in Japan and played D1 football for Marquette University after returning home in 1955. Tom completed his Bachelor of Science degree at Marquette in 1957 and was accepted into Marquette University Law School, where he obtained his law degree in 1960.

During his last year of law school, Tom met the love of his life Mary Josephine (Daley), who had just graduated from Marquette's nursing program. After a short courtship, they were married on April 23, 1960, at the Church of the Gesu in Milwaukee.

Tom applied for and was accepted into the United States Federal Bureau of Investigation after graduating from Law School, but with their first child on the way, Tom and Mary Jo decided to move to Merrill, WI to raise their family. There, Tom began his law career as a general practice attorney in 1960. He opened Sazama Law Offices in 1962, where he continued to practice law for 34 years until his retirement in 1996. He served as Merrill City Attorney from 1965-72, as well as Assistant City Attorney. He was a participating attorney of Wisconsin Judicare, Inc., which provided free legal services to those in need.

Tom contributed much to his community of Merrill and received much in return. He was a faithful Catholic and involved member of St. Robert Bellarmine/St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, where he served as a Parish Council member, Finance Committee Chairman, and President of the St. Robert's Home and School Association. He also participated in the church choir and volunteered as a Mass lector. After retirement he instructed schoolchildren in how to reverently altar-serve at Mass. He was a member of the Merrill Knights of Columbus, Lincoln County Bar Association, Merrill Lions Club, Merrill Rotary Club, Merrill Jaycees and Town of Harding Land Use Committee. Tom was elected to the Merrill Area Board of Education for multiple terms, serving 12 years.

Tom and Mary Jo were dedicated to raising their four children, and he unapologetically prioritized God and family above all else for the entirety of his life. He loved the outdoors, which he shared with Mary Jo, his children and grandchildren, friends and relatives, making the most of every season as an avid fisherman, hunter, snowmobiler and sportsman. He enjoyed coaching basketball teams at St. Robert School, and he was a constant presence cheering at every one of his kids' (and later grandchildren's) sporting events over the years. After retirement, Tom and Mary Jo enjoyed several years of motor homing. They visited family and friends and reached several destinations throughout North America.

Tom is preceded in death by his parents, his beloved wife Mary Jo, brother-in-law Walter Schwarting, and brother/sister-in-law Jerry and Joan Daley. He is survived by his four loving children Jeanne (Kevin) Custy, Lone Tree, CO; Joanne (Paul) Andress, Colgate, WI; Julie (Michael) Hogan, New Brighton, MN; Jerry (Gina) Sazama, Waconia, MN; eighteen grandchildren, three great-grandchildren, sisters Mary Jo Schwarting and Karen (Richard) Sonnentag, both of Oconomowoc, WI, and many cousins, nieces and nephews.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be celebrated at 10:30am on Saturday, February 15, 2025, at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. Father James Horath will preside. Burial will take place at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Cemetery, Merrill, with military honors. Visitation will be held on Friday, February 14 from 4:00-7:00pm followed by a Rosary 7:00-7:30pm at Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral and Cremation Service at 301 S. Eagle Dr, Merrill.

In lieu of flowers, please send memorials to St. Francis Xavier Catholic School, 1708 E. 10th St, Merrill, WI 54452.

We will greatly miss Tom, but we rejoice knowing he will be welcomed into his true Home as the good and faithful servant he was. Thank you to the wonderful staff at Bell Tower, Marshfield Medical Center-Weston and Compassus Home Health and Hospice who specially cared for "Tommy George."

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstinewaid.com](http://www.taylorstinewaid.com).

Dr. Viljo (Will) Piikkila



Dr. Viljo (Will) Piikkila, 91, of Merrill passed away of natural causes on Sunday, January 26, 2025 at Aspirus Hospital Wausau, WI.

He was born April 14, 1933 in Chicago to Solomon A. and Lempi Lydia (Joki) Piikkila.

He graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1951 and attended Wright Junior College for two years. He was drafted in 1953 and served in the Army as a Survey Specialist in Germany and was discharged August 26, 1955. He then attended Loyola University of Chicago graduating in 1957. During this time, he met and then married Margery Lundgoot on June 21, 1958. After graduating from Loyola Dental School in 1963, he opened a dental practice in Des Plaines, IL for three years before moving to Merrill in 1966 where he and Marge bought a farm on Highway C in the Town of Merrill and he started his dental practice at 803 E. First St., Merrill. On the farm they raised beef cattle, horses, pigs, sheep, chickens, loyal farm dogs, many barn cats and three sons. Will operated his dental practice until retiring in May 1999.

Will enjoyed farming and his dental practice and in his spare time, reading, hiking, canoeing and fishing especially in the Boundary Waters and Quetico Superior areas, hunting and many other outdoor activities. His pride and joy were sharing these with his family and passing the love of these activities to his sons.

Will is survived by his wife Margery, three sons Thomas of Mason, WI (partner Colleen Matula), Paul of Appleton, WI (wife Lisa Brandenburg), Matthew of Marinette, WI (wife Patricia Weix), five grandchildren and seven great grandchildren.

Will was preceded in death by his parents and only sibling Johann Piikkila formerly of Tucson, AZ. A private family service will be held at a later date. Memorials may be given in Will's name to the T.B. Scott Free Library [https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted\\_button\\_id=9VD53RHY6NZR2](https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=9VD53RHY6NZR2) (click donate with debit or credit card and the next screen has a "+" to write a note) or the Merrill Historical Society <https://discovermerrillhistory.org/donate>.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstinewaid.com](http://www.taylorstinewaid.com).

Doris A. Martinell



Doris A. Martinell, of Yuma, Arizona, passed away on Tuesday, January 28th, 2025, following a brief illness at Yuma Regional Medical Center. She was 85 years old.

Born on March 13th, 1939, in Dorchester, Wisconsin, Doris was the daughter of the late Albert and Merle Winchell. On January 22nd, 2009, she married Gordy Martinell, who survives her.

Doris was a dedicated mother to seven children, known for her delicious home-cooked meals and desserts. She held various jobs throughout her life, including waitress, cook, and even running a chainsaw and driving a skidder. Doris was truly one of a kind, capable of fixing roofs, laying cement, sewing clothes, and preserving food. She could sing, dance, and bring joy to those around her. She taught her seven children to be good, loving, and caring adults. Doris enjoyed spending time with her family and friends, gardening, traveling, going on cruises, deer hunting, and visiting casinos.

In addition to her husband, Doris is survived by her sister, Marion (Lavern) Yorde; her six children, Cheryl (Michael) Busch of Deerbrook, WI, Noreen (Michael) Schulz of Athens, WI, Darla (Dave) Vachavake of Merrill, WI, Steve Schmidt (fiancée, Sheila Pound) of Cadiz, Kentucky, Bob (Ann) Schmidt of Summit Lake, WI, and Gail (Josh) Lindemann of Surprise, AZ. She also leaves behind 22 grandchildren, 25 great-grandchildren, one great-great-grandchild, and four nephews.

Preceding her in death were her parents, her daughter Collette Rustick, her granddaughter Julie Meade Busch, and her great-great-granddaughter Telari Comer.

A 'Celebration of Life' will be held to honor her memory.

Carol Jean Raasch

It is with deep sorrow that we announce the passing of Carol Jean Raasch (74), who left us on January 27, 2025. Carol was a beloved spouse, parent, sister & friend, and will be dearly missed by all who knew her.

A full obituary including details regarding a summer memorial service will be shared at a later date.

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YOUR FAMILY'S PERSONAL MEMORIALIST

Edwin Anthony Wichlacz



Edwin Anthony Wichlacz, age 91, passed away surrounded by his loving family on Sunday, January 26, 2025 at The Waterford of Colby under the tender care of Heartland Hospice.

A Mass of Christian Burial will be held at 11:00 a.m. on Friday, January 31, 2025 at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Milan. Father George Graham will officiate. Please join the family for visitation at the

Maurina-Schilling Funeral Home on Thursday, January 30 from 4:00 until 8:00 p.m. and Friday at the church beginning at 10:00 a.m. until the time of the funeral service.

Edwin was born on March 20, 1933, the son of Anton and Lucille (Kordus) Wichlacz in the Town of Rietbrock, Marathon County. He served in the US Army for two years during the Korean War from 1953-1955, earning the rank of E-4, Corporal Squad Leader and continued to serve in the Army Reserves for eight years. On July 10, 1954, Edwin was united in marriage to Betty Carol Zóbrak at St. Thomas Catholic Church in Milan. They lived in Milan for 68 years.

Edwin worked for 33 years at Kraft Foods in Milan until 1989 when the plant closed. He also drove milk truck part time. He then worked at Weathershield in Medford and Wisconsin Dairies in Milan retiring in 1996.

Edwin was a member of St. Thomas Catholic Church in Milan and Catholic Family. He was a member of the Edgar American Legion Post #393.

Edwin could figure out how to fix just about anything. He enjoyed woodworking crafts with his wife, hunting, fishing, camping, cutting wood, gardening, canning pickles, making sauerkraut, growing horseradish, tomatoes, feeding and watching the birds. Edwin especially enjoyed playing checkers with his children and grandchildren and worked on puzzles. He also collected Jim Bean fish bottles and mini oil lamps. Edwin was honored to go on the "Never Forgotten Honor Flight" in September 2017 accompanied by his son, Scott. He was born during a snow storm, so his personal tradition on March 20, was to shovel snow. Some years was easier than other years as he had to go look for it from a snow bank in Milan. Even on his 91st birthday, his son Scott had to search for snow and deliver it to his residence at The Waterford, just so he could throw a few shovels with the help of his daughter, Julie.

Edwin is survived by his wife of 70 years, Betty; five children: Gale (Gerard) Schreiber of Athens, Scott (RaeAnn) Wichlacz of Medford, Pamela (Rick) Ahles, Wisconsin Rapids, Julie (Kevin) Lentz of Merrill and Lynn (Kevin) Barttelt of Weston; 14 grandchildren: Jeremy Schreiber, Russell Schreiber, Travis Wichlacz, Jay Wichlacz, Ryan Wichlacz, Beth Wichlacz, Ashley Ahles, Amanda Ahles, Kacie Gibbs, Nathan Gibbs, Rebecca Consolver, Riley Adam Consolver, Andy Consolver and Trevor Barttelt; three step-grandchildren: Joe Mahl, Sarah Lentz and McKinley Lentz; 12 Great-Grandchildren: Haylee Schreiber, Austin Schreiber, Ryan Schreiber, Logan Wichlacz, Paxton Wichlacz, Dakota Wichlacz, Makayla Wichlacz, Aubree Wichlacz, Koal Wichlacz, Kayden Dassow, Kaleb Dassow and Aspyr Steele; three step-great-grandchildren: Devin Sperber, Gaj Mahl and Skylar Mahl and one great-great-grandchild: Jasper Nyhus. He is further survived by his brother, Jeffrey (Joanne) Wichlacz; three sisters-in-law: Joan Wichlacz, Joyce Wichlacz and Marvel Choroszy; and a brother-in-law Ronald (Jean) Zóbrak; plus many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his parents; his in-laws, John and Irene Zóbrak; three brothers: Eugene Wichlacz, Roger Wichlacz and Larry Wichlacz; one sister, Gladys Martin; brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law: Shirley Wichlacz, Jack Martin, Harriet (Bill) Duerst, Virginia (Raymond) Vieau, Zygmunt Choroszy.

The Wichlacz family would like to thank the staff at The Waterford in Colby and Heartland Hospice for the compassionate care Edwin received.

Family and friends may express condolences online at [www.maurinaschilling.com](http://www.maurinaschilling.com).

Danny 'Dan' Woller



Danny 'Dan' Woller passed away peacefully at Pine Crest Nursing Home on Tuesday, January 28, 2025, surrounded by his loving family.

He was born on October 30, 1944, in Wausau, WI, son of Melvin & Amyra (Theilig) Woller. Dan was a graduate of Merrill High School, class of 1962. He married his high school sweetheart Patricia J. Heath on June 12, 1965.

Dan and his wife were the owners and operators of the former Lincoln TV, Lincoln Video and Lincoln Video Presentations in Merrill, WI. He enjoyed watching TV, going on day trips with his wife and walking his dog, Dot.

Dan is survived by his sons, Scott (Shelly) of Medford, WI and Tom (Sandy) of Wausau, WI; two grandchildren, Callie and Jason Woller; and his sister, Bonnie Arkens. He was preceded in death by his wife of 56 years, Patricia Woller; and parents, Melvin & Amyra Woller.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is handling the arrangements. Per Dan's wishes there will be no service.

In lieu of flowers, Dan wishes were that donations be made to the Lincoln County Humane Society.

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

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**Richard Charles Steckel**

Richard Charles Steckel, age 89, of Merrill, passed away on Wednesday, January 29, 2025 peacefully at his home.


Richard was born October 30, 1935, in Hankinson, North Dakota to Frank and Anna (Maas) Steckel. He graduated from Ladysmith High School, in Ladysmith, Wisconsin and later earned a B. S. degree in Industrial Arts Education from the University of Wisconsin-Stout. He began his teaching career at Bruce High School, in Bruce, Wisconsin and then taught at the Ethan Allen School for Boys, in Wales, Wisconsin. He spent most of his career as a teacher at Lincoln Hills School in Irma, Wisconsin where he later became an assistant principal. During his years in education, he touched many lives with his calm and caring manner. He married Kathryn Anderson on July 16, 1960 at the Sand Lake Chapel in Britt, Minnesota. Rick enjoyed playing golf for much of his life. In retirement Rick and Kathy took many winter trips to Myrtle Beach, South Carolina to spend time and golf with his brothers. He was also a loyal supporter of Wisconsin and Merrill High School sports. He especially loved travelling to Blue Jay football games to support his grandson. He looked forward to his times at his hunting shack in Ladysmith, Wisconsin. Rick felt fortunate for time with family and friends, which always put a smile on his face.

Richard is survived by one daughter, Karen (Breck) Buntrock; one grandson, Isaac (Lexi) Buntrock; great granddaughters, Isla and Ashlynn Buntrock, all of Merrill. Rick is preceded in death by his dear wife of 59 years, Kathryn Steckel; his parents; four brothers; Lloyd, Frank Jr., Everett and George; two sisters; Lois and Fran.

A private family celebration of Rick's life will be held at a later date.

Memorials can be given in Richard's name to your local sports or youth organizations. Any monetary gifts will be donated to Merrill Athletic Programs.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstinewaid.com](http://www.taylorstinewaid.com).



**Lila Elaine Duginski**

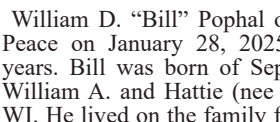
Lila Elaine Duginski, age 84, of Merrill, passed away on Friday, January 24, 2025, at her home. She was born on September 16, 1940 to the late Patrick B. and Mary A. (Donavan) Taylor in Tomahawk. She met Norman Stanley Duginski and the two were united in marriage on October 30, 1958 in Merrill. Sadly, he preceded her in death.

Lila was a homemaker, but also worked at Weinbrenner Shoe Factory for 18 years, and owned and operated her own ceramic studio, called Hungry Hollows, and taught others about ceramics. She enjoyed volunteering at the Merrill Food Pantry and looked forward to the time she was able to spend with her grandkids. In her younger years, the family would go on camping trips, making pudgy pies and hot dogs, and playing cards and taking trips to the casino with Norman. Lila enjoyed living at Jenny Towers in Merrill and visiting with her friends there. She was a strong and independent woman that was very passionate about things important to her, and was fun-loving and easy-going. Lila will be sadly missed, but never forgotten.

Lila is survived by her sons: Dick (Arlene) Duginski, Joseph (Lori) Duginski and Patrick Duginski, 7 grandchildren, 3 great grandchildren, along with many nieces and nephews. She is preceded in death by her parents, husband: Norman, brothers: Junior Baker, Leroy (Mary Kay) Baker and Ronald Baker, and sisters: Mary Ellen Baker, Mildred Haskins, Betty Minenbacher, Barbara (Art) Hill and Pauline Ziegel.

Per Lila's request, no services will be held. An inurnment will take place at St. Francis Catholic Cemetery in Merrill at a later date.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation Services of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstinewaid.com](http://www.taylorstinewaid.com).



**William D. "Bill" Pophal**

William D. "Bill" Pophal of Hustisford. Found Peace on January 28, 2025, at the age of 95 years. Bill was born of September 28, 1929 to William A. and Hattie (nee Schmidt) in Merrill, WI. He lived on the family farm and attended St. Stephen UCC in Merrill. Bill married his wife of 50 years, Diane J. Neumann, on September 28, 1968. In 1973, they moved to Hustisford, WI. He worked at ITW in Hustisford until his retirement at the age of 80. He was a longtime member of St. Peter's Church in Lebanon. Bills favorite pastime was buying/selling cars and cleaning his car. He was very meticulous about his lawn and his riding lawn mower. Bill most enjoyed being with his daughter, his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, as they meant the world to him. He was an Army veteran of the Korean War.

Bill is preceded in death by his wife, parents and three sisters.

Loving dad of Billie Jean (Craig) Stoll. Loving "papa" of Heather Becker, Amber Becker, Amanda Becker, Samantha (Joseph) Baasch and Stephanie (Lucas) Nehls. Cherished "old papa" of Matteo, Marcelo, Maleo and Melaine Nehls, and Brantley Henson. Fond brother of John (Barb) Pophal. Also survived by nieces, nephews, other relatives and friends.

Private family services will be held.

For online condolences please visit:[www.schramkafuneralhome.com](http://www.schramkafuneralhome.com).

# Love the Littles Diaper Drive to be held this Valentines season

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, in conjunction with other area churches and businesses, are working together to hold their second annual Love the Littles Diaper Drive this Valentine season. The drive will run from Feb. 6-23, 2025.

They are requesting donations of new diapers and/or wipes, or a monetary donation which will be used to support the Our Saviour's Lutheran Church Diaper Closet, and donations can be dropped off at any of the following participating locations during normal business hours:

- Our Saviour's Lutheran Church (300 N. Logan St.)
- Christ United Methodist Church (300 N. Mill St.)
- St. Stephen's United Church of Christ (903 E. 2nd St.)
- The Chiropractic Wellness Center (109 S. Center Ave.)
- Park City Credit Union (501 S. Pine Ridge Ave.)
- Polka Dotted Pie (914 E. Main St.)
- Incredible Bank (3210 E. Main St.)
- Westside Market (1504 W. Main St.)
- Riverside Athletic Club (500 S. Center Ave.)
- Courtside Furniture (1022 E. Main St.)

is provided in a confidential, non-judgmental setting to those in need. The Diaper Closet is located at Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 300 N. Logan St. in Merrill, and is open to the community on the second Tuesday of the month from 3-5 p.m. and the fourth Saturday of the month from 9-11 a.m. There are no income requirements. A variety of sizes of diapers and pull-ups are typically available, from infants to adult sizes, at no cost. To accommodate everyone, there is a limit of one package of diapers or pull-ups per visit, and a maximum of 12 visits per year.

Monetary donations can be mailed directly to: Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, 300 N. Logan St., Merrill WI 54452. Please indicate it is for the Diaper Closet.

# Local Rotary Clubs promote ethics and civility to ninth graders

Rotary Clubs in communities throughout northeast Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula are sponsoring local Rotary Four Way Test Speaking contests with students able to win up to \$1,500.

The Rotary Four Way Test was developed more than 100 years ago to teach ethics to Rotary members and the business community.

It states, "In all the things we think, say and do, is it the truth, is it fair to all concerned, will it build goodwill and better friendship, and will it be beneficial to all concerned."

Ninth graders students are invited to write a five-minute speech on how to apply the Four Way test to social media and how people are treated. Detailed information about contest rules and how to enter is available at: [redistricting6220org](http://redistricting6220org).

Local winners will be awarded a cash prize of \$500 and enter competition on the Rotary District level where first place will be \$1,000; second and third place prizes will also be awarded locally and by the district.

Rotary District 6220 is comprised of 41 clubs throughout Wisconsin and Michigan's Upper Peninsula.

Rotary International is one of the world's largest service clubs with more than 1,400,000 members in more than 200 countries.

Rotary District Governor Roger Utneher, a member of the Rotary Club of Wausau, invites parents, grandparents, teachers, friends, and relatives to encourage ninth grade students to participate.

"The next pandemic in America may very well be teen mental health," Utneher said. "A speaking contests that encourages students to think about their social media activity and how they treat others may be one way to deal with the rising problem of teen anxiety and depression."

The thoughts shared by students in these five-minute speeches can be very helpful in assisting adults to relate more effectively to young people, according to Utneher.

The deadline for local competitions is April 1, 2025, with the District competition scheduled for April 12.

Local competitions may be online or in person. District competition will be online only.

For complete entry details, go to: [redistrict6220.org](http://redistrict6220.org).

## PUBLISHER'S LETTER

### Current Spaces and Empty Chair Echoes

Dear Reader,

Yesterday afternoon was bitterly cold, yet the sun shone brightly—a fitting reflection of the emotions in my heart. As I walked into the memory care unit of a Senior Living home I'd been visiting regularly to see my father-in-law Francis for the past two years, the familiar faces greeted me like old friends. They were scattered around the big room, watching yet another rerun of Mary Tyler Moore—or maybe it was The Dick Van Dyke Show. Their smiles, warm and welcoming, made me feel that despite not living there, I still belonged.



for my hand. She launched into a vivid story about her days as a nurse in the ER. Her eyes sparkled with pride as she spoke. Beside her, Mary Lou motioned for me to come closer to her wheel chair. When I asked how she was doing, she lifted her hands like she was holding onto an invisible ledge. "Just hanging on," she said with a wry smile.

The aides began rounding everyone up for dinner so I made my last rounds, shaking hands, giving hugs, and sharing brief, meaningful exchanges. Lark pulled me into one last embrace before I pushed the buttons at the exit door to let myself out.

As the door clicked shut behind me, I couldn't help but reflect on the inevitable. Someday, I'll be in a place like this. Everything will be taken care of—meals, medications, and all the needs of a frail body. But even with all the care in the world, the loneliness lingers. Most of the residents were waiting, one step away from the reunion that comes when the spirit departs a worn-out body. Still, there was beauty in that waiting. It wasn't despair but a quiet anticipation of something more—a peace I could almost feel as I walked to my car.

Driving away, I thought about the rest of my day and all my tomorrows. I made a promise to myself: I'll savor the moments, big and small; I'll hold tight to joy, squeezing every drop from the time I have left. And one day, when I find myself in a room like that, I hope someone will walk through the door to remind me then of the life I'm living now.

**PATRICK J. WOOD**  
Publisher

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



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# DNR now accepting entries for 2026 State Park And Forest 12-Month Vehicle Admission Pass

Design contest open to high school students across Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is now accepting artwork entries from high school students for the 2026 12-month Wisconsin state park and forest vehicle admission pass. The annual DNR-sponsored design contest is open to all high school-age

students in Wisconsin who attend public, private and parochial schools or are homeschooled. Artwork entries should focus on outdoor recreation, animals or plants in Wisconsin. "With the transition to a 12-month admission pass format, we're excited to see what inspiration and creativity is generated by high schoolers across the state. This is a great opportunity for students to blend their artistic passion and interest in our natural resources," said Steve Schmelzer, Parks and Recreation Management Bureau director. "We are grateful for all of the students who submit artwork. It's always a pleasure to see the entries, and it's never an easy choice to pick just

one design." The vehicle admission passes provide access to more than 60 state park, forest and recreation area properties across Wisconsin. All motor vehicles entering state parks and recreation areas must have a vehicle admission pass. Some state forest and trail parking areas also require a pass. Materials for the 2026 sticker design contest are now available, and students can submit entries through April 30, 2025. Rules, submission guidelines, tips for a winning design and past sticker design winners are available on the DNR's State Park Pass Design Contest webpage at [dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/designcontest](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/topic/parks/designcontest).

## St. John Lutheran School announces 2024-2025 second quarter Honor Roll

**HIGHEST HONORS (4.0):** Ruby Hoffman, Ella Humphrey, Molly Literski, Ever Smith, Samuel Szeto, Esther Verpoorten, Job Verpoorten

**HIGH HONORS (3.76-3.99):** Claire Canne, Poppy Geisler, Abner Gremler, Brynlee

Heidemann, Gemma Hoffman, Ellyana Ineichen, Mason Klug, Delana Podeweltz, Adalyn Schooley, Lily Schultz, Julia Skaar, Christian Voigt, June Wallace

**HONORS (3.5-3.75):** Adric Frick, Layla Jacobson, Lola

Klug, Malayna Kufahl, Macie Lange, Lillian Mattson, Garik Peterson, Isabelle Podeweltz, Ethan Schenzel, Natalie Sir, Isabella Sprague, Joanna Szeto, Madilynn VenRooy, Chelsea Wengeler

# It's individual income tax season

MADISON, Wis. — The individual income tax filing season began on Monday, Jan. 27, 2025, and the Wisconsin Department of Revenue (DOR) is ready to help taxpayers with their tax preparation and filing needs.

**Here's how you file**

Wisconsin taxpayers have several options for filing their taxes:

- **Direct File.** This new, free online service allows eligible taxpayers to file their federal income taxes directly with the IRS. Direct File integrates seamlessly with WisTax, allowing you to easily file your Wisconsin state return. Go to:
- **Tax Filing Software.** Numerous software options are available, ranging from basic to advanced, offering varying levels of guidance and support.
- **Tax Preparer.** Enlisting the help of a qualified tax professional can be beneficial for those with complex tax situations or who prefer personalized

assistance.

- **VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance).** Free tax preparation assistance is available to eligible taxpayers through the VITA program, offered by community organizations and IRS-certified volunteers. To locate a site near you, use the VITA/TCE Locator Tool at [irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/](http://irs.treasury.gov/freetaxprep/) or the AARP Site Locator Tool at [aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp-taxaide/locations.html](http://aarp.org/money/taxes/aarp-taxaide/locations.html).

Expanded Wisconsin Child and Dependent Care Credit

Check to see if you qualify for the expanded Wisconsin Child and Dependent Care credit (Schedule WI-2441) at [tinyurl.com/WisCredit](http://tinyurl.com/WisCredit). The qualifying expenses and maximum allowable credit amount have been increased for the 2024 tax year.

**Where's my refund?**

DOR's Where's My Refund tool is the quickest way to check your refund

status, as it gives taxpayers instant access to the same information call center agents provide. To access it, go to [tap.revenue.wi.gov/RefundStatus/\\_/](http://tap.revenue.wi.gov/RefundStatus/_/).

**Extended call center hours**

To further assist taxpayers during this busy time, DOR's Customer Service Call Center is extending hours in the weeks leading up to the filing deadline. Tax specialists will be available from 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m. April 1-3, April 7-10 and April 14-15 to accommodate taxpayers' schedules.

**More resources**

Individual tax filers are encouraged to visit the DOR website's Individuals page at [revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Individuals/home.aspx](http://revenue.wi.gov/Pages/Individuals/home.aspx) where they will find answers to common questions, forms and instructions, tax credit information, payment options, instructional videos, and other resources.



## Trinity Lutheran School announces 2024-2025 second quarter Honor Roll

Students are recognized on the Trinity Honor Roll for a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 and higher. An \*indicates a 4.0 GPA

**FIFTH GRADE**

Easton Baade  
Eli Clerveaux  
Grace Dupke  
Evie Gilbert  
Paul Huth  
Kimberly Klimek  
Joseph Renzelmann  
Stevie Wells

**SIXTH GRADE**

Emma Baumann  
Brady Bostrom  
Hunter Bostrom  
Alivia Hockett  
Michael Houle  
Emma Kromholz  
Abigail Nelson  
James Peterson  
Laney Schmidt  
Oliver Weinkauff

**SEVENTH GRADE**

Amber Blennert  
Mariah Dupke  
Adeline Huth  
Asa Laabs  
Melia Lee

Amiya Lipke-Bauman  
Chloe McKeen  
Fiona McKeen

**EIGHTH GRADE**


Emily Amelse  
Madeline Barker  
Rebekah Hagemeister \*0  
Willow Harmon  
Kayla Klimek \*  
Lexee Laabs  
Nathaniel Nelson  
TyLynn Osness  
Aubrey Renzelmann  
Jillian Severt  
Emmie Steinagel \*  
Brooklyn Teske

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**BY THE COURT:**  
**DATE SIGNED: 02/03/2025**  
**/S/HON. GALEN BAYNE-ALLISON**  
**CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE, BR I**  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
**Notice and Order for**  
**Name Change Hearing**  
Case No. 25-CV-12  
IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME  
CHANGE OF Natasha Leah Becker  
By (Petitioner) Natasha Leah Becker  
**NOTICE IS GIVEN:**  
A petition was filed asking to change the  
name of the person listed above:  
From: Natasha Leah Becker  
To: Natasha Leah Krueger  
Birth Certificate: Natasha Leah Becker  
**IT IS ORDERED:**  
This petition will be heard in the Circuit  
Court of Lincoln County, State of  
Wisconsin:  
Judge's Name: Hon. Galen Bayne-  
Allison  
Place: Lincoln County Courthouse-Br 1  
1110 E. Main St., Merrill, WI 54452  
Date: 03/18/2025  
Time: 1:15 PM  
If you require reasonable accommoda-  
tions due to a disability to participate in  
the court process, please call 715-536-  
0319 prior to the scheduled court date.  
Please note that the court does not  
provide transportation.  
**IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:**  
Notice of this hearing shall be given by  
publication as a Class 3 notice for three  
(3) weeks in a row prior to the date of  
the hearing in the Foto News a  
newspaper published in Lincoln County,  
State of Wisconsin.  
Published: 2/6/25, 2/13/25 & 2/20/25  
WNAXLP

**BY THE COURT**  
**DATE SIGNED: January 14, 2025**  
**Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer**  
Probate Registrar  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN,**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
Phyllis Louise Monka  
**Notice to Creditors**  
**(Informal Administration)**  
Case No. 2025 IN 03  
**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:**  
1. An application for informal  
administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth  
1/21/1935 and date of death  
12/27/2024, was domiciled in Lincoln  
County, State of Wisconsin, with a  
mailing address of 1806 W. Jackson  
Street, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against  
the decedent's estate is 04/25/2025.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln  
County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin,  
Probate Office.  
Stephanie Springborn  
N2395 Gen Drive  
Merrill, WI 54452  
715-218-8496  
Published 1/23/25, 1/30/25 & 2/6/25  
WNAXLP

**BY THE COURT**  
**DATE SIGNED: January 16, 2025**  
**Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer**  
Probate Registrar  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN,**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
Dale C. Woller  
**Notice to Creditors**  
**(Informal Administration)**  
Case No. 2025 IN 06  
**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:**  
1. An application for informal administra-  
tion was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth  
10/02/61 and date of death 01/11/25,  
was domiciled in Lincoln County, State  
of WI, with a mailing address of 405 N  
Prospect St.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against  
the decedent's estate is 04/25/25.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln  
County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin,  
Room Probate.  
Tori Smith (Woller)  
416 N 6th Ave, Wausau, WI 54401  
715-571-8499  
Published 1/23/25, 1/30/25 & 2/6/25  
WNAXLP

Legals 7700

Notice of Pending Application for  
Proposed Pond via Nonmetallic Mining  
Brad Plautz (Plautz Excavating &  
Logging, LLC), W5401 Row Rd, Merrill,  
WI. 54452, has applied to the  
Department of Natural Resources for a  
permit to create a pond within 500' of a  
waterway (Unnamed stream WBIC  
1481400) via nonmetallic mining. The  
project is located in the NW 1/4, SE 1/4,  
Section 35, Township 32 North, Range 6  
East in the Town of Merrill, Lincoln  
County, WI.  
The project consists of a small quarry  
that plans to be 4 phases of operation.  
Only phases 1 and 2 (approximately 3.5  
acres) are proposed to be in operation  
and permitted under this Ch. 30 permit.  
The operator plans to mine sand and  
gravel over the next 8-10 years (based  
on supply and demand) and then  
proceed accordingly into phases 3 and 4  
for future operations. Once mining  
extraction is completed, the site will be  
reclaimed per statewide reclamation  
standards to a wildlife pond  
approximately 8 acres in size and  
approximately 5 feet depth on average  
(max 8' deep). A wetland delineation has  
been completed as part of the project  
and no wetland disturbance or impacts  
are proposed. The site is located outside  
of the floodplain.  
The Department will review the proposal  
provided by the applicant and any  
information from public comments and  
the public informational hearing. The  
Department will determine whether the  
proposal complies with ss. 1.11, 30.19,  
30.208, 281.36, Wis. Stats., and ch. NR  
150, Wis. Adm. Code, and ensure that  
the required mitigation meets the  
standards in s. 281.36(3r), Stats. If the  
project impacts wetlands.  
The Department has made a tentative  
determination that it will issue the permit  
for the proposed activity.  
**If you would like to know more about**  
**this project or would like to see the**  
**application and plans, please visit the**  
**Department's permit tracking website at**  
**[https://permits.dnr.wi.gov/water/](https://permits.dnr.wi.gov/water/SitePages/Permit%20Search.aspx)**  
**[SitePages/Permit%20Search.aspx](https://permits.dnr.wi.gov/water/SitePages/Permit%20Search.aspx)**  
**and search for "Plautz".**  
Reasonable accommodation, including  
the provision of informational material in  
an alternative format, will be provided  
for qualified individuals with disabilities  
upon request.  
Any person may submit comments  
and/or request a public informational  
hearing by emailing  
lane.loveiland@wisconsin.gov, over the  
phone at (715) 596-0110, or writing to  
Lane Loveland, 225051 Rib Mountain  
Dr., Wausau, WI 54401 by U.S. mail. If  
you are submitting general comments  
on the proposal, they must be emailed,  
verbalized, or postmarked within 30  
days after the date this notice is  
published on the Department's website.  
If you are requesting a public  
informational hearing, the request must  
be emailed, verbalized, or postmarked  
within 20 days after the date this notice  
is published on the Department's  
website. A request for hearing must  
include the docket number or applicant  
name and specify the issues that the  
party desires to be addressed at the  
informational hearing.  
If no hearing is requested, the  
Department may issue its decision  
without a hearing. If a public  
informational hearing is held, comments  
must be postmarked no later than 10  
days following the date on which the  
hearing is completed.  
The final decision may be appealed as  
indicated in the decision document.  
Docket Number IP-NO-2024-35-02610  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT**  
**OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
For the Secretary  
BY: /s/ Lane Loveland  
Water Management Specialist  
Date: January 27, 2025  
Published February 6, 2025 WNAXLP

.....  
**ADVERTISE**  
**HERE**  
**715-536-7121**  
.....

Legals 7700

**BY THE COURT**  
**DATE SIGNED: January 17, 2025**  
**Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer**  
Probate Registrar  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
Gregory Keith Cegielski  
**Notice to Creditors**  
**(Informal Administration)**  
Case No. 2025 IN 07  
**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:**  
1. An application for informal administra-  
tion was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth  
3/23/1973 and date of death 1/09/2025,  
was domiciled in Lincoln County, State  
of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of  
W8447 HWY 64, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against  
the decedent's estate is May 2, 2025.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln  
County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin,  
Probate Office.  
Rory Cegielski  
325 Central Ave., Medford WI 54451  
715-560-5434  
Published 1/23/25, 1/30/25 & 2/6/25  
WNAXLP

**DATE SIGNED: January 27, 2025**  
**Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer**  
Probate Registrar  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
DARWIN BERNDT  
DOD: 01/11/2025  
Amended  
**Notice Setting Time to Hear**  
**Application and Deadline for Filing**  
**Claims**  
(Informal Administration)  
Case No. 25-IN-04  
**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:**  
1. An application for informal  
administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth  
08/25/1947, and date of death  
01/11/2025, was domiciled in Lincoln  
County, State of Wisconsin, with a  
mailing address of W5371 Park Avenue,  
Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. The application will be heard at the  
Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 E  
Main St. Merrill, Wisconsin, Br. 3  
Hearing Room, before Becky Byer,  
Probate Registrar, on February 27, 2025  
at 10:00 A.M.  
**You do not need to appear unless you**  
**object. The application may be**  
**granted if there is no objection.**  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against  
the decedent's estate is May 9, 2025.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln  
County Courthouse, 1110 E. Main St,  
Merrill, WI 54452, Room 2nd Floor.  
6. This publication is notice to any  
persons whose names or addresses are  
unknown.  
If you require reasonable accommoda-  
tions due to a disability to participate in  
the court process, please call 715-536-  
0342 prior to the scheduled court date.  
Please note that the court does not  
provide transportation.  
W. Erich Scherr  
1029 E. Main St, P.O. Box 176, Merrill,  
WI 54452  
715-536-8371 Bar Number 1031423  
Published 1/30/25, 2/6/25 & 2/13/25  
WNAXLP

**EARLY IN PERSON VOTING NOTICE**  
Early voting for **TOWN OF MERRILL** residents for the  
February 18th, 2025 Spring Primary, will begin at the Town of  
Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Ave. on Tuesday,  
February 4th.  
**Voting hours are:**  
Tuesday • February 4th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Thursday • February 6th 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Tuesday • February 11th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.  
Thursday • February 13th 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Friday • February 14th 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.  
Mitzi Flegner, Clerk  
Published January 30, February 6 & 13, 2025 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 February 18, 2025, Spring Primary  
Election is scheduled to begin at 10:00 A.M. on  
Monday, February 10, 2025. The testing will be  
conducted in the Town of Merrill Community Center,  
W4594 Progressive Ave., Merrill, WI 54452.  
Mitzi Flegner, Clerk  
Published February 6, 2025 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 February 18,  
2025 General Election is scheduled from  
8:30 a.m.–9:00 p.m. on Saturday, February 8,  
2025 through Wednesday, February 12, 2025.  
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 February 6, 2025 WNAXLP

JANUARY LAW OF THE MONTH:  
SAFE WINTER DRIVING

Be prepared  
for winter road  
conditions in  
Wisconsin

Winter is officially here,  
and with that comes the  
potential for dangerous  
road conditions. Snow,  
sleet, and ice make it  
harder to control and stop  
your vehicle. From Oct.  
2023 to May 2024, winter  
weather contributed to  
more than 11,000 crashes  
in Wisconsin, resulting in  
9 fatalities and over 2,000  
injuries.

The Wisconsin State  
Patrol's January Law of  
the Month focuses on safe  
winter driving.

“Many of us look  
forward to the beauty  
and adventure of a new  
season, but we can't deny  
that winter weather can  
also create treacherous  
road conditions,”  
Wisconsin State Patrol  
Superintendent Tim  
Carnahan said. “It's  
always best to stay off  
the roads in slippery  
conditions. If you must  
drive, be sure to avoid  
distractions, allow  
additional time to get to  
your destination, and  
give fellow motorists and  
snowplows extra space.”

Drive a reasonable  
speed to prevent  
crashes

State law requires  
drivers to travel at speeds  
that are reasonable and  
prudent for current  
conditions. Speed limits  
are set for when roads are  
clear and dry, so it may be  
too dangerous to drive at  
the posted speed limit in  
slippery conditions. Many  
winter crashes and slide  
offs are caused by drivers  
going too fast in hazardous  
conditions.

Give snowplows  
space to work

Snowplow drivers work  
long hours to clear nearly  
115,000 miles of roads  
across Wisconsin, so it's  
important for everyone to  
give them the space they  
need to get the job done.  
When approaching a  
snowplow that's clearing  
ice or snow, or laying salt  
or sand, state law requires  
drivers to stay at least:

- 200 feet back on a  
highway with a speed  
limit more than 35 miles  
per hour
  - 75 feet back on a road  
with a slower speed limit
- Road conditions ahead  
of a plow are likely worse,  
so drivers should use  
extra caution if passing  
a snowplow. Plow drivers  
have limited visibility and  
the vehicles often create

a cloud of snow that can  
obscure visibility for all.

Prepare for winter  
driving

It is best to stay off  
the roads during severe  
winter weather to  
eliminate the risk of a  
crash and keep the roads  
clear for first responders  
and snowplow drivers. If  
you must head out, always  
prepare yourself and your  
vehicle for winter driving.

The State Patrol  
recommends the  
following winter  
driving tips:

- Clear snow and ice  
from vehicle windows,  
lights, roof, and hood.  
Snow and ice sliding off  
your roof or blowing  
off your hood can be  
dangerous.
- If you're driving  
while it's snowing, you're  
required to turn your  
headlights on. The general  
rule is if you have your  
windshield wipers on,  
your headlights should be  
on too.
- Snow means slow.  
Allow extra travel time  
and following distance  
and reduce your speed  
during winter conditions.
- Avoid sudden braking  
or steering. Don't be  
overconfident with 4WD  
or AWD. Remember  
that bridge decks and  
overpasses freeze up first.
- Avoid using cruise  
control in winter  
conditions.
- Buckle up and put your  
phone down while driving.  
Every trip, every time.
- Have a fully charged  
phone and an emergency  
kit in your vehicle.
- If you get stranded  
or slide off the road, stay  
buckled up in your vehicle  
and call for help. Getting  
out of the vehicle is very  
dangerous, especially in  
winter weather.

Know before you go

511 Wisconsin is a free  
resource that provides live  
updates on traffic and road  
conditions. Winter road  
condition categories were  
recently updated to better  
reflect current conditions  
on roads across the  
state. The categories are  
now: Normal, Partially  
Covered, Completely  
Covered, Travel Not  
Advised, and No Report.  
Stay informed with 511.  
If you must travel, know  
before you go. Download  
the 511 Wisconsin app,  
visit 511wi.gov, or call 511  
to monitor conditions.

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# Varsity Boys Basketball suffers two consecutive home losses

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

The Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2025, Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball game was postponed due to the frigid temperatures which also closed school and activities throughout the Merrill area.

On Friday, Jan. 24, the Merrill Boys played host to the Wausau West Warriors and the Warriors walked away with the win, 54-61.

“We were a little flat for much of the game, and we couldn’t buy a basket in the first half, scoring just 17 points,” said Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Head Coach Troy Pieper. “I thought we were getting great looks, same looks as we got vs Antigo last Saturday; however, we couldn’t get a shot to fall in the first half, and our defense was a little flat and lacking the energy we normally play with on defense.”

“Second half, though, credit to the guys. We fell down by 25 with 8:00 left and didn’t stop fighting, and might have stumbled upon a decent full court option to go with our zone defense,” he said. “We forced some turnovers and got West to play too fast, and finally saw some shots fall. We battled all the way back to within five points and had the ball, but a missed shot in that possession and some FT’s by West sort of sealed the win for them. I think if we could have added a couple minutes to the game, we might have pulled off a pretty remarkable comeback.”

“Again it’s like a broken record, but playing another very good team in West and a team that is very physical, we showed again we can compete and

battle with them, but we still need to put 36 minutes of our brand of basketball together and do it at a high level in order to start seeing the positive endings in these tough matchups,” Pieper said.

“I liked how Charles Kalinowski (6 pts, 2 FG, 1 3pt, 1 FT, 2 reb, 1 stl) and Cooper Wendorf (2 pts, 1 FG, 2 ast, 1 stl) played for us in the second half off the bench,” Pieper said. “They really brought some great energy and were a key part to our comeback.”

“Tyson Ott (15 pts, 6 FG, 3 3pt, 2 ast, 1 stl) had another very good game, as did EJ Weix (15 pts, 5 FG, 2 3pt, 2 FT, 4 reb, 3 ast, 1 stl),” he said. “Both were very efficient on the offensive side, and Kory Page (14 pts, 3 FG, 2 3pt, 6 FT, 4 reb, 3 ast, 3 stl)—while he struggled to find his shot in the first half—didn’t hang his head and had a great second half himself.”

Ott, Weix, and Page were the high scorers of the game.

**Box Score**  
**Wausau West 61 @ Merrill 54**

On Tuesday, Jan. 28, the Merrill Boys played Wausau East in another home game and lost this one 51-59.

“We didn’t start well again, which is going to be a focus for us moving forward,” Pieper said. “It’s been a focus all year, but for some reason the last few conference games we sort of came out of the gate slow and not executing, which has put us in a hole in those games and tonight was the same.”

“To the guys credit, in all those games including tonight, we righted the ship and sort of dictated the

game for the most part from that point on, however we just couldn’t quite hit that big shot when we had chances to tie or take the lead,” he said. “We had it down to three points with the ball late and got a great look from someone we want taking that shot and it just didn’t fall. That happens, but again we just can’t start the way we did to put ourselves in such a hole to dig out of.”

“I thought Kory Page (21 pts, 6 FG, 4 3pt, 5 FT, 7 reb, 1 ast, 3 stl) might have had his best night of the year and his career,” Pieper said. “He had 21 points, but he also led us in rebounding, and was very active on defense all night. I really liked the energy he brought tonight.”

“Eli Burtman (6 pts, 2 FG, 2 FT, 3 reb, 1 stl) gave great minutes off the bench again,” he said. “He’s starting to find his groove a little bit over the past couple weeks, and tonight against a big East team he held his own and did a great job on both ends.”

“The broken record continues—another top-five ranked team in the state and another game where if we put it together for 36 minutes, we probably win, but we didn’t do that,” Pieper said. “We have shown time and time again that we can play with and compete with the best, but we need to get over the hump and finish one of these games off. I’m looking forward to the second half of conference play to see if we can get a couple of these to go our way.”

EJ Weix (7 pts, 2 FG, 3 FT, 2 ast, 3 stl) was the other high scorer for Merrill in the game.

**Box Score**  
**Wausau East 59 @ Merrill 51**



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"PG13" (1HR 39MIN)  
FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:00, 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:00 & 7:00PM  
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

**DOG MAN**  
"PG" (1HR 29MIN)  
FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:00, 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:00 & 7:00PM  
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

**FLIGHT RISK**  
"R" (1HR 31MIN)  
FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:00, 7:00 & 9:00PM  
SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:00 & 7:00PM  
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

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**438037**

**Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar**

**Feb. 7-23** - Love the Littles Diaper Drive  
**Feb. 8** - Winter Craft & Vendor Sales  
**Feb. 8** - Merrill Ice Drags  
**Feb. 8-9** - Merrill Ice Reflections Ice Skating Show  
**Feb. 14** - Free Swing Dance Basic Lessons at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church  
**Feb. 15** - Knights of Columbus Ice Fishing Tournament  
**Feb. 15** - Gleason Ice Oval Races  
**Feb. 15** - Merrill Ice Drags  
**Feb. 16** - Dog House Couples Bowling Tournament at Les & Jim's  
**Feb. 21** - MHS Choir presents Dinner and a Show  
**Feb. 22** - Snowbound in the Underdown  
**Feb. 22** - Merrill Ice Drags  
**Feb. 22** - Ultimate Ice Racing  
**Feb. 22** - Sip N Solve Puzzle Tournament at Sunset Hollow

For more information, go to: [merrillchamber.org/events](http://merrillchamber.org/events) or contact the event sponsor.

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Coupon good at Colby, Spencer, Withee, Merrill, Cadott & Altoona locations only!

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Coupon good at Colby, Spencer, Withee, Merrill, Cadott & Altoona locations only!

**Winter Craft & Vendor Sale**

**Saturday, Feb. 8th**  
**9am to 2pm**

Two Convenient Merrill Locations  
Different Crafters & Vendors at Each Location!

**Les & Jim's Lincoln Lanes**  
1208 N Center Ave

**Eagle's Club**  
1205 Lake St





# THE GLEASON CORNER

## Gleason couple starts local plumbing service

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Young's Plumbing is a Gleason business that started just over a year ago, in January 2024. Owned by Seth and Danielle Young of Gleason, Seth is a master plumber with 10 years of experience and a licensed DNR well pump installer, while wife Danielle answers the phone, returns messages, schedules work, and does the bookkeeping on evenings and weekends. She also works another full-time job, but occasionally she has the opportunity to help on the job, Danielle said. Young's Plumbing also just recently hired their first part-time employee.

After being married about 13 years, the Youngs decided to start their own business because, "I wanted to make good use of my master plumbing license and experience the satisfaction of completing projects independently from start to finish," Seth said.

"We made the decision to start the company after Seth obtained his master license," Danielle said. "He has always wanted to work for himself, and I fully support him in the decision. He is very good at what he does and has excellent customer service skills. Not to mention many people around Gleason told us Gleason needed a local plumber."

Seth is a native of Gleason, having grown up in the community. "It is his hometown," Danielle said. She grew up in Tomahawk. With their new business, "We get to service both our hometowns,"

Danielle said. "We serve Gleason, Merrill, Tomahawk, Rhinelander, Antigo, and the nearby areas. Our target is within 30 miles of Gleason."

"We are readily available and handle most plumbing aspects, including septic, well pump, and well line installations," Seth said. "We can handle more than a handyman service."

"We take pride in our customer service, responding to calls promptly and treating each job as if it were in our own home," he said. "Our commitment to excellence ensures that we go above and beyond to meet our customers' needs."

"At Young's Plumbing, we take pride in delivering excellent customer service and quality workmanship," Danielle said. "We are punctual and ensure clear communication about your project and associated costs. Our goal is to be the company you recommend to your friends and family because of your positive experience."

Young's Plumbing specializes in septic system and well pump/well line installation and offers services including new residential construction plumbing, plumbing for remodels/updates, leak repair, and sump pump, pressure tank, and water heater services.

Business has been going very well for the Youngs. "Our community/friends have been like family for us!" Danielle said. "The support and referrals we have received is unmatched for this small community."

The couple has a French bulldog named Mario who serves as their business mascot. "Mario—like super Mario," Danielle said. "Mario (the character) is a plumber."

For more information about Young's Plumbing of Gleason, go to their website: [www.youngs-plumbing.com](http://www.youngs-plumbing.com) or call 715.612.1950.



For Seth Young, although some aspects of plumbing can be a dirty job, it's fulfilling to see the job done right and from start to finish.



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JANUARY 6, 2025

Girl, Athena Marie, born to Jafia Ritchie and Andrew Ritchie of Clintonville.

JANUARY 10, 2025

Girl, Ainsley Paige, born to Jordan Sherman and Jonathan Sherman of Merrill.

JANUARY 15, 2025

Girl, Layni Jean, born to Kaitlin Lukes of Merrill.

JANUARY 16, 2025

Girl, Lilly Anna, born to Christy Biermier and Nathan Stanley of Gleason and Stevens Point.

JANUARY 19, 2025

Boy, Conrad James, born to Breann Bonke and Ben Bonke of Merrill.



St. Francis Xavier Catholic School announces 2024-2025 second quarter Honor Roll

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# Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame Night

On Jan. 18, 2025, the Merrill Basketball Program celebrated their annual 2024 Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame night at halftime during the Merrill Girls Varsity Basketball Team game against Antigo. The new 2024 inductees were: Girls player - Jessica (Van Der Geest) Truax, Boys player - Jeff Ott, and Boys/Girls Coach - John Bezier.

## Jessica (VanDerGeest) Truax

Jessica (VanDerGeest) Truax played for the Merrill Girls Varsity Basketball Team from 1993-1996. In her Senior Year, she was the unanimous selection for 1st Team All-Conference and was named 4th team All State, having averaged 14.5 points, 9.6 rebounds, 3.4 steals, and 2.1 assists per game; she was named the Team's Most Valuable Player (MVP) and was a Channel 7 All-Star. In her Junior Year, she was named 2nd Team All-Conference and averaged 13 points and 6.8 rebounds per game; she was also named the Team's MVP.

After graduating from Merrill High School, Truax played college basketball at Wright State University. There she was named MVP in 1998 and 2000. She was also named Raider Award winner in 1999 and 2000 and Female Athlete of the Year 2000. She was fifth in all-time free throws made in her career (310-437) and ninth for all-time rebounds with 672, and she scored 1,054 points

in her career. In 2008, she was inducted into the Wright State University Wall of Fame.

## Jeff Ott

Jeff Ott played for the Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Team from 1979-1982. In his Senior Year, he was named 1st Team All-Conference and 2nd in the Wisconsin Valley Conference. He averaged 19.9 points per game and 6.1 rebounds per game, was named Team MVP, Honorable Mention All State, and Channel 7 All-Star. In his Junior Year, he was named 1st Team All-Conference and 2nd in the Wisconsin Valley Conference. He averaged 19.4 points per game and was named Team MVP and Channel 7 All-Star. Ott scored 590 points in the Wisconsin Valley Conference, is 5th all time for Merrill, and he was the 10th all time leading scorer in Merrill with 793 points (he played when there was no 3-point shot). One of Jeff's best memories was hitting a buzzer beater from the top of the key to beat Wausau Newman, he said.

After graduating from Merrill High School, Ott played Junior College basketball in Texas.

## John Bezier

John Bezier was recognized for his contributions as a Merrill Basketball Program Coach through the years. He served as both the Merrill Bluejay

Boys and Girls Elementary School and the Junior/Middle School Coach from 1985-2020: 5th/6th grade elementary Boys from 1985-1994; 5th/6th grade elementary Boys from 1995-1998; Junior High 9th grade Boys and 8th grade Boys from 1999-2009; 7th/8th grade Girls and 6th grade Boys from 2010-2012; 6th grade Boys and 7th grade Girls from 2013-2020; 6th, 7th, 8th Girls traveling team from 2003-2006; and 6th, 7th, 8th Boys traveling team from 2006-2009. Coach Bezier also made multiple Final 4 appearances as the Coach of the 5th & 6th Grade Washington Wildcats, including back-to-back years in 1990 and 1991 with Coach Pieper as his point guard, and his team, the Washington Wildcats won the Championship in the 5th & 6th Grade Boys Basketball Tournament in 1996.

"These three inductees have left a lasting legacy on the school's basketball programs and continue to serve as role models for athletes and fans alike," said Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Team Head Coach Troy Pieper.

The names of the 2025 Hall of Fame inductees will be announced at the Bluejay Boys Basketball Golf Outing on July 12, 2025, at the Merrill Golf Course. Next year's 2025 Hall of Fame ceremony will be held at the Boys/Girls Basketball doubleheader on Saturday, January 17, 2026.



Jeff Ott, Jessica (VanDerGeest) Truax, and John Bezier are inducted into the Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame.  
Photo courtesy of Merrill Basketball Program.

## 2025 Merrill High School Winter Sports Schedule

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV & JV2)			
Fri, Feb. 7	Stevens Point (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Fri, Feb. 7	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Thurs, Feb. 13	WI Rapids Lincoln (JV3)	Away	4:15 pm
Thurs, Feb. 13	WI Rapids Lincoln (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Thurs, Feb. 13	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Girls Basketball (Varsity, JV & JV2)			
Thurs, Feb. 6	Stevens Point (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Thurs, Feb. 6	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Tues, Feb. 11	WI Rapids Lincoln (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Tues, Feb. 11	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Boys Wrestling (Varsity & JV)			
Sat, Feb. 8	Wausau East (Varsity & JV)	Away	10:00 am
Girls Wrestling (Varsity)			
Sat, Feb. 8	Wausau East (Varsity)	Away	10:00 am
Boys Hockey (Varsity & JV)			
Thurs, Feb. 6	Marshfield (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs, Feb. 6	Marshfield (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Girls Hockey (Varsity & JV)			
Sat, Feb. 8	Superior (JV)	Away	12:00 pm
Sat, Feb. 8	Superior (Varsity)	Away	2:00 pm



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## EMU Bluejacks lose two, one in OT

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

On Jan. 23, 2025, the EMU Bluejacks played Wisconsin Rapids in a conference game at Marathon Park. Wisconsin Rapids kicked things off with the first goal in the first period, and the Bluejacks came back with a goal by Liam Zdroik with an assist from Kanin Jahnke. Then it was back to Rapids where they scored another three consecutive points, putting Rapids up 4-1 at the end of the first period.

In the second period, Wisconsin Rapids came on strong again and put up another two points before the EMU Bluejacks successfully landed another goal 14.35 in.

In the third period, the Bluejacks scored their third and final goal of the game just over 7 minutes in, but Wisconsin Rapids came back with another goal to take the win 7-3. Connor Burton and Chase Klebenow each had a turn at the Goalie position, with Burton making 26 saves and

Klebenow making 28.

## Box Score Wisconsin Rapids 7, EMU 3

On Saturday, Jan. 25, 2025, the EMU Bluejacks played host to Cedarburg for a non-conference game at the Merrill Area Recreation Complex. The game was a close one, going into overtime before it was all said and done. First Cedarburg came out with the lead, firing two goals into the net in rapid succession about five minutes into the first period. Then the Bluejacks evened things up in the second period with two goals, first a goal by Ryker Remington with an assist from both Jackson Pierce and Kanin Jahnke, and then a goal by Zach Pangel with an assist from Brody Benedict. But Cedarburg came right back minutes later with another score, going into the third period with the lead 3-2.

In the third period, EMU evened up the score 3-3 at 15:03 into the period when

Brody Klebenow made a goal with an assist from Nick Bodner. The tie put the game into overtime where Cedarburg scored 44 seconds in to take the win 4-3. EMU Goalie Chase Klebenow made 42 saves in the game, including 2 in overtime.

## Box Score Cedarburg 4, EMU 3 in overtime

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**Callum Wheeler**, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week for the week of Feb. 6, 2025. Callum started wrestling in fourth grade as a Junior Jay, continued wrestling at Prairie River Middle School (PRMS), started on the JV team for the first meet of his Freshman year when he was pulled up to Varsity, and he has been on the Merrill Varsity Wrestling Team ever since, just recently celebrating 100 career wins. Callum started playing Football in the sixth grade at PRMS, played JV2 as a Freshman, played JV as a Sophomore, and played the next two years as a running back on the Merrill Varsity Football Team.

At school, his favorite class last semester was metals, and he is looking forward to his welding class this semester. When not at school or playing sports, Callum likes to hang out with friends playing video games or fishing; lift weights at home or at the high school; hunt deer, ducks, and geese; and go out to eat with family.

The son of Christy Lopez of Merrill and Jason Wheeler of Antigo, Callum has a 2.4 GPA. After graduating this spring, Callum plans to enter the workforce, going into the trades as a welder.



Callum Wheeler

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