



PRSRT STD U.S. POSTAGE PAID MERRILL, WI PERMIT NO. 35

POSTAL CUSTOMER



YOUR HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER SINCE 1956 MERRILLFOTONEWS.COM

THURSDAY, MARCH 13, 2025 VOLUME 70, ISSUE 11

Weight limits for weep to the weight limits for well and the weight limits for weigh area highways go into effect

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) North Central Region announced the seasonal posting of weight limits on area state highways. The weight restrictions are 6 tons gross load for single axle vehicles and 10 tons gross load for tandem axle vehicles (any two axles under 8 feet apart). The maximum gross weight is 24 tons.

Weight restrictions went into effect at noon on Monday, Mar. 10, 2025, on the following highways in Lincoln County and Marathon County:

WIS 52, Marathon County, from Little Elm Rd. to Shawano County line.

- WIS 107, Marathon County, from Marathon County Rd. A to the Lincoln County line.
- WIS 107, Lincoln County, from Marathon County line to WIS 64.
- WIS 107, Lincoln County, from Matthews Rd. to Lincoln County Rd.
- WIS 153, Marathon County, from Marathon County Rd. J to Shawano County line.

See WEIGHT page 5

Lincoln County Correctional Sergeant charged with abuse, battery of female inmate

BY TINA L. SCOTT **EDITOR**

Jason H. Meister, age 44, of Pearson [Langlade County], Wis., made an initial appearance in Lincoln County Court on Monday, Mar. 10, 2025, via video conference from the Oneida County Jail where he was in custody to face charges that he assaulted an inmate at the Lincoln County Jail while employed as a Correctional Sergeant there. Meister is charged with one count each of Abuse of Residents of Penal Facilities and Substantial Battery, both Class I Felonies. If convicted, Meister faces a maximum penalty of up to three years and six months imprisonment and/or up to a \$10,000 fine for each count.

The charges stem from an incident that occurred on Friday, Feb. 28, 2025, at the Lincoln County Jail in Merrill. According to the Criminal Complaint filed by the Lincoln County District Attorney's office, Meister was involved in an altercation with a female inmate that resulted in the inmate requiring medical treatment at Aspirus Hospital Merrill. Medical records confirm "Victim sustained two broken ribs and a laceration to



Jason H. Meister.

her right eyelid area that required 10

The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation (DCI) was called in to lead an independent investigation into possible excessive use of force by Meister

Photo courtesy of Oneida County.

"Victim stated that she was not physically resistive, and while she was verbally aggressive and using profanities, she wasn't physically resisting the requests of the Lincoln County Jail correctional staff," the

See **INMATE** page 5



1400 Logan Ave. • Merrill • 715-536-2491 Hours: M-F 7-6 • Sat. 8-1







An aerial view of the former National Guard Armory building in Merrill located to the south of the Merrill Fairgrounds.

More details on purchase of former **National Guard Armory released**

Merrill Mayor Steve Hass provided additional details about the City's purchase of the former National Guard Armory adjacent to the Merrill Fairgrounds.

The Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs contacted the City last fall to see if they had any interest in purchasing the vacant building, Hass said. City Administrator Rod Akey, along with Mayor Hass and other City leaders, toured the building and the adjoining out buildings. All agreed the purchase of the buildings and land would ensure the continuity of the adjoining fairgrounds and allow the City to continue to develop the grounds as an event center.

Akey and Hass negotiated with the State and agreed on purchasing the property for \$400,000. The City Council was made aware of the potential purchase and supported the negotiations throughout the process. At their regular monthly meeting on Feb. 11, 2025, the Council ratified the purchase unanimously.

Funding for the Armory was

See ARMORY page 5



PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Human Body Design

Dear Reader,

When we stop to think about the design of the human

body, we might find ourselves wondering if it could have been crafted more efficiently. Consider the everyday processes of hydration and nutrition: why must we spend so much of our lives urinating or expelling waste from our bodies? Couldn't we have been designed to hydrate through the skin, or



metabolize food directly into energy without the need for

It's a curious thought experiment—imagining a body that functions without the need to "offload" its excesses, freeing us from the sometimes inconvenient realities of biological maintenance. Wouldn't it be wonderful to live unencumbered by these daily rituals, focusing solely on the higher pursuits of life?

Yet, when we reflect more deeply, we realize that the human body as it is designed is nothing short of miraculous. It's a complex, harmonious system where countless processes—digestion, circulation, respiration work in synchrony to sustain us. These so-called inefficiencies might actually be part of the greater design, teaching us humility and grounding us in the rhythms of life. They remind us of our interconnectedness with nature and the delicate balance we inhabit.

Could there have been a "better" design? Perhaps. But then, would we be the same creatures we are now- resilient, adaptable, and marvelously imperfect? Perhaps the true genius of the human design lies not in its flawlessness, but in its resilience and ability to grow through imperfection.

> PATRICK J. WOOD Publisher

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



Early Literacy Program helps build strong foundation for children

Encouraging early reading habits supports childhood development and lifelong learning

Lisa Falduto, Program Director for Reach Out and Read Wisconsin

Reading is one of the most powerful tools for a child's development, helping to build language skills, improve cognitive function, and strengthen emotional bonds with caregivers. According to Reach Out and Read, families participating in the program are 2.5 times

more likely to read with their children, leading to improved school readiness and communication skills.

To support early literacy and child development, Health Aspirus partnered with Reach Out and Read, a national initiative that provides free books to children during wellchild visits. The program encourages families to make reading a regular part of their daily routine, helping children develop essential skills for future learning.

"Reading strengthens development language creates meaningful connections between parents and children," said Lisa Falduto, Program Director for Reach Out and Read "These early Wisconsin. experiences play a critical role in a child's future success."

Aspirus pediatricians incorporate book distribution and literacy education into checkups, reinforcing the importance of reading at an early age. "This program makes reading a positive part of health care visits and provides books to families who might not otherwise have access," said Dr. Joseph Novak, a pediatrician at Aspirus.

From birth through age five, children experience rapid brain development, and regular exposure to books can significantly enhance their ability to learn. Research has shown that children who are read to regularly demonstrate stronger literacy skills and perform better academically later in life. Encouraging early reading habits helps set children up for long-term success in school and beyond.

66 When a child grows up surrounded by books and stories, they develop a love for learning that lasts a lifetime.

Beyond cognitive benefits, reading together fosters emotional security and family bonding. "The other piece that a lot of people don't think about when reading is the bond that happens between parent and child," Falduto said. "That connection is crucial for literacy development, emotional health, and brain development."

Aspirus Health continues to support programs that enhance childhood development and promote literacy. By working with Reach Out and Read, Aspirus helps make books and literacy resources more accessible to families, giving children the opportunity to develop a love for reading early in life.

For more information about Reach Out and Read, visit reachoutandread.org.



February Youth Optimist

Olivia Pajtash, a Senior at Merrill High School, is the February Youth Optimist of the Month. "I have been Olivia's teacher for three years ... as a Freshman in Honors Biology, as a Junior in Anatomy & Physiology, and now as a Senior in AP Biology. Olivia is an easy pick when it comes to nominating a Youth Optimist," said Ms. Morgan Wilde in her nomination.

This young lady truly does it all: sports, marching band, AP and dual credit classes, and a job," she said. "Olivia leads a very stressful life, but she does it with a positive attitude. It isn't Olivia's optimism toward her own life and circumstances that sets her apart from her peers. It is her optimism towards others that does.

"Her hope and confidence about the future radiate to her peers in kind words and actions," Ms. Wilde said. "Olivia is always ready to be friendly and motivate others with her optimism. Olivia truly does it all-and does it with

grace and positivity," she said. "Her optimism will change lives one day." At school, Olivia is actively involved in Raise Your Voice, Tri-M, National Honor Society (Vice President), Junior Optimist, Marching Band (Section Leader & Drum Major), Swim team (Captain & Bluejay Award), and Soccer. Outside of school, she has helped pack lunches for the Food For Kids Program, helped with Make A Difference Day, rang bells for the Salvation Army, spent time with Bell Tower residents, volunteered for Wags of Wisconsin, read to PRSYL students, and worked the solo ensemble event.

The daughter of Seth and Stephannie Pajtash of Merrill, Olivia plans to attend the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh to major in nursing. After college graduation, she wants to work in the ICU for a couple of years before eventually going back to school to become a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist.

Kyla Hoffman, an eighth grader at Prairie River Middle School (PRMS), is the February Youth Optimist of the Month. "Kyla is the kind of student who lights up every room she enters with her infectious optimism," said Mrs. Lisa Jarvensivu in her nomination. "No matter the challenge, she always approaches it with a positive attitude. Motivated by a genuine desire to do well, Kyla takes initiative in her academics, staying focused on achieving anything put in front of her. Her dedication is matched by her kindness. She is always there for her friends, offering support and encouragement.

People are naturally drawn to her upbeat personality and warm spirit," Mrs. Jarvensivu said. "Kyla is the kind of person who makes life a little brighter for everyone around

At school, Kyla has received the Citizenship Award and considers herself smart,

Kyla is the daughter of Breanna and Kyle Hoffman of Merrill



Kyla Hoffman



Optimist Clubs: "Bringing Out the Best in Kids" Merrill Noon Optimists – Wednesdays at 12:00 noon Eagles Club, 1205 Lake St., Merrill

Adult volunteers join Optimist Clubs to conduct positive service projects in their communities aimed at providing a helping hand to youth. Their upbeat attitudes empower youth to be the best they can be. Optimists International, with 3,000clubs, conducts 65,000 service projects, serving more than six million youth annually. Locally, Merrill Noon Optimists serve 3,000+ area youth, contributing or organizing events and service projects in our Merrill community





Patrick J. Wood Publisher publisher@mmclocal.com

Tim Schreiber General Manager

tschreiber@mmclocal.com **Rachel Crockett**

Graphic Designer

Tina I Scott Editor

tscott@mmclocal.com Jennifer Gartmann Sales Consultant

igartmann@mmclocal.com

Heidi Schult Front Office Manager/CSR Heidi Griebel

Customer Service

Representative

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

CONGRATULATIONS!

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

Fax: (715) 539-3686 Ad & News Deadlines: Display Advertising: 12:30 p.m. Monday Classified Advertising: 11:30 a.m. Monday

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

THE FOTO NEWS (ISSN 0191-8958) is published weekly by Multi Media Channels LLC, N2919 County Road QQ, Waupaca WI 54981. Subscription price by mail: \$100 per year; domestic U.S. Mail only, nonrefundable but transferable. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE FOTO NEWS, 2011 E. Main St., Merrill, WI 54452.

© Copyright Multi Media Channels LLC 2025. All Rights Reserved. No part of this publication or any of its conten may be reproduced, copied, modified, or adapted without the prior written consent of Multi Media Channels LLC.





2 miles South of Curtiss on Hwy. E 715-223-4797 We accept: SNAP/EBT Cards **Bratwurst** Original **Butter Quarters** Sandwich Cookies

Incooked - Frozen 16 oz.. 14 oz. **Peanut Butter** Turkey Breast ONLY ONLY rozen, 5 lbs. ONLY **OPEN MONDAY FRIDAY** 8:30-6:30 • **SATURDAY** -4:00

Sausage Patties String Cheese Original, Fully Cooked Chicken Broth Mozzarella Cheese Sausage Links ONLY Shredded, 5 lbs ONLY **Cheddar Cheese** Snack Crackers

ONLY Shredded, 5 lbs Colby Jack Cheese Shredded, 5 lbs. **Cream Cheese**

5 lbs

Original, 8 oz. Colby Jack Cheese fully Cooked, Frozen 35 lbs.

QF Uncooked, Frozei Muenster Cheese ONLY **End-Trims** 35 lbs.. ONLY rozen. 5 lbs Havarti Dill Lil Smokies

ONLY

ONLY

Fully Cooked, Frozen

Hot Dogs

Cheese

Bacon Sliced, Maple, Frozen Sausage Crumbles Chorizo - Fully Cooked Frozen, 5 lbs Smoked Turkey ONLY

Mayo

6 oz..

Ham's

Frozen, 9 lbs.

Trail Mix

Nuts-n-Chocola

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

.ONLY



Each Precious Moments figurine calls to mind a time or person that is special to the collector.

Precious Moments, precious memories on exhibit at the library

For the month of March only, the T. B. Scott Free Library in Merrill will showcase a portion of the Precious Moments collection amassed by Library Director Laurie Ollhoff, as a part of the Beyond Books: Community ArtShare Exhibition.

Laurie became a charter member of the Precious Moments Club in 1981 and actively collected figurines and more into the 21st century. Many of the pieces were gifts from family and friends to celebrate special moments in her life. While the display is only a mere glimpse of Laurie's 300+ piece collection, it focuses on the annual club figurines she receives each year, some special musical figurines, and a few of her favorites.

A spreadsheet listing all the figurines in her collection is available for individuals to view if anyone is interested in adding a piece to their collection or to get as a gift for that special someone.

The exhibit is on display in the library's Carnegie wing.



Precious Moments figurines often relate to personal moments. **Submitted photos.**



This Precious Moment figurine depicts a loving birthday celebration.



NEWS SHORTS

Park City Credit Union receives Best New Account Experience Award

Park City Credit Union (PCCU) recently recived a 2025 Best of the Best New Account Experience Award, presented by MemberXP, a leading customer experience program offered through CUSG. The accolade celebrates credit unions that are committed to delivering exceptional service and member experiences.

"The Best of the Best award highlights our dedication to prioritizing member needs and continuously improving our offerings. We are thrilled to receive this recognition," said Val Mindak, President/CEO of PCCU. "It demonstrates the hard work and passion of our entire team, who strive daily to create the best experience possible across all our channels."

The 2025 MemberXP "Best of the Best" Awards are based on insights from more than 2.6 million data points, reflecting the experiences of around 8.6 million credit union members. This comprehensive evaluation process utilizes key performance metrics, including Net Promoter Score (NPS) and Member Effort Score (MES), allowing data experts to analyze and validate results meticulously. Recognition is given to the top 25% of performers across various experiential categories, with PCCU earning top honors in New Account Experience. The award was presented in February as an annual recognition by CUSG, honoring credit unions that consistently excel in delivering exceptional service.

Gov. Evers edits to language offends Felzkowski

Senate President Mary Felzkowski (R-Tomahawk) released the following statement after it was brought to light that Governor Tony Evers changed the word "mother" to "inseminated person" several times and erased the word "father" over 100 times in his biennial budget proposal: "It is disgusting to see the Evers Administration's attempt to erase mothers and fathers."

"It is becoming clear the governor not only wants the government to raise children, as we learned in the State of the State address, but that he wants to erase the concept of 'mom and dad' altogether," she said.

She cited Evers edits to the language used as further evidence of attempts "to erase women, the institution of marriage, and the family unit."

2025 Economic Summit to be held in Tomahawk on April 8

Lincoln County Economic Development Corporation will hold their 2025 Economic Summit: Economic Empowerment for Rural Communities on Tuesday, Apr. 8, 2025, from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at Inshalla Country Club, N11060 Clear Lake Rd. in Tomahawk. Designed to empower and strengthen rural businesses and communities, the summit offers attendees the opportunity to engage in either a full or half-day of economic insights and educational sessions. Participants will gain valuable knowledge on key economic issues that drive business and community success.

Event highlights will include essential economic updates from local governments and economic partners, followed by a "State of the Economy" presentation from John Koskinen, Chief Economist for the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, and a keynote from Mike Ward, VP of Business & Community Development with the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation who will share actionable strategies for rural business and community empowerment.

Lunch will be available via some of Tomahawk's favorite food trucks.

The afternoon will focus on economic education with breakout sessions to allow attendees to tailor their learning experience:

- ñ Managing Your Business: Topics including workforce retention, business resources, and legal foundations.
- ñ Financing Your Business: Discussions on funding options, government contracts, and securing capital.
- ñ Marketing Your Business: Strategies for budget-friendly marketing, comparing different marketing methods, and collaborating with marketing partners.

The closing presentation will focus on "Empowering Economies Through Entrepreneurs" and the summit will conclude with a discussion focusing on the critical role of entrepreneur-led businesses in rural economic success and how communities can support them effectively.

Tickets and a link to a flyer with complete information are available at: lincolncountyedc.org/event-details/2025-economic-summit.

Early registration is encouraged, and sponsorships are still available. View the event page or contact LCEDC Executive Director Sara Guild for more information at Director@lincolncountyedc.org or 715.390.0747.



School District of Athens

Pre-K (4K) and Kindergarten (K) Registration and Open House March 28th, 2025

What: 4K & 5K school registration for age-eligible children seeking attendance at Athens Elementary (PK/K) or Maple Grove (K) for the 2025-2026 school year.

Who: Children 4 or 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2025, are eligible to enroll in the AES 4K program.

Children 5 years of age on or before September 1, 2025 are eligible to enroll in the AES or MGCS Kindergarten programs.

Registration / Application Information

Athens Elementary School

Call 715-257-7571 for a registration appointment.

Community resource information will be available.

Maple Grove Charter School

No appointment needed. Join the All School Open House from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Charter school applications, school tours, food, and activities will be available.

ST. JOHN LUTHERAN SCHOOL

1104 East Third Street, Merrill • www.stjohnmerrill.org

NOW ENROLLING for 2025 - 2026 school year!

Space available for Pre-K, Kindergarten, and 3rd-7th Grades.
Wisconsin Choice School tuition vouchers available
until April 17th, tuition assistance available.

Affordable before and after school care.



Contact **715-536-7264** or **schooloffice@stjohnmerrill.org** for more information and to schedule your tour today!

| OBITUARIES |

Bonnie Jean Woller



Bonnie Jean Woller, born on February 4, 1962, in Tulsa, Oklahoma, to the late Dale and Patricia (Graham) Robinette, passed away peacefully at her home in Merrill on March 7 2025, surrounded by her loving family. She married Dale C. Woller on May 14, 2004. He precedes her in death.

Bonnie was known for her vibrant and colorful personality that seemed to light up every room she entered. An individual who embraced life

with open arms, she was affectionately described as an "energizer bunny," always on the go and ready to crack a joke to bring a smile to those around her. Her outgoing nature made her a cherished friend and a beloved family member, embodying the spirit of joy and

Throughout her career, Bonnie dedicated herself to meaningful work that showcased her commitment to helping others. She served as a machine operator at Stokley's The Cannery and Midwest Wire. Also, Lincoln Industries working with disabled adults which then lead her to becoming a lead supervisor for the Housekeeping Department at AmericInn, where she worked with disabled adults, demonstrating her compassion and leadership.

Bonnie's enduring family values were evident in every aspect of her life. She found immense joy in spending time with her loved ones, whether it was fishing, kayaking, or simply driving around and enjoying each other's company. Her love for the Green Bay Packers and her enthusiasm for hitting the casinos occasionally added to the richness of her life's tapestry, where every moment was filled with laughter and memorable experiences.

As we reflect on Bonnie Jean Woller's life, we honor her legacy of love, laughter, and passion. Her presence will be deeply missed, but her spirit will forever remain in the hearts of those who were fortunate enough to know her.

Bonnie is survived by her children: Monica (James) Toppi of Merrill, Dustin (Tori) Woller of Wausau, Cory (Angie) Woller of Merrill, grandchildren: Jasmine Toppi, Christopher Klempke, and Adaline Woller. Step-grandchildren: Dante Hendrickson and Nevaeh Hendrickson, great granddaughter: Miracle Toppi, siblings: Cindy (Bill) Hill, Linda Walmsley, Kathy Hintz, and Dale Robinette, and best friend of many vears, Barbie Irmischer.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Dale Woller, her parents, mother-in-law, Mae Woller, father-in-law Robert Woller Sr., brothers-in-law, Tom Walmsley and Eddie Hintz. A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.taylorstinewaid.com





Specialists in Pre-Needs Planning

FROM SELECTION TO DESIGN TO SETTING,

ALL OF OUR WORK IS PROUDLY DONE IN - HOUSE 20 N. 2nd St., Tomahawk, WI • 715-453-6523 Visit us at: www.tomahawkmonument.com

Email us at: contactus@tomahawkmonument.com

We Have Over 15,000+ Designs In Our Portfolio

Plus Over



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



715-536-6654

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



HonorOne.com

Brandelia A. 'Brandi' DuFour



Brandelia A. 'Brandi' DuFour, 44, of Merrill, passed away Saturday, March 1, 2025, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

Brandi was born February 22 1981, in Merrill, daughter of Robert 'Bob' and Brenda (Boyd) Busterud. She gradu-ated from Merrill High School with the class of 1999. She attended classes at Rasmussen College and worked as a Medical Assistant. Recently she worked at Ascension Health Care at the clinic hospital, and in the cardiology

department.

Brandi was a very involved mom and was always there for her children. She was a happy go lucky person and always had a big smile with the best dimples. She enjoyed listening to music, dancing, and getting a laugh out of Snapchat filters. Brandi loved traveling, especially spending time at the ocean, being near the water and in the sun. She loved shopping at hobby lobby, decorating her house, and crafting. She liked the holidays, dressing up for Halloween, and celebrating the kids' birthdays. Brandi loved Mexican food and margaritas. She was a Minnesota Vikings fan, so it's no surprise that her favorite color was purple and she named her German Shepherd 'Skol'.

Survivors include her children, Brielle DuFour, Addison 'Addi' DuFour, and Dax DuFour all of Merrill; mother, Brenda Busterud (Grant Peterson) of Merrill; father, Bob Busterud of Merrill; brother, Tim 'Taco' Busterud of Merrill; nieces and nephews, Ana, Damion, Destinee, Brody, and Jozie; great niece and great nephews, Sofia, Sebastian, and Gabriel; and many aunts and uncles. Brandi is further survived by her former spouse, John DuFour of Weston and his family, mother, Patty DuFour of Minnesota; sister, Michelle (Nathan) Krell of Minnesota; and nephew and niece, Tyler and Brynn.

Brandi was preceded in death by her brother, James 'Jimi' Busterud; grandparents, Lloyd & Marilyn Boyd and James & Angie Busterud; uncles, David Boyd and Randy Boyd; best friend, Misty Glisch; and former father-in-law, Dave Colonel' DuFour.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements, Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.taylorstinewaid.com

Carl J. Berndt



Carl J. Berndt, age 80, of Merrill went to be with his Lord and Savior on Thursday March 6, 2025 at Woodland Court while under the care of Hospice.

He was born on December 2 1944 in Langlade County to the late Reinhold and Agnes Berndt. He married Mary Schnur on March 7, 1964.

Carl worked many jobs throughout his life including dairy farming and many in maintenance at years Wausau Insurance.

He was a very avid member of the church. Carl served as an elder at Merrill Bible for years, he and Mary enjoyed hosting bible studies. Carl spent his final years as a member of Highland Community Church.

Carl enjoyed hunting and fishing. He and Mary enjoyed taking the grandchildren fishing in Door county and their annual outing to Canada. His favorite pastime was working on projects around the yard and tinkering in his

Carl is survived by his wife Mary; his two sons James (Lynn), Tim (Cathy); 6 grandchildren and 11 great grand-

He was proceeded in death by his parents; two sisters; and his daughter, Rebecca.

In accordance with Carl's wishes, no formal service will be

The family expresses their sincere thanks to all the nurses and staff at Woodland Court and Hospice for their wonderful care and compassion given to Carl.

We plan for a long life. We plan to do the things we love. We plan to watch our families grow. We pre-plan our final wishes with them and for them.



301 Eagle Drive • 903 E. Third Street • 715-536-4646

www.taylorstinewaid.com

Charlene D. Trantow

Charlene D. Trantow, 84, passed away at her home on February 20, 2025 (estimated) in St. Francis, Wisconsin. She was born February 7, 1941 to Harold and Lorraine (Secard) Trantow and grew up in Merrill, WI. Upon graduating from Our Lady of the Holy Cross High School in 1959, she relocated to Milwaukee where she was employed at American Appraisal until her retirement.

Charlene liked gardening and caring for her collection of container plants. She volunteered at the Milwaukee Zoo and enjoyed going to music productions at the Bradley Center.

Charlene discovered her strong sense of independence at an early age, despite the challenges of cerebral palsy. She was a courageous soul who took on the world far from home and succeeded admirably. She will be fondly remembered by all who knew her for her kind and caring spirit.

Charlene is survived by many cousins and close friends. She was preceded in death by her parents.

Gravesite rites and burial will take place in the spring of 2025 at St. Francis Xavier Cemetery in Merrill. Internment details will be announced nearer to that time.

Special thanks to Jeff Kleczka, of Prasser-Kleczka Funeral Home in Milwaukee, for his invaluable assistance and for ensuring that Charlene's remains were treated with the utmost respect and dignity.

Delbert Donald Lange



Delbert Donald Lange, 91, of Irma, passed away Thursday, March 6, 2025, at his home under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care &

Hospice Services. Delbert was born May 5 1933, in Gleason, to the late Otto Sr. and Minnie (Radeck)

Lange. He enlisted in the United States Army in April 1953 and served with his twin brother, Delmer, during the Korean War. Delbert was honorably discharged in March 1955. On September 22, 1956, he married Marie Schaupp.

Delbert worked as a bricklayer for most of his working years. In and out of state, he worked on some prestigious projects, such as DC Everest and Barron Paper Mill. Delbert and Marie loved to travel and managed to visit all

50 states during their 64-year marriage. Being big country western fans, they also attended numerous Fan Fairs in Nashville, Tennessee. Delbert also loved to deer, rabbit, and turkey hunt in his younger years. Delbert and Marie also had a good time hitting the casinos.

The last from a family of ten, Delbert was preceded in death by his wife, Marie; infant son, Gregory; brothers, Oscar, Clarence, Carl, Emil, Laverne, Delmer, and Otto Jr.; and sisters, Iona and Evelyn. Numerous nieces and nephews also survive including Nancy Leder and Mike Schaupp, his gambling cronies. Also, Jerry and Rose Schoepke, his extremely helpful neighbors.

The funeral service will be held at 11:00 A.M., Friday, March 14, 2025, at Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation – 301 Eagle Drive, Merrill. Rev. David Sutton will officiate. Burial will take place in Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery with graveside military rites conducted by V.F.W. Post 1638, Merrill. Visitation will begin at 9:00 A.M., Friday, at the funeral home.

The family would like to thank Aspirus Comfort Care and & Hospice services for the wonderful care they provided Delbert.

The family requests monetary donations be made in Delbert's name to the Lincoln County Humane Society – 301 N. Memorial Dr., Merrill, WI 54452

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.taylorstinewaid.com

Eileen Deloris Hintz



Eileen Deloris Hintz, age 98, of Merrill, Wisconsin, passed away peacefully in her sleep on March 7, 2025. She was born on March 31, 1926 in Three Lakes, Wisconsin to the late Antone and Gertrude (Netzel) Karwoski.

Eileen worked at Weinbrenner in Merrill for 35 years until her retirement. She was a lifelong member of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church. She loved going for walks around the city, being outside, gardening, reading, and puzzles.

She is survived by her daughter, Elana Sukow of Wausau son, Eugene (Jean) Hintz of Tripoli, six grandchildren, one step-grandson, and one step-granddaughter, several great grandchildren and several great-great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

She was preceded in death by her parents, brother, Harry Karwoski, sisters, Angeline Piasecki and Kathleen Cannon half-brother, Alouis "Butch" Yablonski, half-sister, Beatrice

Samuelson and grandson Alexander Hintz. Per Eileen's wishes, no services will be held. She donated her body to the UW Wisconsin Body Donor Program.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements, Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.taylorstinewaid.com

| OBITUARIES |

Edwin Burr Gipple



Edwin Burr Gipple, 83, of Merrill, passed away peacefully at his son's home on Thursday, March 6, 2025.

Burr was born July 4, 1941, in Merrill, son of Edwin Bunsen Gipple and Dorothy Ida (Plautz) Gipple. Burr owned and operated Club 107 in Merrill from 1965 until 1972. He worked at Ward Paper Company as a colorman and retired in 1995.

Burr enjoyed watching sports especially football. He favored the Green Bay Packers and Milwaukee Brewers. In

younger years, he played baseball for the Merrill Giants. Burr was also instrumental in developing the ice drags. For 40 years, Burr hunted mule deer in Wyoming. He loved talking about hunting and sharing his own hunting stories. He loved his dogs, sitting on the deck and having a cocktail,

and woodworking in his garage.
Survivors include his sons, Scott (Sandra) Gipple and Randy (Jodi) Gipple of Merrill; grandchildren, Dana (Rob) Randy (Jodi) Gipple of Merrill; grandellingen, Dalla (Roo) Klug, Lea (Jeremy) Dobson, Karissa Gipple (Joel Meyer), Kasi (Kurt) Waid, and Kody (Leah) Gipple; great grandchildren, Lola, Evie, Tate, Willow, Isaac, Laney, Hadley, Konner, Marlee, and Kenzie; brother, Bunsen Gipple of Tomahawk; and close friends, Judy Anderson of Merrill. Burr was preceded in death by parents, Edwin and Dorothy Gipple; infant brothers; sister-in-law, Joni Gipple; and his former spouse and the mother of his children, Marlene Essert.

A memorial visitation will be held from 4:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. Thursday, March 20, 2025, at Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation-301 Eagle Drive, Merrill.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation of Merrill is assisting the family. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.taylorstinewaid.com

Betty Jane Pyatt



Betty Jane Pyatt, Deerbrook, died on Saturday, March 1, 2025 at Aspirus Langlade Hospital. She was 86 years old. She was born on February 14, 1939 in Jefferson, a daughter of the late Raymond and Rose (Schemm) Heine. She married Patrick Pyatt in 1990 in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Betty was a graduate of Jefferson High School, class of 1957. She was a graduate of Rosston School of Hair Design in Ontario, California. Betty owned Northcentral Hair Lines

in Merrill for 30 years.

She was a member of Our Savior Lutheran Church in

She enjoyed golfing, four-wheeling, and being outdoors. Survivors include her husband, Patrick of Deerbrook; a son, Douglas (Karen) Drost of Merrill; a daughter, Tammy (Joseph) Wessling of Merrill; three grandchildren, Dan (Alicia) Drost, Kendra (Logan) Flynn, and Olivia Cooper; and six great-grandchildren.

In addition to her parents she was preceded in death by two brothers, Raymond, Jr. and Howard Heine.

A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Marion M. Forecki (Schwabe)



Marion M. Forecki (Schwabe) passed away peacefully on Sunday, March 2, 2025 at the age of 101 in Tomahawk, Wisconsin. She was born on December 26, 1923 in the Milwaukee Michael and Edna Schwabe. She came of age during the Great Depression raised by her mother Edna, together with her brothers Joe and Paul and her sister Audrey, all of whom predeceased her.

Marion was unrecognized valedictorian at her Catholic

Grade School and graduated near the top of her class at South Division High School in Milwaukee. She fell in love and married Harry Forecki in 1949. She was a loving wife to Harry until his passing in 1988, and a wonderful mother to

She is survived by her five children, Kathy (Gary) Raash Michael (Lisa) Forecki, Karen Forecki, Kristina (Michel) Houseman, Karyl (Daniel) Corcoran and grandchildren, Charlie Forecki, Max (Beth Hanson) Corcoran, Katey (Ryan Baggerly) Houseman and Sally Houseman. She is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

Marion was charismatic, was warm and trusting to all, and unkind to no-one. She was a voracious reader and an encyclopedic card player. Mostly, she liked to tell stories about her past, and she was remarkably capable of doing all of these things for her hundred plus years.

Mass of Christian Burial was held at 11:00 a.m. on Saturday, March 8, 2025 at St. Augustine Catholic Church, N10090 County Road B, Tomahawk, with Fr. Aloysius Royan Anthony officiating. Visitation was held from 10:00 a.m. to time of service at church. In Lieu of flowers, the family requests that you consider offering a Mass at St. Augustine's Catholic Church in Marion's name.

Online condolences for the family may be directed to www

nimsgernfuneral.com

Krueger-Nimsgern Funeral & Cremation Service is assisting

Penny Zastrow



Penny Zastrow, age 58, of Merrill, Wisconsin, died on February 26, 2025, at the Rhinelander Aspirus Hospital. She was born on February 27 1966 in Merrill, the daughter of Raymond and Donna (Rogers) Zastrow. Penny graduated from the Merrill Penny High School in 1984. She has been a lifelong resident of Merrill.

Penny loved the Packer's playing cards and games with close friends, Joan Gable Gable Karen and Renee

Schmidlkofer. She loved her kitties, Lacey Jane and Stanley very much. Penny really did have a heart of gold. A giving person and very thoughtful. She had a wonderful sense of humor and just enjoyed helping others. We would like to thank all the health care workers that came in contact with Penny, especially the staff at Pine Crest Nursing Home and the Merrill staff at Aspirus hospital for taking care of Penny. Penny is survived by her brothers Elroy (Ara) Zastrow and Chris Zastrow her nieces and nephews, Amanda, Ashley Kaila, Kody and Lucas and close cousins, Denise Severt Gruetzmacher, Gwen Cotter and Gayle Dobson. She was preceded in death by her parents.

You may leave your private condolences for the Zastrow family at www.carlsonfh.com. The Carlson Funeral Home (715-369-1414) is serving the Zastrow family.

Gary Donald Ertl



Gary Donald Ertl, age 75 of Coloma passed away peacefully surrounded by his family Sunday, March 9, 2025 at his home. Gary was born in Fond du Lac on October 19, 1949 to Donald and Dorothy (Horn) Ertl and moved to Stockbridge in 1951. He attended St. Mary Grade School in Stockbridge St. Mary Central High School in Menasha and furthered his education at UW-Oshkosh earning a nursing degree in 1973 as well as a degree from Wausau Hospitals School of

Anesthesia in 1976. Gary met Brenda Bartelt under the drapes in the operating room; they were united in marriage on July 3, 1976 and blessed with two children. The two later divorced but remained close.

Gary worked as a Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetist for 25 years at Holy Cross Hospital in Merrill and 10 years at Divine Savior Hospital in Portage. His kind and joyful personality made him the original Patch Adams, easing the fear of surgery for children. He made the jolliest hospital Santa Clause. His love and compassion was felt by all his friends patients, and their families.

Gary was a member of the Knights of Colombus and a past member of several professional and environmental organiza tions. Locally he stayed connected to his community seeing the importance of our youth closely following the: schoolboard, fair board and 4-H.Gary taught catechism at St Roberts Catholic Church in Merrill and served at Good Shephard Catholic Church in Westfield. He volunteered for medical missionary trips to Honduras as well as delivering community meals for the local soup and sandwich mission. Gary was also a strong advocate for the Ice Age Trail, serving as chairperson for 10 years.

Gary was an avid outdoorsman. Fishing and hunting filled his time, but he also enjoyed hiking, stargazing, collecting marathons and counting sandhill cranes. Some of Gary's most cherished times were spent with his best friend, Otis at the cabin, but most of all he loved to laugh and be with his five grandchildren.

Gary is survived by his children: Joshua (Beth) and their children, Victor and Leia of Ashland and Antoinette (Joseph) Marotz and their children Johnathan, Abraham, and Henry of Westfield. He is also survived by two sisters: Karen (Dan) Kilduff and Betty (Lynn) Reaves as well as many special nieces and nephews. Gary is further survived by his godchildren: Angela Groskreutz, Jack Kilduff, Kelsey Reaves, and Matt Rung as well as his brother-in-law, Mark Gajewski.

Gary is preceded in death by his parents, sister, Linda Gajewski and nephew, Brian Kilduff.

A Mass of Christian Burial for Gary Ertl will be held on Thursday, March 13, 2025 at 11:00 AM at Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Westfield. Visitation will be held from 9:00 until 10:45 AM at the church. Father Savio Yerasani will preside and burial will take place privately at St. Mary's Catholic Cemetery in Stockbridge. In lieu of flowers, donations are preferred to Good Shepherd Catholic Church, 241 E. 6th Street, Westfield, WI 53964.

Steinhaus-Holly Funeral Home of Westfield is assisting the family with arrangements. www.steinhaushollyfuneralhome

ARMORY

from page 1

provided entirely by the Bierman Family Foundation.

"Funds for this purchase were received as part of a generous donation from Bierman Family Foundation," Hass said. "The City has been the recipient of many wonderful gifts over the years, and we cannot

say enough what that generosity has meant to

As for future use of the building, Mayor Hass said the focus of the building would be on the youth of the community. "A partnership is being explored at this time, and I feel once all the details are worked out, this building will support and develop the young people in this community for generations to come."

INMATE from page 1

Complaint said. "Victim stated that she remembers having her head banged and felt extreme pressure on her head. Victim further stated that she was thrown onto a cell bunk and then dragged onto the ground, where Victim stated she was punched and kicked."

The Complaint goes on to detail surveillance video of the incident that was reviewed by DCI. "In the video, a correctional officer, identified as Jason Meister, open [sic] the cell door to the cell that held Victim. Victim is observed standing at the cell door with her arms crossed. Meister entered the cell and as Meister enters the cell Victim steps away from the cell door. Meister is observed grabbing Victim by the hair or back of the head and slamming her head into the clear window of the cell. Meister is then observed throwing Victim down onto the jail bench/bed. Victim's blood from her head can be observed on the wall as she was pulled from a standing position to the cell bench/ bed. Meister then pulled Victim from the cell bench/ bed to the cell floor. Meister deliver multiple punches and knee strikes to Victim's body. Victim is not observed being actively resistive or fighting back."

During the initial appearance, Lincoln County District Attorney Kristopher Ellis noted the disparity between the current law that charges an inmate who assaults another inmate with a Class H Felony while a correctional officer who assaults an inmate is charged with a Class I Felony, a lesser charge. He requested Meister be held on \$5,000 cash bond and said he wished he could request a higher bond under the circumstances.

Meister, who appeared without legal counsel, argued that he has family in the area and, as such, would not be a flight risk.

Lincoln County Circuit Court Judge Robert Russell presided over the court appearance and set a \$2,500 cash bond. In addition, he said Meister is to have no contact with the victim except for incidental contact in a confined setting, and Meister is prohibited from obtaining employment leading to his acting in a supervisory role.

Judge Russell said he would recuse himself from the case due to his working relationship with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. The court then adjourned Meister's initial appearance to allow time for him to get an attorney and for an out-of-county judge to be assigned to the case. Once the new judge is assigned, the adjourned initial appearance will be scheduled.

Meister subsequently posted his bond Monday afternoon and was released from custody.

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

A Mar. 10 press release from the DOJ DCI said, "As a result of an internal investigation, the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office has terminated Meister's employment as a correctional sergeant with their agency."

"The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office is fully cooperating with the investigation," the release

E – Burma Rd. and CTH E

WEIGHT

from page 1

Seasonal weight restrictions (springtime posted roads) are placed on specific highways during the spring thaw period. The restrictions are added to prevent damage to the navement structure

The Lincoln County Highway Department also P-All issued weight restrictions that went into effect at 8 a.m. on Monday, Mar. 10, as follows:

8 ton maximum — 6 tons/axle

Hwy. E – CTH E from the intersections of Burma Rd. through the gravel portion.

18 ton maximum — 6 tons/axle

A – USH 51 to STH 17 B - STH 17 to CTH D C-AllCC - Tannery Rd. to USH 8 CCC - All

D – USH 51 east to STH 17

intersection to STH 64 E – CTH O to intersection of CTH E & Burma Rd. FF - All G – East of STH 17 H - Copper Lake Rd. to CTH A J – All MM - AllM - AllN-All0 - AllJJ - AllS – USH 51 east to CTH H T – All V - A11WW-AllX - A11Y - Railroad tracks to county line YY - All

Additional town roads and city and village streets may also be posted or limited to legal load limits or less. Decisions to place or lift weight restrictions on those roads are up to local units of government.

SHOP LOCAL FIRST, IN PERSON OR ONLINE.

Z - A11

Support Local Businesses. Keep your community STRONG!

|LEGALS|

BY THE COURT DATE SIGNED: February 21, 2025 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer Probate Registrar

Probate Registrar
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
Selma A. Weber
Notice Setting Time to Hear
Application and Deadline for Filing
Claims (Informal Administration)

Claims (Informal Administration)
Case No. 2025IN16
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

application for

administration was filed.

2. The decedent, with date of birth 6/27/27, and date of death 2/7/25, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of W5675 Joe Snow Rd, Merrill, WI 54452.

3. The application will be heard at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office, before Becky S. Byer, Probate Registrar, on 3/27/25 at 10:00 AM.

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 06/13/2025 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office.

6. This publication is notice to any persons whose names or addresses are

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 715-536-0342 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

Nancy L. Raddatz N3196 Hwy 107 Merrill, WI 54452

Published 2/27/25, 3/6/25 & 3/13/25 WNAXLP DATE SIGNED: February 18, 2025 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF VICKIE L. McKAY

Notice to Creditors (Informal Administration) Case No. 25-IN-15 PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.

2. The decedent, with date of birth June 2, 1959 and date of death November 15, 2024, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of WI, with a mailing address of 716 Divot Street B., Merrill, WI 54452.

3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is May 30, 2025. 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin Room probate. Atty. Craig J. Nienow

N5041 County Road JJ, Irma, WI 54442 715-536-7185 Bar Number 01015178 Published 2/27/25, 3/6/25 & 3/13/25



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CITY OF MERRILL

The City of Merrill will be accepting Proposals for the property located at 401 S Kyes Street. For more information please visit our website or contact Rod Akey at Rod.Akey@ci.merrill.wi.us. Proposals are due April 30th, 2025.

Published March 13 & 20, 2025

WNAXLP

1ews

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS CITY OF MERRILL

The City of Merrill will be accepting Proposals for the property located at 703 S Center Ave. For more information please visit our website or contact Rod Akey at Rod.Akey@ci.merrill.wi.us. Proposals are due April 30th, 2025.

Published March 13 & 20, 2025

WNAXLP

EARLY IN PERSON VOTING NOTICE

Early voting for City of Merrill Residents for the April 1st Spring Election will begin at City Hall (1004 East First Street) on Tuesday, March 18, 2025.

In-Person Early Voting hours are

03/18 - 03/21 03/24 - 03/27

8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

In-Person Early Voting may be completed in the City Clerk's office or at the Treasurer's office window.

Please have a photo ID available.

Early voting is not permitted on Monday, March 31, 2025.

Lori L. Anderson-Malm City Clerk

Published March 13, 2025

WNAXLP

NOTICE OF PUBLIC TES1

Notice is hereby given that public testing of the DS200 Tabulating Equipment and the ExpressVote machines being used in the City of Merrill for the April 1, 2025 Spring Election is scheduled to begin at 1:00 P.M. on Monday, March 24th. The testing will be conducted in the Common Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street.

Lori L. Anderson-Malm

City Clerk

Published March 13, 2025

STATE OF WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURT LINCOLN COUNTY AMENDED SUMMONS (FOR PUBLICATION) Case No. 25-CV-13 Code: 30404 (Foreclosure) NICOLET NATIONAL BANK 111 N. Washington Street Green Bay, WI 54301 Plaintiff,

JOSHUA J. DUELLMAN 711 E. 1st St., Apt. 605 Merrill, WI 54452

TO: Joshua J. Duellman 711 E. 1st St., Apt. 605 Merrill, WI 54452

Defendant.

You are hereby notified that Plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. Within forty (40) days after March 13, 2025, you must respond with a written demand for a copy of the Complaint. The demand must be sent or delivered to the Court, whose address is Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 E. Main Street, Suite 205, Merrill, WI 54452, and to Christopher M. Seelen, Plaintiff's attorney, whose address is Ruder Ware, L.L.S.C., 402 Graham Avenue, P.O. Box 187, Eau Claire, WI 54702-0187. You may have an attorney help or represent

If you do not demand a copy of the complaint within forty (40) days, the Court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal for the award of money or other legal action requested in the Complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in Complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future and may also be enforced. in the future, and may also be enforced

y garnishment or seizure of property.
You are notified that we are attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained will be used for

that purpose.
Dated this 7th day of March, 2025.
RUDER WARE for Plaintiff, Nicolet Attorneys National Bank By: <u>Electronically</u>
<u>Christopher M. Seelen</u>
Christopher M. Seelen signed

State Bar No.1029724 402 Graham Avenue

P.O. Box 187 Eau Claire, WI 54702-0187 Telephone: 715-834-3425 Fax: 715-834-9240 Published March 13, 20 & 27, 2025

WNAXLP

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

We welcome letters to the Editor, a chance for members of the community to comment on issues of concern to them. All letters must be original, not duplications of letters addressed to public officials or written by others. The views and opinions expressed are those of the letter writer and do not necessarily reflect the views of this publication, its publishers, Editor, or staff. Please see our complete Letter to the Editor Policy on our website.

To the Editor:

Thank you to the County and Foto News for publishing a correction to the Ad Hoc Report Chart. Please note another error has been found. The County was informed of this on February 24, 2025. As of March 2, 2025, it has not been acknowledged or corrected.

For the year 2023, the revenue was understated by \$1,597,382, and the expenses were understated by \$39,135. The effect of these errors changes the "income/deficit column" from a negative (\$1,108,704) to a positive \$449,543; a difference of \$1,558,247. In my mind significant. (See chart below.)

Once again, it is unfortunate that another published financial statement by the County is incorrect. It makes me wonder what information can we trust?

This stands out even more, as the information from the People For Pine Crest has been categorically dismissed time and time again, when it is, in fact, more accurate. Audited accurate - no. I will leave that to the experts.

Instead of spending time double and triple checking who is right, let's use our efforts to find solutions based on accurate information and get to work on keeping the Pine Crest Nursing Home

county owned. Thank you.

- Eileen Guthrie Merrill, Wis.

Editor's Note: "As previously stated, the document provided did not originate by an employee currently at Lincoln County," said Renee Krueger, Lincoln County Administrative Coordinator in response to our request for more information. "'We'" attempted to continue the document for consistency in reporting," she said. That has met with challenges.

To the Editor:

In regard to your February 20, 2025, article, "Pine Crest Nursing Home: Looking back at 11 years of financials," I would like to clarify the debt service issue. Lincoln County will have to pay that debt whether Pine Crest is sold or NOT SOLD. It is a Lincoln County debt.

Will the \$268,434 for salary and fringe benefits for Lincoln County employees responsible for Pine Crest Nursing Home be eliminated if Pine Crest is sold? How many Lincoln County employees will become unemployed? If these employees are not discharged, is there a savings?

I am also a Lincoln County resident concerned about the residents of Pine Crest who receive their care through the Medicaid program. These individuals need this 5-star skilled nursing facility that does not discriminate based on ability to pay. It represents a fundamental message, that we are our brother's

As a community, we are committed to the welfare of all citizens. Thank you for your attention to our seniors.

- Victoria Bender Tomahawk, Wis.

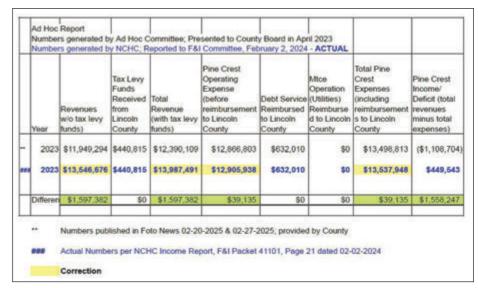


Chart provided by Eileen Guthrie.

LEGALS

EARLY IN PERSON VOTING NOTICE

Early voting for TOWN OF MERRILL residents for the April 1st, 2025 Spring Election, will begin at the Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Ave. on Tuesday, March 18th.

Voting hours are:

Tuesday • March 18th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Thursday • March 20th 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Tuesday • March 25th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Thursday • March 27th 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Friday • March 28th 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Mitzi Flegner, Clerk

Published March 13 & 20, 2025

WNAXLP

LINCOLN COUNTY **NOTICE TO ALL DOG OWNERS**

Pursuant to Chapter 174 Wisconsin Statutes and Lincoln County Ordinance 88, and as amended by Ordinance Chapter 12, every owner of a dog more than five months of age on January 1 of any year, or five months of age within the license year, shall annually obtain a license. Current certificate of rabies vaccination must be presented when obtaining a dog license.

Penalty: Upon citation for unlicensed dogs shall be a forfeiture of \$100.00.

LICENSE FEES	Before 3-31	After 3-31
Dog, Male or Female	. \$30.00	\$65.00
Neutered or Spayed Dog	. \$10.00	\$25.00
Kennels (1ST 12 Dog Tags)		\$35.00 + \$5 per dog

Dog licenses must be obtained from your Municipal Clerk.

Lincoln County Board of Supervisors

Published March 13, 2025

WNAXLP

TOWN OF PINE RIVER, LINCOLN COUNTY ROAD PROJECTS BIDS REQUEST

The Pine River Town Board is accepting bids for the following 2025 road projects:

- 1) Grind and pulverize with sheeps foot approximately 1 mile of French Ridge Road
- 2) Grind and pulverize with sheeps foot approximately
- .5 mile of High Ridge Road 3) Repave approximately 1 mile of French Ridge Road
- to a compacted 2.5" 4) Repave approximately .5 mile of High Ridge Road to
- a compacted 2.5" Paving and grinding projects must be bid separately. Work must be completed by September 15, 2025. Project

specifics are available from Greg at 715-536-3694 or 715-218-1451. Sealed bids must be received by the start of the Town Board Meeting on Tuesday, April 1, 2025 at 7 PM at the Town of Pine River Fire Station and can be delivered in person or mailed as: Road Project Bids C/O Dave Breunig, N1647 Deer Run Ave., Merrill, WI 54452. Town Board reserves right to reject any or all bids. Please Recycle Amanda Herdt, Clerk

Published March 13 & 20, 2025

WNAXLP

Volunteer! Be social! **Get active!**

Get involved in your local community events!

The Merrill Foto News website contains even more stories and photos that don't fit into our print edition.

www.merrillfotonews.com

www.merrillfotonews.com

Rural homelessness and the fight to do "more with less"

BY HALLIE CLAFLIN WISCONSIN WATCH

NORTHERN WISCONSIN – Last winter, Eric Zieroth learned that multiple layers and a down blanket were the best way to keep warm while living in his car in far northwestern Wisconsin.

For over a year, he and his then-20-year-old daughter Christina Hubbell regularly parked in a corner spot at a public boat landing a mile outside Shell Lake, where they had spent most of their lives.

Now, because they are homeless, they have been ostracized for showering, parking, and sleeping in public places.

Washburn County has no homeless shelters. Hubbell's job at a dollar store keeps them from relocating to a shelter in another county.

They are on a waitlist for a low-income housing unit.

Zieroth is awaiting a surgery that will allow him to get back to work.

If it weren't for his daughter, the former mechanic said he might consider committing a crime and getting booked into jail instead of spending another winter in the vehicle.

"There's no way I could do it again," Zieroth said. "I had to figure out something else this year."

In rural Wisconsin, homelessness is often hidden behind a veil of individuals and families who are couch surfing and sleeping in their vehicles.

Resources are few and far between, shelters are always full, and funding can be a significant challenge.

After falling for years, the state's estimated homeless population has been rising since 2021, surpassing 5,000 in 2024 for the first time since 2017.

In the 69 counties outside Milwaukee, Dane, and Racine, the homeless population increased from 2,938 individuals in 2023 to 3,201 in 2024—and that's likely an undercount.

Those living in cars are often missed, and those sleeping on couches don't count because they're "housed," said Jenny Fasula, executive director of Wisconsin's Foundation for Rural Housing.

Despite accounting for over 60% of the state's homeless population in 2023, these mostly rural counties collectively contain just 23% of the state's supportive housing units, according to the Wisconsin Policy Forum.

Experts say such long-term housing support with on-site services is the best way to address chronic homelessness.



Eric Zieroth unlocks the back gate of the apartment where he's staying as his dog, Bella, runs after him before driving to his storage unit with his daughter, Christina Hubbell, on Dec. 3.

Joe Timmerman / Wisconsin Watch photo

But providing the option is an expensive, labor-intensive task for small, rural providers with limited funding.

Rural shelter providers across the state identified several solutions to the problem: Cutting out county governments as the middleman for state reimbursements, increasing the availability of new rental units, consolidating multiple definitions of homelessness, more consistent and proportional state funding, and assistance with case management are just a few.

Federal funding and HUD

Since 2009, HUD—the main federal agency that handles homelessness—has targeted permanent supportive housing programs with long-term, sustainable services

like case management for federal funding.

The national shift from temporary housing programs reflects a widely adopted "housing first" approach—that the security of a permanent shelter is the first, necessary step before people can address the root causes of their homelessness.

While permanent housing programs effectively lowered Wisconsin's homeless population in both rural and urban areas before the pandemic, the shift hasn't been easy for rural shelters that are strapped for resources.

"As a shelter, when you have 50 people, it's impossible to have the funding to hire case managers that are really

See RURAL page 9

Better begins when you are heard.



Better begins at Aspirus Health.

Aspirus Health is here to support women of every age with compassionate health care for every stage of life's journey.



Find an Aspirus provider. call 800.847.4707 visit aspirus.org



Merrill's Thursday Night C Pool League concluded last week with team Northway #1 taking the Championship match 5-2 vs. Outskirts Bar. Front row L to R: Apryl Gagne, Kym Woller, Mikey Schreiber, and Tim Schreiber (sub). Back row L to R: Jayson Vander Velde and Wendyl Mathis. Missing from photo: Dougy Drost and Debby Mathis (sub). Submitted photo.







11420 S. County Rd. K, Merrill WI • 715–536–9391

Sun. 7am-2am, Mon.-Thurs. 11:30am-2am, Fri. 11:30am-2:30am, Sat. 7am-2:30am, Dine-in • Takeout • NO Delivery

Saturday & Sunday

Breakfast 7am-11am Mimosas & Bloody Mary's

Mondays

\$5 Burger & Home Fries Dine-in only & additional toppings are extra.

Sunday & Tuesday

Broasted Chicken 12 Noon-8pm

Friday

Fish Fry 12 Noon-8:45pm

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

ADVERTISE WITH US! 715-536-7121

SENIORS • \$5.00 I neatre

MOVIES AND SHOWTIMES 3/14/25 TO 3/20/25 days All Seats \$5.00

MICKEY 17

"R" (2HR 17MIN) **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 **LAST BREATH**

"PG13" (1HR 33MIN)

FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:15PM **SATURDAY:** 1:00, 3:30, 7:00 & 9:15PM SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:30 & 7:00PM MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

THE UNBREAKABLE **BOY**

"PG" (1HR 49MIN) FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:15PM **SATURDAY:** 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:15PM SUNDAY: 1:00 3:15 & 7:00PM MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

310 E. 2nd St., Merrill 715-536-4611 SERVING FOOD **DAILY TILL 8PM**

HOURS

MONDAY • Noon - 6pm TUE. - FRI. • Noon - Close SATURDAY • 11am - Close **SUNDAY** • Noon - 6pm

MARCH BOOZE OF THE MONTH

WINDSOR

\$5.00 - 16 oz. Pint

SAT. MARCH 15TH

ST. PATRICK'S BINGO Open 11am, Starts 1pm **CASH PRIZES, FOOD** & DRINK SPECIALS **CORNED BEEF & CABBAGE LUNCH**

SAT. MARCH 22ND

CRIBBAGE TOURNAMENT Open 11am, Starts 1 pm

Area Events & Entertainment Community Calendar

Mar. 14 - St. Francis Fish

Mar. 14 - Free Swing Dance Basic Lessons at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

Mar. 14 - St. Patty's Night Bingo at The Dugout

Mar. 14 - Handcuff Pool Tournament at Northway

Mar. 15 - Merrill Fastpitch 4th Annual Cornhole Tournament at Les &

Mar. 15 - St. Patrick's Day Party at Sawmill Brewing Company

Mar. 15 - St. Patrick's Day Bingo at Plautz's Pub Mar. 16 - MACA Concert:

Paolo Schianchi Mar. 16 - Bingo at VFW

Mar. 16 - Singles Pool Tournament at Hy-Da

Mar. 19 - Wednesday Bingo at The Dugout Mar. 21 - St. Francis Fish

Mar. 21 - Billy Bronsted and Augie Dougherty at Sawmill Brewing Company

Mar. 22 - Little Lakes Memories Banquet

Mar. 22 - Blackout Bingo at Bubba's Pub

Mar. 22 - St. Patty's After Party at Hy-Da Way

Mar. 26 - Critic's Choice Movie at T.B. Scott Free Library

Mar. 26 - Wednesday Bingo at The Dugout Mar. 27 - Food Truck Stevies at the Creative Spirit

Mar. 27 - Brewers Baseball Opener and Tailgate Party at Plautz's

Mar. 28 - Library Social Hour at T.B. Scott Free Library

Mar. 28 - St. Francis Fish

Mar. 28 - Live music at Sawmill Brewing

Company Mar. 29 - Art & Craft DeStash at Merrill

Enrichment Center Mar. 29 - Spaghetti Dinner fundraiser at The Eagles Club (in honor of Brandi Dufour for her children)

Mar. 29 - Mixed Couples Pool Tourney at Plautz's

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







Mar. 22 - 23, 2025 PURKO'S PROMOTIONS

DC Everest Sr. High School **G-T Field House** 6400 Alderson St, Weston (Wausau, Wis. Suburb)

Sat 9-5 Sun 10-3 Adm/\$7.00 • Good for both days



Collectors, Decorators, and History Buffs have enjoyed 1000's of charming and the "HARD to FIND" Treasures since 1985. Come, Search, and Discover the History of the Past! ... Worth the trip!



Antiques • Vintage • Farm Chic • Furniture Mid-Century Modern • Victrola Repairer & More! 715-526-9769 • ZurkoPromotions.com



WITTENBERG

RURAL from page 7

involved and able to really assist people," said Michael Hall, a former Waupaca County shelter worker and director of Impact Wisconsin—a nonprofit providing housing and recovery services in a six-county rural region.

Restrictions on federal funding and multiple definitions of homelessness are another barrier for rural homeless providers, said Millie Rounsville, CEO of Northwest Wisconsin Community Services Agency.

The federal McKinney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act defines homelessness specifically for youth as minor children who "lack a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime

But HUD defines homelessness in multiple categories including: 1) an individual or family who is immediately homeless and without shelter, and 2) those at imminent risk of homelessness.

Homeless children and families in the rural region surrounding Superior tend to be doubled up in some kind of housing, Rounsville said.

While they often meet the McKinney-Vento definition of homeless, they are considered category two homeless under HUD's definitions.

But in order to qualify for HUD-funded Rapid Rehousing programs, individuals must fall under category one.

'The funding needs to be flexible," Rounsville said. "We can't assume that every community across the country has the same need."

It's a housing issue

Rural Wisconsin is lacking affordable, habitable homes. Providers in Rusk County, Taylor County, Bayfield County, and Waupaca County said without low-income options, they often can't get people into permanent housing.

"As fast as units open up, they get filled," said Kimberly Fitzgerald, interim director of the Rusk County Lighthouse shelter. "In Ladysmith specifically, there are next to no rental units. So even if somebody did get approved for the housing program, where are we going to put them?"

Rural areas are also home to the state's aging housing stock, which can mean higher energy bills.

"People stereotype them to think 'Oh, we have these programs because people don't know how to manage their money.' It's not that," Fasula said. "These are folks that come in that just have a crisis. ... They don't have anything to fall back on. Any little hiccup is a big impact for them

While working to eventually afford an apartment in Shell Lake, Hubbell is making \$13.50 an hour at the Dollar General, but only scheduled to work 20 hours a week. The living wage calculation for one adult in Washburn County is \$19.45 an hour working 40 hours a week, according to the MIT living wage calculator.

State funding

In the state's 2023-25 biennial budget, the Legislature rejected Gov. Tony Evers' recommendations to spend some \$24 million on emergency shelter and housing grants, homeless case management services, and rental assistance for unhoused veterans.

The Legislature also nixed \$250 million Evers proposed for affordable workforce housing and home rehabilitation

The state funds two main grants for homeless shelters and housing annually.

The State Shelter Subsidy Grant (SSSG) receives around \$1.6 million per year, and the Housing Assistance Program receives \$900,000.

But for small shelters like Taylor House—the only homeless shelter in rural Taylor County—the funding "pennies," said Adam Schnabel, the shelter's vice president.

The facility has a continuous waitlist.

The northcentral Wisconsin shelter with a 17-person capacity received \$10,000 from SSSG this year, Schnabel

That's around \$588 per person. But four emergency shelters in Milwaukee with a combined capacity of around 392 received \$400,000 from the \$1.6 million grant total—\$1,020 per person.

The state's Recovery Voucher Grant Program awarded \$760,000 to grantees in 2024 to provide housing to those experiencing homelessness and struggling with opioid use disorders.

Half of these funds went to three providers in Dane, Milwaukee, and Waukesha counties.

Another state resource is the Homeless Case Management Services (HCMS) grant program, which distributes up to 10 \$50,000-grants per year to shelters and programs that meet eligibility requirements.

While helpful, these pots of money quickly run out, and many of them don't cover operating costs or wages.

Small shelters face county-level hurdles

Some shelter workers and advocates say in rural Wisconsin, homelessness is addressed only to the extent that their local governments and administrations are willing to acknowledge the issue and get involved.

Providers in several rural counties noted that there aren't any shelters that are owned or operated by local governments.

Washburn County Social Services can only direct homeless residents to the Lakeland Family Resource

Hall and Schnabel said local governments need to be more involved in their work, whether that be providing a county employee to serve as a shelter director, or simply making better use of their limited resources.



Christina Hubbell runs the laundromat's hot water to melt her frozen laundry detergent after picking up her winter clothes from a storage unit she shares with her father, Eric

Joe Timmerman / Wisconsin Watch photo

Schnabel added that small shelters often cannot pay their directors a decent wage, resulting in frequent staff

Taylor House has had four directors in the last 18 months, he said. The inconsistency leaves "a bad taste" in the mouth of those reviewing their grant applications.

Some counties are much more willing than others to utilize Comprehensive Community Services (CCS)—a state program aimed at addressing substance abuse and mental health needs.

The program allows counties to contract employees and case managers who provide services such as skills development and peer support.

The county can bill those expenses back to the state through BadgerCare

But some county officials are unwilling to engage in the program, Hall said.

He added that allowing local shelters that serve those covered under BadgerCare to bill the state directly for these services instead of relying on the county to initiate it "would solve the problem tomorrow."

Hall also noted that county governments can use their opioid settlement funds to provide housing and shelter to those with eligible needs, yet some have instead spent it on

Waupaca County, for example, told Wisconsin Watch it has spent nearly \$100,000 in opioid settlement funds on awareness campaigns, training, a counselor position, and equipment that helps local police quickly identify narcotics.

Another challenge is that some small communities reject homeless shelters, assuming they will bring negative footprints.

The small city of Clintonville approved an ordinance last winter enforcing a 60-day limit on local hotel stays in a sixmonth period, citing drug concerns, disorderly conduct, and disturbances.

Many homeless individuals in the area are put up in

"We're trying to figure out, what are we going to do with those 50 people this winter when the police departments come through and say they have to get out," Hall said.

Shunned by their community

While still homeless, Zieroth and Hubbell were fortunate enough to find a temporary place to stay as the weather gets colder—a small room in the unfinished basement of an acquaintance who didn't want to see them living out of their car.

They insist on paying the homeowners \$50 a week—all they can afford—for letting them stay in the basement.

Zieroth uses his skills as a mechanic to fix things around the property, and Hubbell picks items up for them at the Dollar General whenever she can.

Once healed, he wants to get back to work and acquire a property of his own, but his first priority is his daughter.

COMING UP: SPORTS PREVIEW Place your full color



ad, wishing area athletes good luck in their upcoming sport season.

> To advertise in this publication, contact the Merrill office today. (715) 536-7121



After getting on her feet, Hubbell hopes to go to cosmetology school in Rice Lake.

"She has her whole life ahead of her and experience has taught me that some real bad beginnings get really good endings, and she deserves a good one," Zieroth said.

HOW TO FIND HELP

If you or someone you know is experiencing or is at risk of experiencing homelessness, please consider the following resources:

- Wisconsin Foundation for Rural Housing One-time emergency assistance. Visit www.wisconsinruralhousing.org.
- The Wisconsin Community Action Network Identify the agency that serves your county. Visit wiscap.org/find-an-agency-2.
- Wisconsin Balance of State Continuum of Care Identify your county to locate services. Visit www.wiboscoc.org/find-services.html.



Thank You

We wish to express our sincere thanks to the Town of Russell First Responders, Lincoln County EMS, Sheriff's Department, Aspirus Merrill Hospital, Aspirus Medevac and Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral Home for the care of our brother. Thank you Reverend Laska for your comforting words.

The family of Russell "Russ" J. Ryan.

Pet of the Week



Meet Cedric! How handsome is this man! Cedric is great with other cats and loves to get attention! Cedric • is vaccinated, neutered, microchipped, and is ready to find his forever home!

Visit 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 on the web at www.furrypets.com.

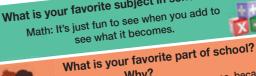




Louie Reichelt Son of

Jason and Samantha Reichelt Louis is in the 4th grade at Trinity Lutheran School. He was nominated by Mrs. Handlin.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?



When I get to go outside and play games, because I get to talk with my friends and play with them.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why? I want to be a mailman, because I like to give stuff to people.

Louie is always there to help a friend in need and cheers everyone up.

~ Mrs. Handlin



7135

|CLASSIFIEDS|

Furniture and Home Decor

For Sale: Thomasville Italianstyle oval dining table. Parque top w/pedestal base, 48"x68" with (2) 18" leaves & (2) table . Six king-back chairs w/padded seats. One owner non-smoker. Pick up only. 715-241-8351

7236

Firewood 7244

DRY OAK & Hard Maple. cord. Over 15 mi is extra. Have hard wood in wood shed 715-351-1888 or 715-873-4196



7250 Lawn and Garden

New & Used Lawn & Garden Equipment Servicing all brands.

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

Guns 7264

Guns for Sale Old .410 single shots, Winchester lever actions, handguns and more. 8am-3pm Saturday, March 15 at the Stevens Point gun show. 5341 Hwy 66 North East.

Stevens Point Gun Show March 15, 8am-3pm. 5341 Hwy 66 past airport from exit 159 at the Izaak Walton Lodge. Food served. \$5.00 admission. Bring your guns or sporting items to sell, buy, or

WE BUY USED GUNS! Bullseye Sports 1201 S. Central Ave. Marshfield, WI

715-384-6580

Cats

Snow Shoe Siamese! 12 wks. M&F, 300.00, 715-421-3667

7270

7272 Dogs

Shepherd Puppies German Purebred, Good temperament dogs, parents on site \$500 Also, German shepherd mix puppies \$250. All are ready to go! Please call 715-445-1636

Agriculture Services 7292

Hand Crafted Garden & Storage Sheds, Garages & Cabins. Many Styles and Options. Sizes from 8' x 8' up to 15' x 40' are available.

Call BAKER BARNS, LLC mile North of Gleason, Hwy 17

You've Got It! Somebody Else Wants It! Check The Classifieds.

Apartments for Rent

THE MEADOWS APARTMENTS 1, 2, & 3 bedroom units in Merrill, WI For low & moderate income individuals & families. Handicapped accessible Units Available. Appliances, hot water, water/sewer, garbage service provided

> Toll Free 855-441-8688 Certain income

Coin-op laundry facility.



This institution is an equal opportunity provider & employer

Homes For Sale

ANTIGO WI- 1440 Saratoga St. Owner moved to assisted living. Beautiful 2 bdrm home w/like new appliances, near new furnace, full basement, 4-stall garage & so much more! Come and view

7454

Lots and Acreage Wanted

Gen Z, USMC Veteran looking for at least 1 acre for small butcher shop startup (715)921-0352.

Campers and Motorhomes 7526

PARK CITY CREDIT UNION -MERRILL 2022 FOREST RIVER CAMPER CRUISE LITE 24RLXL COLOR: GRAY ID# 4X4TSMZ29N7428161 MINIMUM BID \$10,000 OR BEST OFFER Please contact Trish @ 715-536-8351 Ext. 4233 Or Ashley @ 715-536-8351 Ext. 4821

Passenger Cars

For Sale: 2015 Buick Verano 2.4L, 4-cycle Ecotec engine. 50,000 miles, very good condition \$10,200 obo. Call or text: 715-574-9389

7175

Skilled Trades

FIELD

SERVICE TECHNICIANS WANTED: Conger Industries Inc., a leading ma terial handling equipment com pany with over 70 years of expe rience, is seeking skilled Field Service Technicians to join ou Duties include trou team. bleshooting, repairing, and main taining forklifts amongst othe handling equipmen from industry-leading brands We offer competitive wages paid time off, health insurance 401(k) with employer match, on going training, and growth op-portunities. Prior experience in mechanical, electrical, or hy draulic systems is preferred Join a company that values its employees and their expertise To Apply: call (920) 499-5181 ext. 101 or email hr@conger

Professional and Technical

Church Mutual Insurance Company has an opening in Merrill, Wisconsin, for an Advisory Data Modeler position.

Provide design and implementa tion of data model solutions using relational and dimensiona databases to translate business needs into long-term solution data models that are easily used by end users for reporting and analytics. Create visual representations of information sys tems to communicate connec tions between data points and structures Implement business data requirements through new data strategies and designs across all data platforms (relational dimensional NoSQL) and data tools (report ing, visualization, analytics, and machine learning). Work with business and application/solution teams to implement data strategies, build data flows, and develop conceptual/logi cal/physical data models. Re quires Master's degree or equiv alent foreign degree in Computer Information Systems, Information Technology Manage ment, Business Administration with a concentration in Computer Information Systems, o Computer Science, Position requires at least 2 years of experi ence with (1) data modeling principles/methods, including con-ceptual, logical, and physical data models; (2) information sys tems and integration/design so-lutions; (3) dimensionally modeled data and data modeling tools; (4) utilizing SDLC method

Qualified applicants should apply online by going to https://careers-churchmutual. icims.com/iobs/3615/advisorv data-modeler/job, or by sending resumes and cover letters to KeLyAnna Austin email: Kaustin@churchmutual.com



Someone's waiting for you... in classifieds

Professional and Technical

Church Mutual Insurance Company has an opening in Merrill, Wisconsin, for a Senior DataOps Engineer

7135

position. Administer analytics platforms across CMIC's data ecosystem veraging a variety of DataOps data warehousing, and system administration methodologies and disciplines. Implement and operate the analytics platform ecosystem including technologies, leading business intelligence and visualization products, as well as industry leading analytics nfrastructure platforms. Install, upgrade, configure, optimize and administer required applica tion platforms, both on-premise: and cloud-based. Manage the application platform components related to configuration, security and connectivity. Ensure analytic systems have the necessary controls and compliance stan dards (such as HİPAA) regard ng data access, data security data sensitivity and data confi dentiality. Facilitate the SDLC rocess across the various ana vtic tools and environments hich includes the release of data pipelines and analytic solu ions into production. Requires Master's degree or equivalen foreign degree in Computer In formation Systems, Compute cience, Computer Engineering or Information Technology, pluat least 3 years of experience with (1) data development, data engineering, and/or data admin-istration; (2) Windows Servers and Windows Server maintenance and monitoring; (3) PowerExchange CDC and Informate ca Suite tools. Position also re quires at least 2 years of experi-ence with (1) SQL Server dataase environments and (2) Pow erShell scripting, cloud data management, and scheduling

Qualified applicants should apply online by going to https://careers-churchmutual. icims.com/jobs/3614/seniordata-ops-engineer/job, or by sending resumes and over letters to KeLyAnna Austir email: Kaustin@churchmutual.com





The Janikowski Family recently made a donation of a cartload of cleaning supplies, pet food, and supplies to the Lincoln County Humane Society in memory of Ellen Janikowski.

Bounty

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES



OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH

300 Logan Street, Merrill (715)536-5813

Seeking Director of Youth **& Family Ministry**Part-Time Position (20 Hours Per Week)

VISION

The Director of Youth and Family Ministry strives to foster Christian community through building relationships with young people and their families and pursuing ways to bring all generations together to participate in God's mission for this church.

To apply or for more information please contact Our Saviour's Lutheran Church.



Holden (shown in photo) sold banana cake and puppy chow at his grandma's rummage sale and raised money for the Lincoln County Humane Society. He used it to purchase cat and dog supplies and cleaning supplies and also made a \$41 donation! Nice job,

Submitted photo.





Your local community newspaper is the best place to look.

MERRILLFOTONEWS.COM

Lincoln County is Now Hiring Summer Help!

Looking for a great summer job?

Join **Lincoln County** and make this

season both fun and rewarding! We're hiring seasonal team members to help us during our busiest time in the following departments:

- Highway Department
- Forestry Department

To view Job Descriptions and To Apply, please visit Lincoln County's career opportunities at: www.co.lincoln.wi.us/jobs or call Administration at (715) 539-1010.

450553

OPERATIONS MANAGER

Melvin Companies, a well-established gravel, excavation and underground utilities company in Abbotsford and Medford for 93 years, is hiring an Operations Manager to join our team. This "hands on" position involves diverse tasks such as job coordination, ensuring safety standards are met, managing regulatory compliance, handling sales, overseeing employment recruitment and training.

The ideal candidate will have supervisory experience, preferably in the underground utilities, gravel and excavation sectors. With a 90-mile work radius, this position offers a significant perk — the chance to be home almost every night.

Melvin Companies offers a competitive salary and benefit package including 401K plan.

Please send resume to the address below or submit it through our website melvincompanies.com



MELVIN COMPANIES
PO Box 646 • Abbotsford, WI 54405

All qualified applicants will receive consideration without regard to race, color, religion, sex or national origin

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

Join the Lincoln Production Crew in Merrill, WI!

Lincoln Wood Products has proudly provided work in Merrill for over 75 years, crafting high-end windows and doors sold across the U.S. Be part of a legacy of quality!

LINCOLN

Come build your future with Lincoln Wood Products.

Wood Products.

Apply today
and be part of
something great!

Why Join Us?

- Starting Pay up to \$22/hr.
- First Shift Only keep your evenings free!
- Seniority Incentives & Annual Shoe Allowance
- Transfer Incentive & OT after 8 hours daily
- Health Deductible = \$750 Individual/\$1,500 Family

3 WAYS TO APPLY

- 1. Apply in person at 1400 W. Taylor Street
- 2. Email your resume to gebeyer@lincolnwindows.com
- 3. Go to www.indeed.com to search vacancies
 @ Lincoln

43922

SIERRA PACIFIC WINDOWS

- Maintenance Tech2nd Shift\$30.10 \$32.35/HR
- Crew Member \$19.79 \$21.29/HR

APPLY IN-PERSON

605 N. Ohio St. • 1815 Water St. Questions? Call: 715-722-1884

- 4 10-Hour Days
- Both shifts available
- Possible OT on Friday
- Attendance Bonus Program (up to an additional \$1.50/hr)
- Retirement & Life Insurance
- Paid Holidays and Vacations
- Excellent Low-Cost Benefits: Individual: \$84/Month
 Spouse: +\$134/Month
 Child: +\$56/Month
 2025 Monthly Rates

Visit us online at spi.careers!

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

AMRON IS HIRING!

Entry Level to Skilled Labor Positions \$15.70 per hour - \$27.08 per hour

EXCELLENT BENEFITS

MONDAY – FRIDAY ONLY
Three Shifts Available
NO MANDATORY OVERTIME
NO MANDATORY WEEKENDS

To Apply - Stop by 920
Amron Avenue, Antigo,
WI Or Email
kori.martin@amronndc.com
Or Call 715-623-4176



Amron

A Division of AMTEC Corporation



A National Defense Corp Company

Equal Opportunity Employer/Affirmative Action: Minorities, Women, Veterans, Disabilities. Due to the nature of our work, applicants must be U.S. Citizens.

Campus News

UW-Oshkosh fall 2024 Dean's List. Honor Roll released

The following Merrill students qualified for the Dean's List and Honor Roll at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh in fall 2024 across its Oshkosh and Fox Cities campuses:

- · Zachary Becker, Honor
- Kierra Boyd, Dean's List
- · Anthony Hanse, Honor
- · Michael McRae, Honor Roll
- · Cole Osness, Dean's List
- Sara Rajek, Dean's List · Morgan Schmidt, Honor

The term grade-point average (GPA) requirement University Honor Roll is 3.3; the term GPA requirement for Dean's List is 3.75, out of a possible 4.0. To qualify, a student

uction & Realty

must have been enrolled in a minimum of 12 credits. There can be no individual grades below a "C" and no incomplete or non-reported grades at the time the process is run.

UW-Eau Claire fall Dean's List announced

The University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire announced the following Bluegold students from the area were named to the fall 2024 Dean's List.

- · Shauna Belter of Athens, College of Health and Human Sciences
- Kaitlyn Riehle Athens, College of Business Ryder Depies of Merrill, College of Arts and
- Sciences · Lydia McIntyre of Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences
 - Bailey Orzech

Saturday,

March 15, 2025

10:00 AM

Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences

- · Matthew Palazzo of Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences
- Allison Palecek of Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences
- Tanaya Pillai of Merrill, College of Arts and Sciences
- Alexis Rogers Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences
- Amelia Skoviera of Merrill, College of Arts and Sciences
- Amber Winter Merrill, College of Health and Human Sciences

The Dean's list recognizes outstanding academic performance. To be eligible, a student must be in good academic standing, have a minimum semester GPA of 3.70, and have completed at least 12 credits during the semester, no incompletes, below the courses no level, no repeats, and no Satisfactory/ Unsatisfactory registrations (except in credit-bearing courses that are offered only on the S/U grading system in which a grade of S has been earned).

UW-Stevens Point undergraduates honored for scholastic achievement

University of

Point

Wisconsin-Stevens

honored more than 2,600 undergraduate students for attaining high GPAs during the fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year. Full-time undergraduates who earned GPAs of 3.90 to 4.0 (4.0 equals straight A) are given the highest honors designation. High honor citations go to those with GPAs from 3.75 to 3.89 and honor recognition is accorded to those with GPAs from 3.50 to 3.74. Personalized certificates of scholastic achievement are sent to those who earned highest honors distinction.

Students from the area received who honors include:

- · Lydia Carlson of Athens, Highest Honors
- · Savannah Epping of Athens, Highest Honors
- · Andrew Hartmann of Athens, Highest Honors
- · Linzee Hixon of Athens, **Highest Honors**
- · Michael Komarek of Athens, Honors
- · Emma Nowak of Athens, High Honors
- Cambrea Sarasin of Athens, Honors
- Faith Seliger of Athens, **Highest Honors**
- Elliana Smith of Gleason, High Honors
- · Monica Lane of Irma, Honors
- · Jaylen Anderson of Merrill, High Honors
- Annie Becker Merrill, Honors
- Samuel Bennett of Merrill, Honors
- Taylor Bird of Merrill,

Honors

- Molly Dallman of Merrill, Highest Honors
- Caleb DeJong
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Dennis Fyksen of
- Merrill, Highest Honors
- · Cory Gigl of Merrill, High Honors
- · Adeline Heisinger of Merrill, High Honors
- Catherine Herdt of Merrill, Honors
- · Callen Hoeppner of Merrill, High Honors
- · Allison Hunter of Merrill, Highest Honors
- Emerson Iwen of Merrill Honors
- · Brooklyn Kraegenbrink of Merrill, High Honors
- Zachary Kriegel of Merrill, Highest Honors · Courtney Krueger of
- Merrill, Highest Honors Hailey Krueger
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Madisyn Krueger of
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Cassandra Lezotte of
- Merrill, High Honors · Mitchell Mayers of
- Merrill, Honors · Edwin Moore of Merrill,
- **Highest Honors** Christen Nelson of
- Merrill, Honors · Sebastian Ollmann of
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Jesse Osness of Merrill,
- Honors · Aiden Pehlke of Merrill, Honors
- · Jaiden Pillai of Merrill,
- High Honors Patience Pyan of Merrill, High Honors
- · Alexandra Schmeltzer of Merrill, High Honors

- · Sawyer Schmitz of Merrill, Highest Honors
- · Katelyn Schult of Merrill, Highest Honors
- · Julia Shull of Merrill, **Highest Honors**
 - · Alyssa Spakowski of
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Brenna Steinagel of
- Merrill, Highest Honors · Ginni Townsend of
- Merrill, Honors
- · Tessa Wheat of Merrill, **Highest Honors**
- · Taylor Zastrow of Merrill, High Honors

Essert named to SNHU President's List

Stacy Essert of Merrill has been named Southern New Hampshire University's fall President's List. The fall terms run from Sept. to Dec. Full-time undergraduate students who have earned a minimum GPA of 3.700 and above for the reporting term are named to the President's List. Full-time status is achieved by earning 12 credits over each 16-week term or paired 8-week terms grouped in fall, winter/spring, and summer.

Dengel graduates from Marquette University

This past fall Dawson Dengel of Merrill graduated from Marquette University in Milwaukee with a Bachelor of Science degree

BUSINESS DIRECTORY

NEIGHBORHOOD PROFESSIONAL & RELIABLE SERVICE DIRECTORY

BASEMENT WATERPROOFING

| AUCTIONS |

ESTATE AUCTION | EXPO Center, 303 N Sales St., Merrill

See Website for Directions. WATCH FOR SIGNS

Large John Deere Tractor And Toy Collection

Most All The Items Are ERTL • Toys • Large Coin Collection

• Snap On Toys • Long Guns • Pistols • Ammo

• Household Furniture • Cub Cadet New Riding Lawn Mower

• Large Snow Blower • Tools And Much More

www.alangeauctionrealty.com or Call Arnold at: 715-574-2258 Registered Wisconsin Auctioneer • Col. Arnold H. Lange, Manager/Broker, WI Lic. #230

OVER 50 YEARS OF TRUSTED EXPERIENCE

our website for pictures, details, Terms, conditions & Buyers Pre



All Exterior Excavation, Foundation Wraps, Drain Tile Systems New & Existing Homes . Residential, Commercial, Agricultural Fully Insured • CALL FOR FREE ESTIMATES: 715-257-7193

"Give me a call, before the rain starts to fall!"



- Brian Plisch • Owner/Operator I OCALLY OWNED

> Serving the area for 21 years. **FREE ESTIMATES** 715-297-0907

> > **FREE**

ESTIMATES!

Tired of re-roofing

your house?

TRY A

STEEL ROOF!

www.bpseamless.com Email: bpseamless@gmail.com

Great Look, Great Price, 5% off if you mention this ad.

BADGER STATE

STEEL ROOFING

• Snaplok (hidden fastener) • Can Be Installed Over

An Existing Roof • 40 Year Factory Warranty • 4-Star Hail and Fire Resistant • Ventilated At Peak • Energy Star

SCRAP METAL

- We'll Pick it Up
- Clam Truck Service
- Dumpster Service Buying Cars & Trucks





Serving Central & Northern WI for over 80 years

Cousineau Recycling

Hwy. 45 South, Antigo • Toll Free 866-330-3730 or 715-623-2372

Maple Ridge Construction



Specializing In:

- Metal and Asphalt Roofing
- House Roofs
 Barn Roofs
- Replacement Windows
- Vinyl Siding and More!



TIRED OF RE-ROOFING • CAN BE INSTALLED OVER YOUR HOUSE? TRY A STEEL ROOF!



RESISTANT

SHERWIN-WILLIAMS.

- **EXISTING ROOFING** • 40 YEAR FACTORY WARRANTY • 4 STAR HAIL AND FIRE
- · VENTILATED AT PEAK ENERGY STAR EFFICIENT
- SNAP-LOC HIDDEN FASTENER • 18 COLORS AVAILABLE

INDIVIDUAL HOMEOWNERS, CONTRACTORS OR COMMERCIAL ON SITE CUSTOM ROLL FORMING AVAILABLE

CALL TODAY FOR YOUR FREE ESTIMATE 715-618-8232



Culverts/Driveways Landscaping/New Lawns **Concrete Removal** Storm Clean Up Stump Removal **Demolition Lot Clearing/Food Plots**

Repair Service, LLC

Heating • Cooling • Sheet Metal



W2810 Hwy, C, Merrill (715) 536-6791







715-314-2295

in Information Systems. Marquette University is a Catholic, Jesuit university that draws over 7,600 undergraduate and 3,700 graduate and professional students from nearly all states and more than 60 countries. In addition to its nationally recognized academic programs, Marquette is known for its service learning programs and internships as students are challenged to use what they learn to make a difference in the world.

Evans named to President's List at Western Technical College

Clayton Evans from Merrill was named to Western Technical College's President's List of High Distinction for the fall 2024 term. To be included on the President's List, students must achieve a GPA of 3.5 or higher and carry six or more credits in an associate's degree or technical diploma program.

UW-La Crosse announces fall 2024 Dean's List

students have Area been named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse for the fall semester of the 2024-25 academic year, ending in December. Qualification for the Dean's List is limited to students who have attained outstanding academic achievement. To be eligible, students must have earned at least a 3.5 semester GPA and carried a minimum of 12 credits.

Students on the Dean's List from this area include:

- Sophia Coker of Athens, Elementary/Middle Education Major
- Dayne Diethelm of Athens, Exercise and Sport Science Major: Physical, Adapted, and School Health Education
- Brooks Kraus of Athens, Exercise and Sport Science Major: Exercise Science -Pre-professional Track
- Nicole Zoellner of Gleason, Exercise and Sport Science Major: Exercise Science - Pre-professional Track
- Anna Bowe of Merrill, Exercise and Sport Science Major: Exercise Science -Pre-professional Track
- Breannon Herdt of Merrill, Psychology Major
- Kaitlin Kalafice of Merrill, Elementary/ Middle Education Major
- Danyelle Kottke of Merrill, Accountancy Major
 Erin Kremsreiter of
- Merrill, International
 Business Major
 Chloe Malinowski of
- Chloe Malinowski of Merrill, Archaeological Studies Major
- Emma Marlowe of Merrill, Elementary/ Middle Education and Special Education Major
 Chloe McRae of Merrill,
- Undeclared Major CBA
- Lydia Schult of Merrill, Biology Major
- Logan White of Merrill,

Marketing Major

Saari named to lowa State University fall 2024 Deans List

Jack Saari of Merrill, Junior studying Mechanical Engineering. joins more than 11,500 Iowa State University students who have been recognized for outstanding academic achievement by being named to the fall semester 2024 Dean's List. Students named to the Dean's List must earn a gGPA of at least 3.50 on a 4.00 scale while carrying a minimum of 12 credit hours of graded course work.

UW-Platteville announces fall 2024 Dean's List

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville announced its Dean's List, honoring those full-time students who earned a GPA of 3.75 and above in the fall 2024 semester.

Students from the area on the Dean's List include:

- Mathew Redmann, Athens, Mechanical Engineering BS
- Isaac Bixby, Gleason, Civil Engineering BS

Area students named to fall 2024 Dean's List at UW-Milwaukee

The following students from the area have been named to the Dean's List at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee for the fall 2024 semester. UW-M is the second largest university in the State of Wisconsin, with more than 24,000 associate, undergraduate, and graduate students.

- Dana Felzkowski, Athens, Letters & Science Undergrad
- Rosalee Hornung, Athens, School of the Arts-
- Fletcher Ellenbecker, Merrill, English & Computer Science Undergrad
- Benjamin Freyer, Merrill, School of the Arts-Undergrad
- Danielle Korman, Merrill, Social Welfare Undergraduate
- Adam Polak, Merrill, English & Computer Science Undergrad
- Haven Wakefield, Merrill, Social Welfare Undergraduate

Area students graduate from UW-Milwaukee in December

Two students from the area graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee during commencement exercises held Sunday, Dec. 15, 2024 in Milwaukee:

- Dana Felzkowski, Athens, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science
 - Wendi Ludwig, Athens,

School of Education, Master of Science

Local students named to UW-Madison fall 2024 Dean's List

The University of Wisconsin-Madison has recognized students named to the Dean's List for the fall semester of the 2024-2025 academic year.

Students who achieve at a high level academically are recognized by the dean at the close of each semester. To be eligible for the Dean's List, students must complete a minimum 12 graded degree credits in that semester. Each university school or college sets its own GPA requirements for students to be eligible to receive the distinction. Most call the honor "Dean's List," but some grant the "Dean's Honor List" and "Dean's High Honor List."

- Alyssa Nielsen, Athens,
 College of Agricultural &
 Life Science, Dean's List
- Serena Reinke, Irma,
 Collegeof Agricultural &
 Life Science, Dean's List
- Decilyn Clark, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Kian Garske, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Carla Higgins, Merrill, College of Agricultural & Life Science, Dean's List
- Joseph Jaroski, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Isaac Johns, Merrill, College of Engineering, Dean's Honor List
- Carl Knaack, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Lydia Koehler, Merrill, School of Education, Dean's List
- Regena Lahti, Merrill,
 College of Letters and
 Science, Dean's List
- Trenton Lokemoen, Merrill, School of Education, Dean's List
- Matthew Monnot, Merrill, College of Engineering, Dean's Honor List
- Jordan Stoecker, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Izzy Sunby, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Kayli Wirtala, Merrill, College of Letters and Science, Dean's List
- Laney Zuelsdorff, Merrill, College of Engineering, Dean's Honor List

UW-Green Bay announces academic honors

University The Wisconsin-Green of Bay 11,188 serves undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students as well as 85,883 continuing education learners annually. UW-Green Bay offers 200 academic degrees, programs, and certificates. With four campus locations in Northeast Wisconsin, the University's access mission welcomes all students

who want to learn, from every corner of the world. It is Wisconsin's fastest-growing UW.

Students who earn a 4.0 GPA, which represents all A grades, receive highest honors. High Honors go to students earning 3.99 to 3.75 GPAs. Honors are given to students earning 3.74 to 3.50 GPAs. All were fulltime students in the fall/ winter term, earning 12 or more credits of graded coursework. This list includes students attending all four UW-Green Bay campuses (Green Bay, Marinette, Manitowoc, Sheboygan).

Students from the area recognized with honors for the fall 2024 semester include:

- Jazelle Hartwig, Athens, Semester Honors
- Addison Lavicka, Athens, Semester High Honors
- Grace Fleischman, Gleason, Semester Highest Honors
- Alexys Millard,
 Gleason, Semester Honors
 Carter Baade, Merrill,
- Semester Honors
 Reed Dombeck, Merrill,
 Semester High Honors
- Claire Drew, Merrill, Semester High Honors
- Connor Haynes, Merrill, Semester Honors
- Don Leander, Merrill, Semester High Honors
- Savannah Orzech, Merrill, Semester Highest Honors
- Maddy Ott, Merrill, Semester High Honors
- Emersyn Reich, Merrill, Semester Honors
- Brooke Rudie, Merrill, Semester High Honors

Students named to Dean's List for fall 2024

The following students from the area have been named to the University of Wisconsin-Stout Dean's List for the fall 2024 semester. The award is presented to students who have a GPA of 3.5 or above.

- Cooper Diedrich, Athens, BS Golf Enterprise Management
- Braden Kapitz, Athens,
 BS Engineering Technology
 Danielle Schoenrock,
- Damelie Schoenrock,Athens, BS PsychologyVaughn Albrecht,
- Vaughn Albrecht, Merrill, BS Mechanical Engineering
- Maggie Breitenmoser, Merrill, BFA Illustration
- Gracie Brown, Merrill, BS Human Develpm & Family Std
- Benjamin Doyle Merrill, BS Management

 Danielle Kunth, Mannille
- Danielle Kurth, Merrill, BS Human Development & Family Studies
- Kaiden Ratzlaff, Merrill, BS Cybersecurity
- Austin Wiederhoeft, Merrill, BS Mechanical Engineering

UW-Stevens Point announced December 2024 graduates

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point conferred degrees to 462 graduates for the fall 2024 semester in December 2024. Graduates from the area:

- Cobie Ellenbecker, Athens, Bachelor of Science, Math Education Option, Summa Cum Laude
- Bailey Buckholt, Merrill, Bachelor of Science, Sociology
- Abby Bucknell, Merrill, Bachelor of Science in Nursing, Nursing
- Gavin Dinges, Merrill, Bachelor of Science, History and Social Studies Education
- Julie Drexler, Merrill, Bachelor of Science, Psychology, Summa Cum Laude
- Dennis Fyksen, Merrill,
 Bachelor of Science,
 Computer Information
 Systems, Summa Cum
 Laude
- Sawyer Schmitz, Merrill, Bachelor of Science, Biology, Summa Cum Laude

Minnesota State Mankato announces 2024 fall semester Dean's List

Academic High The Honor and Honor lists (Dean's lists) for the past fall semester at Minnesota State University, Mankato have been announced by Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs David Hood. Among 4,404 students, a total of 1,354 students qualified for the High Honor List by achieving a 4.0 straight "A" average, while 3,050 students earned a 3.5 to 3.99 average to qualify for the Honor List, among them two students from the area:

- Rachel Jaworski, Athens, Honor List
- Nicole Fuchs, Merrill, Honor List

NTC announces fall 2024 President's List for outstanding academic achievement

Northcentral Technical College (NTC) announced the President's List for outstanding academic achievement for the fall 2024 term. The following students from the area enrolled in a post-secondary program, earned a 3.75 GPA or above and successfully completed a minimum of six credits during the fall term:

- Bailey Hanke, AthensCelina Ellenbecker, Athens
- Atnens
 Connor Butler Athens
- Jakob Annala, AthensKatlyn Schreiner,
- Athens
 Kenesha Schug, Athens
 Makenna Sebold,
- Athens
 Piper Wagner, Athens
- Calle Johnson, GleasonJosh Chiamulera,Gleason
- Nicole Blott, GleasonAlex Sievert, Irma
- Addison Schmeltzer, Merrill
- Aidan Blystone, MerrillAlayna Pozorski, Merrill
- Alexzander Steffen, Merrill

- Allison Blaubach, Merrill
- Allison Wolff, Merrill
- Amy Pehlke, Merrill
- Ava Detert, MerrillAva Pitts, Merrill
- Bobbi Gerbig, Merrill
 Bobi Skinner Merrill
- Bobi Skinner, MerrillBrenden Leder, Merrill
- Brianna Wardall, Merrill
- Brooke Slagoski, Merrill
 - Cade Klosinski, Merrill • Candice Ruleau, Merrill
- Charlie Marcoux, Merrill
- Christian Candler,
 Merrill
 Dakotah Hawthorne
- Dakotah Hawthorne, Merrill
- Devin Frick, MerrillElly Hanson, Merrill
- Emily Wiesneski, Merrill
 - Grace Berg, Merrill
- Jack Hoock, Merrill Jalissa LaBarge, Merrill
- Jared Heller, Merrill Johnny Handlin,
- Merrill

 Jordan Smukowski,
- Merrill
 Katherine Ament,
 Merrill
- Kelly Page, Merrill
- Kendel Semling, MerrillKensey Prentice,
- Merrill
 Kristen Rampart,
 Merrill
- Mason Schultz, MerrillMcKenna Meunier, Merrill
- Rachael Blaasch, Merrill
 - Rain Sperl, Merrill

• Nathan Woller, Merrill

- Ramazan Kaya, MerrillRheanna Schulz,
- Merrill
 Samantha Kasten,
- Merrill
- Scott Schug, MerrillShayla Swan, Merrill
- Sophie Wendorf, MerrillStefani Terpstra,
- Merrill
 Trenton Pozorski,

Ty Suchon, MerrillTyler Berg, Merrill

NTC announced fall

2024 graduates

Merrill

Northcentral Technical College announced the following Merrill students graduated at the end of the

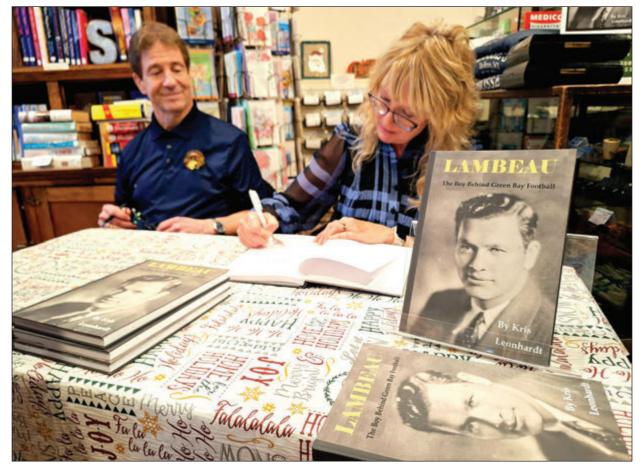
- fall 2024 semester:
- Julianne StacyKatrina Miller
- Bobi Skinner

Local students named to University of Minnesota Twin Cities Dean's List

The following area students were named to the 2024 fall semester Dean's List at the University of Minnesota Twin Cities, qualifying via completion of 12 or more letter-graded credits while attaining a 3.66 GPA:

- Emma Ford, Athens, Junior at Carlson School of Management
- Caleb Norton, Merrill, Sophomore at College of Design

Visit Us Online @ www.MerrillFotoNews.com



Book release event at Bosse's News Depot with Don Sipes and Kris Leonhardt.

Submitted photos.

Multi Media Channels editor writes Curly Lambeau book

Multi Media Channels (MMC) Senior Editor Kris fans and readers alike. If you love football, community, and Leonhardt has authored a book on Green Bay Packers first head coach and general manager, Curly Lambeau.

Lambeau—The Boy Behind Green Bay Football chronicles Lambeau's life from birth through death and includes photos supplied by Green Bay area archives, including the Neville Public Museum, UW-Green Bay Archives, and Packers Hall of Fame, Inc.

The book also features a foreward written by current Packers Hall of Fame, Inc. President Don Sipes and is tailored toward both the casual football fan and the diehard fanatic

This book captures the heart and history of the Green Bay Packers as not just a sports team, but a symbol of resilience and unwavering belief. At its core is the story of Curly Lambeau, a man who refused to let challenges stop him from building a legacy. Against all odds, he kept the Packers alive through sheer determination, transforming them into one of the most revered teams in NFL history. Lambeau Field stands as a fitting tribute to his passion and persistence, but this book tells the full story of his journey—a fascinating tale of dedication that will inspire

tales of grit, this book is a must-read, said MMC Publisher Patrick Wood.

Signed copies are available through MMC at shopmmclocal.com/product/lambeau and also available on Amazon at a.co/d/31K2Arc.

The book will also be accessible in the coming months in the Waupaca, Wausau, and Stevens Point communities, as well as other local book providers throughout the state. Watch facebook.com/MMCLOCAL for future book

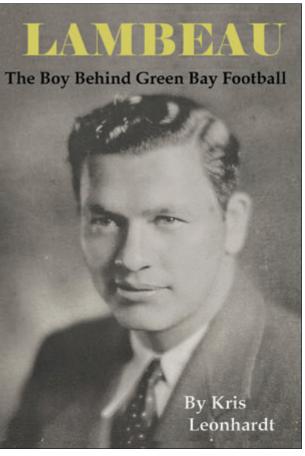
signing events near you. Kris Leonhardt honed her literary skills at Marquette University and the University of Wisconsin while obtaining her communications degree. She also served in the United States Army, receiving an honorable discharge in 1997.

She began a part-time journalism career in 2001, while working in a family business, and joined MMC full-time in 2016. As a part of MMC, Leonhardt has been recognized in the communities she serves for her work in historic preservation.

Leonhardt is also a coordinator for the "Pass it Forward" community journalism internship initiative developed



Kris Leonhardt.



Book cover.

through a partnership with the Green Bay Packers Give Back, Nicolet Bank, UW-Green Bay, Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, St. Norbert College, UW-Stevens Point, and Notre Dame de la Baie Academy.

She has authored two other historical non-fiction titles. MMC is the owner of more than 30 print publications, including 22 weeklies [including the Merrill Foto News] and 17 digital channels that serve the central, northern, and eastern regions of Wisconsin.





2025 Jeep Wrangler - 2 Door **SALE PRICE \$32,680****



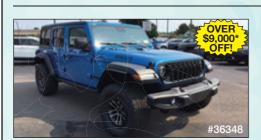


2025 Grand Cherokee FROM \$41,215**





2025 RAM 1500 Crew Cab's **UP TO \$11,000* OFF**



2024 Wrangler Willys MSRP \$61,960

SALE PRICE \$52,794**



2025 Jeep Gladiator **Nighthawk**

SALE PRICE \$43,680**



2024 RAM 2500 Crew Cab In Stock From \$50.659**

*Off of MSRP. **Plus tax, title, license and service fee.

Jeep

3000 EAST MAIN STREET MERRILL Phone: (715) 536-2833 • Toll free 800-499-JEEP (5337) **LOCATED 1/2 MILE WEST OF HWY. 51-64 INTERCHANGE** Visit our web site at www.bricknersparkcity.net



Bluejays dominate Antigo, fall short at Wausau East

BY TINA L. SCOTT **EDITOR**

Bluejays open playoffs with strong win over Antigo

The Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Team started their playoff run with an 84-61 victory over Antigo at home last Tuesday, Mar. 4, 2025. Setting the tone early with defense, the Bluejays raced to a 51-27 halftime lead on their home court against "War on 64" rivals, the Antigo Red Robins.

EJ Weix (16 pts, 6 FG, 2 3pt, 2 FT, 4 reb, 2 ast, 2 stl), Tyson Ott (15 pts, 6 FG, 2 3pt, 1 FT, 2 reb, 1 ast, 3 stl), and Kory Page (15 pts, 5 FG, 3 3pt, 2 FT, 8 reb, 2 ast, 1 stl) led the Bluejay attack that featured five players scoring in double figures. Charles Kalinowski (12 pts, 5 FG, 2 3pt, 2 reb, 2 ast) and Aidan Houghton (12 pts, 5 FG, 2 FT, 10 reb, 2 ast, 3 stl) also hit double digits in scoring.

"We came out with the type of energy on defense that not many teams want to try to score against," said Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Team Head Coach Troy Pieper. "The guys were flying around getting deflections and steals. Antigo didn't feel comfortable pretty much the entire game."

The Bluejays' defense produced 14 steals and 27 deflections, leading to 28 points off turnovers. Merrill also dominated in transition, outscoring Antigo 21-11 in fast break points.

'We've been dealing with some struggles on offense down the stretch of the regular season, so we wanted to get out and go a little more, pick up the pace and tempo to get some more energy and urgency on offense," said Pieper. "I think our defense helped that a lot, and we really had a great night on both ends of the court."

"Five guys in double figures is a great thing; every guy who came in looked and played confident. It was a nice way to start the playoffs," said Pieper. "I could mention so many guys. I thought Aidan Houghton, though, really had one of his best games, getting a double double with 15 points and 10 rebounds. He was very aggressive on both ends of the floor and just played fantastic all night.'

Box Score Antigo 61 @ Merrill 84

Heartbreaking playoff exit at Wausau East

The Bluejays' season came to an end Friday night, Mar. 7, when Merrill fell 52-50 to Wausau East in the Regional Semifinal, despite a second-half comeback, in a match so close the Bluejays could just almost taste victory. It was a crushing end to their playoff season.

EJ Weix (17 pts, 5 FG, 2 3pt, 5 FT, 5 reb, 2 ast, 1 stl), Tyson Ott (11 pts, 4 FG, 3 3pt, 3 reb, 3 ast, 5 stl), and Cooper Wendorf (8 pts, 3 FG, 2 3pt, 1 reb) led the scoring for Merrill, with the Bluejays trailing 33-27 at halftime.

"We came out a little slow, it took us a little while in the first half to find our footing," said Coach Pieper. "We started by picking up full court trying to get them out of sync and in result, we ended up giving up a few easy buckets and just didn't execute



Merrill playing Wausau East in the second playoff game.

Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.

in the full court press. But once we got out of that, we really settled in with our halfcourt defense, and after allowing them to get out to a big lead, we chipped away and had a chance to advance, but just came up short on our final shot."

After the slow start, the Blueiavs' defense tightened, allowing just 19 points in the second half, and the Merrill Boys' threepoint shooting kept them in the game, connecting on 10 three-pointers compared to East's 3.

"Our defense really did its job, especially the second part of the first half and the entire second half," said Pieper. "We gave up just 19 points in the second half."

"It's a heartbreaking loss. We had a chance—we played well for the most part minus a few costly live-ball turnovers here and there, but we had the ball with a chance to tie or win the game, and just came up short. It's going to take some time to get over this one," said Pieper.

"I really had a blast coaching this team this year. It was a very fun group to be around," he said. "This Senior group is going to missed-six awesome young men who are going to accomplish great things. I wish the season didn't have to end the way it did, and as soon as it did, I wasn't ready to be done coaching this group."

"I want to thank all of the fans who came out to the two playoff games. Both games had awesome atmospheres, and I can't thank the Merrill community enough for all the support they have shown Merrill Basketball," said Pieper. "The team represented Merrill with class and dignity and played the game the right way with grit and effort, they left it all on the floor, and as their coach, that is all I can ask of them."

"The underclassmen and myself will use the loss as motivation and fuel for the offseason and for next season," said Pieper. "That is all you can do after a difficult close playoff loss. You process it, learn from it, and be better because of it."

Box Score Merrill 50 @ Wausau East 52

> LEFT: The Merrill Bluejays delivered a win against the Antigo Red Robins.

> > Blue Sky Photography/ Peter Tesch photo.



The Bluejays were on fire playing against Antigo in the playoffs.

Joseph Frederick photo.

2025 Memill High School Spring Sports Schedule

Boys Baseball (Varsity, JV, & JV2)

Practice begins Monday, March 24th

Girls Softball (Varsity & JV)

Practice begins Monday, March 17th

Boys Golf (Varsity & JV) Practice begins Monday, March 31st

Girls Soccer (Varsity & JV) Practice begins Monday, March 24th

Trap Team (Varsity)

2nd Practice at Lincoln County Gun Club Tuesday, March 18th



Calendar of events is sponsored by:

THE GRE ∧TER





Kendall Klug, a Freshman at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week for the week of March 13, 2025. Kendall started wrestling in kindergarten with a Wausau-area program before moving to Merrill and joining the Junior Jays in first grade. She has wrestled ever since, competing through Prairie River Middle School (PRMS) primarily against boys, before joining the Merrill Girls Varsity Wrestling Team this year. This season, she qualified for and wrestled for the first-ever Girls Wrestling State Tournament. Kendall also started playing t-ball in kindergarten, continuing on to softball, and hopes to make the Merrill Girls Varsity Softball Team this season. She has also played volleyball since fourth grade and is currently a member of the Merrill Varsity Volleyball Team.

At school, Kendall is involved in the Fellowship of Christian Athletes (FCA), and her favorite class is English. In her free time, she enjoys deer and turkey hunting, spending time outdoors, boating with her family, and snowmobiling.

The daughter of Josh and Megan Klug of Merrill, Kendall maintains a 3.8 GPA. After graduating, she is considering a career in the nursing field.

Congratulations from these sponsors:







Kendall Klug

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

> Please direct comments or suggestions to fotonews@mmclocal.com







NORTH CENTRAL WISCONSIN ORTHOPEDIC

WALK-IN CARE IN MERRILL

OPENING MARCH 3

Accidents happen. When they do, our walk-in services at our Merrill clinic can provide fast, expert care for sprains, strains, fractures, minor cuts and abrasions.

- Bours: Monday Friday | 8:00 a.m. 4:00 p.m.
- O Located at our Merrill clinic | 100 Eagle Drive
- Questions? Call us at 715.536.7181

NO REFERRAL NEEDED.
NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY.

2024-25 Merrill Girls Varsity Wrestling Team with grade. Front row L to R: Bryanna Doerr (9), Lauren Hoffman (9), Katelyn Grawien (9), Caroline Durbin (11), Madlyn Hunter (9), Natalia Woller (9), and Gracie Vanvuren (11). Back row L to R: Cadence Seliger (Manager - 9), Kendell Klug (9), Marissa Miles (10), Liberty Yates (11), Adison Clark (11), Kaylynn Allen (11), Shelby Yates (9), and Merin Yates (12).

Photo courtesy of Merrill Wrestling Program.

Merrill Girls Varsity Wrestling Team celebrates sweet ending to their season

BY TINA L. SCOTT EDITOR

The Merrill Girls Varsity Wrestling Team wrapped up their 2024-25 season with a unique twist on the traditional end-ofyear banquet. Instead of a dinner, the team chose to celebrate their accomplishments with an ice cream social on Sunday, Mar. 9,

Head Coach Scott Arneson highlighted the team's motivational themes that guided them throughout the season. The girls were challenged to remember principles like "For every negative = 7 positives" and "TEAM: Together Everyone Accomplishes More." Other team mantras included "CPR: Consistent, Persistent & Resilient," "Win the PPMC," and "Energy, Effort, Execution and extraORDINARY."

Arneson didn't just reflect on the past season but looked forward to the next, challenging his wrestlers to start improving now. He outlined what he called "The Secret to Success," emphasizing the need for purpose, planning, persistence, and positivity.

"The reason Merrill Girls Wrestling was successful is because it has the key components for teams to be successful," Arneson said. These components include "a great community and district that supports, great administrators/leaders that lead, a great club that works, great coaches that inspire, and great kids that work hard."

Arneson thanked the team for a great

season and encouraged everyone to prepare for next year with his signature "WAM = WE ARE MERRILL!"

During the ice cream social, several athletes were recognized for their outstanding contributions to the team. Individual performance awards went to Kaylynn Allen for Most Team Points and Most Pins, while Kendall Klug received the Most Takedowns Award.

The Academic Award highlighted the team's excellence in the classroom, with 9 of the 14 team members achieving GPAs of 3.5 or higher. Recipients included Senior Merin Yates; Juniors Kaylynn Allen, Adison Clark, Caroline Durbin, and Liberty Fuchs; Sophomore Marissa Miles; and Freshmen Shelby Yates, Kendall Klug, and Bryanna Doerr.

Team-voted awards recognized Bryanna Doerr (Teammate Award), Kaylynn Allen (PA Award for Positive Attitude), Kendall Klug (Practice Room Warrior), Marissa Miles (Toughest Wrestler Award), and Adison Clark (Ironman Award).

The most prestigious honors, presented with plaques, went to Merin Yates (Pinnacle Award and Outstanding Wrestler), Kaylynn Allen (Leadership Award), and Shelby Yates (Bluejay Award and Most Improved Wrestler).

As the team enjoyed ice cream, the sweet treats matched the sentiment of celebration and accomplishment that exemplifed the end of the Merrill Girls Varsity Wrestling Team's very first season as a team. It was a sweet way to end their season.

Real Rewards, Year After Year

Nicolet BANK

800.369.0226 | NicoletBank.com



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