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Max Tibbett, second from left, project engineer with Town & Country Engineering shows a resident of the Hodag Park neighborhood a map outlining the city's planned Messer Street area street and utility project. City officials and members of the engineering firm held an informational meeting on the project Wednesday, March 12, 2025 at City Hall. **Heather Schaefer**

Ready, set, go: Work on Messer project to begin March 31

HEATHER SCHAEFER
EDITOR

It's almost go-time for the City of Rhinelander's next major street and utility project.

City officials and representatives from Town & Country Engineering, the outside firm that oversees the city's major public works projects, held an informational meeting last Wednesday evening, March 12, to outline the schedule for the \$8.5 million Messer Street area project.

Weather-permitting, the contractor plans to start work March 31, according to project manager Mark Barden of Town & Country.

The project involves a total of 16 blocks in the Hodag Park neighborhood and will start on Rose Street, Barden explained. June 13 is the scheduled completion date for that first work area, he said.

From May 13 to July 3, the focus will be on the second work area which consists of Messer Street (north of Rose) to Hodag Park Drive and includes all of Hodag Park Drive and Fremont Street.

Finally, from July 7 to Oct. 31, attention will shift to the third work area which includes Lake Shore, Evergreen, Pearl and Doyle.

Motorists can expect detours and there will be times when residents will be unable to park in their driveways, Barden added.

The Hodag Park boat landing will be accessible throughout the project, however the annual Fourth of July fireworks will be set off from West Side Park to avoid congestion while work is underway near Hodag Park.

Barden also noted that a competitive bidding process benefited the city in that the total cost of the project is now expected to be about \$90,000 lower than originally anticipated.

The project, which includes repairs and updates to sanitary sewer mains, manholes, laterals, streets and storm sewers, was unveiled in June 2024.

Initially, residents of the Hodag Park neighborhood expressed concerns, particularly related to proposed new sidewalks and the potential loss of trees. By fall, a compromise was reached wherein the city agreed to

See **MESSER** page 3

Council tables alderman's appointment to airport commission

HEATHER SCHAEFER
EDITOR

Following a flurry of motions, and some confusion over procedure, the City of Rhinelander Common Council voted last week to table Mayor Kris Hanus's appointment of alderman Bob Lueder to the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport Commission.

Hanus's decision came as a surprise to current airport commissioner Geoff Weller, who had applied to serve another five-year term.

During the public comment portion of the council's March 10 meeting, alderman Tom Barnett read a statement from Weller in which he noted that Hanus's decision to nominate Lueder left him surprised and bewildered as sitting commissioners interested in continuing to serve have historically been reappointed to the panel.

"Looking back, there is no record of a time when a sitting Rhinelander - Oneida County Airport Commissioner who was seeking reappointment was not re-appointed," he wrote.

Weller, who is the chief meteorologist at WJFW TV, also advised that he is a pilot and an FAA certified flight instructor while Lueder is not.

After Barnett finished reading Weller's statement, a motion was made to separate Lueder's nomination from the rest of the consent agenda. The council then approved the other appointments Hanus recommended as well as monthly departmental reports, bills and claims, and other routine matters.

With just the airport commission appointment on the table, alderman David Holt asked Hanus to explain his rationale for choosing Lueder.

Hanus explained that the city and county take turns appointing members to the airport commission, as it's co-owned by both entities. He stressed that Weller has done a fine job serving on the commission and his decision to recommend Lueder was not indicative of any kind of



The proposed appointment of a sitting alderman to the Rhinelander-Oneida County Airport Commission caused a stir during the Common Council's Monday, March 10 meeting. **Heather Schaefer**

performance issue. Both Weller and Lueder are "highly qualified," he stressed.

"Geoff's a good guy," Hanus continued. "He's done a lot for the airport."

Hanus went on to explain that the ownership agreement "dates back to the '50s" and will need to be updated and modernized in the coming years.

"You don't see too many agreements that are still done in typewriter print," he added, noting that he believes there is value in having a council member, who will vote on the agreement, involved in the process.

He also mentioned Lueder's experience in the aviation industry (he owns Plane Parts Inc., an aircraft distributorship in downtown Rhinelander) as well as his connections with local small businesses in Rhinelander, the council and the chamber of commerce.

"I thank Geoff for what he's done," the mayor continued, noting that Weller would be welcome to continue attending airport commission meetings and contribute to the airport's continued growth. "By no means is this a negative on

him or that he's done something wrong," he stressed.

After explaining his rationale, Hanus attempted to yield his time to Lueder so that he could further explain his background. At that point, Barnett requested a clarification from legal counsel as, in his estimation, it would be unfair to hear from Lueder and not Weller.

After it was explained that the alders did hear from Weller, via the statement read by Barnett, Lueder was allowed to speak.

"This body now knows why Geoff is qualified. I think it's fair to let the other candidate have that same opportunity," Hanus said.

Lueder explained that he has been in the aviation market for 41 years.

"I've had interactions with both airports, the FAA, the TSA and other government agencies as well as airlines and have helped in negotiations with airline baggage and handling fees, fuel fees and also landing and taxiing fees," he said, adding that he has also interacted with maintenance facilities and airport administration.

See **AIRPORT** page 4

Sheriff's office announces internet safety presentation

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Oneida County sheriff's office is partnering with the School District of Rhinelander to offer a presentation on internet crimes against children (ICAC) to include internet safety, the role of law enforcement, and what people can do

to help prevent themselves or others from becoming a victim of the heinous crimes.

The presentation, scheduled for 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, March 26 at the John and Dori Brown Performing Arts Center (Rhinelander High

School auditorium), will last approximately one hour and will be followed by a question-and-answer session, organizers announced in a press release.

Free food from Pizza Ranch will be available at this event.

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School board candidate forum March 26

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Rhinelander High School Student Council, in conjunction with the League of Women Voters of the Northwoods, is inviting the public to participate in a school board candidates forum from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Wednesday, March 26 at the Rhinelander High School Superior Diesel tiered classroom, 665 Coolidge Avenue, Rhinelander. Attendees are asked to enter through Door 1 at the front of the high school. Please bring your ID to check in at the main office. The public is invited to arrive at 8:30 to prepare written questions for the candidates, according to a press release announcing the event.

“All candidates for the four open seats on the school board, who have filed the necessary paperwork, have been invited to attend, to speak and to answer questions from the public,” the release states. “The forum will be moderated by two Student Council members, and facilitated by the League of Women Voters of the Northwoods and the Rhinelander High School Student Council. This event is a great opportunity for voters and candidates to meet, ask questions and share views. During the forum, each candidate will be asked to make a brief 60-second introduction to include who they are, why they are running for the school board, what background they bring to help the school board, and what they believe to be the most important issue in the district today. After opening statements, audience questions will be selected by the moderators for discussion.” This is a non-partisan event, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of the Northwoods. The League is a non-partisan organization devoted to helping members and fellow citizens develop educated political opinions and act upon them through the democratic process. For more information, call Debra Durchslag, League of Women Voters of the Northwoods, at 715-282-6554.

Students participate in game lab

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The School District of Rhinelander (SDR) Community Education Program, Nicolet College, and ArtStart recently hosted a Game Design and Development Lab for middle and high school students in partnership with the 2025 Global Game Jam.

Since Feb. 4, approximately 24 students met at James Williams Middle School on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings. In teams, the students designed and built physical and digital games from the initial concept to a playable demo.

On Tuesday, Feb. 25, students held a Showcase Night at the Nicolet College Theater in the Lakeside Center, where they displayed their games and demonstrated how to play them.

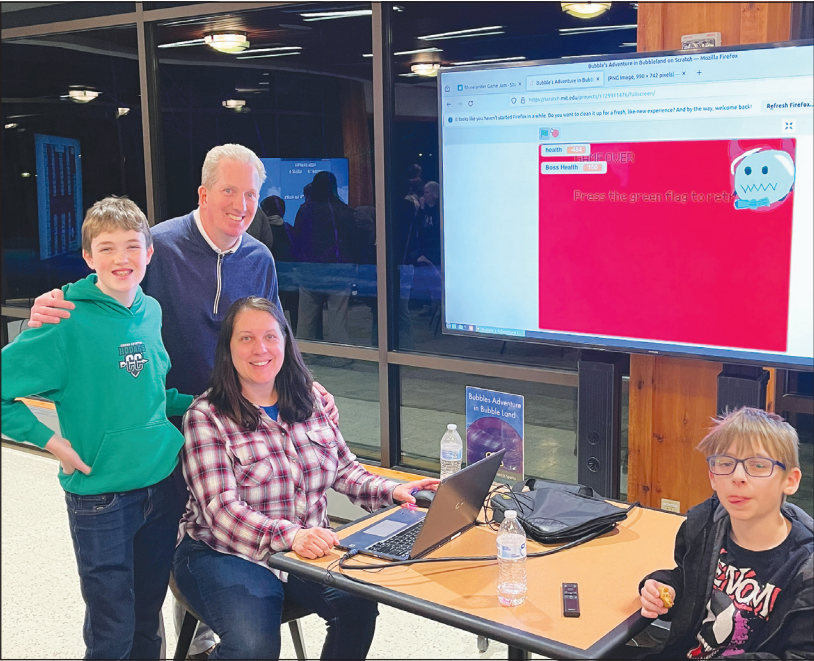
Jeremy Nikolai, a software engineer and programmer from Stevens Point, led the program.

“It’s wonderful that we can offer this opportunity to students interested in gaming, coding, art, and creativity,” said SDR’s Mike Cheslock. “The students are being connected with professionals in the field to give them valuable hands-on experience. We may have some future gaming engineers within the program!”

The program is part of the Culture Tap Artist Residency Program, an innovative partnership between SDR, Nicolet College, ArtStart, and the Rhinelander Community Foundation that brings international and regional artists to the Northwoods.



Rhinelander students at the 2025 Global Game Jam Showcase Night at Nicolet College Theater in the Lakeside Center on Feb. 25. **Submitted photos**



In teams, students designed and built physical and digital games from initial concept to a playable demo.

YMCA of the Northwoods announces Packer Heritage Bus Tour

The YMCA of the Northwoods is offering a day bus trip on Thursday, April 10 to Green Bay to learn about Green Bay Packers history. The trip comes just before the 2025 NFL Draft is held in Green Bay, which will make it extra exciting, organizers said in a press release.

“Immerse yourself in the 15,000 sq. ft. Green Bay Packers Hall of Fame, featuring 13 championship trophies, historical artifacts, and captivating stories from Packers greats,” the release states. “(Enjoy) a hands-on history presentation by the curator, where you will be able to get up close with authentic jerseys, footballs, and helmets as the curator shares their stories. Hold the artifacts and take photos for a one-of-a-kind experience!”

To top off the experi-

ence, attendees will enjoy a delicious lunch at 1919 Kitchen & Tap, located inside the stadium. Choose from the following: Cobb Salad, Wiscoburger with chips, hickory smoked pulled pork with chips, or turkey club with chips.

Following lunch the group will hop on a bus for a guided journey through history, from train depots to churches, and explore over 100 years of Green Bay’s heritage. Enjoy photo ops at iconic landmarks, including a stop at Old City Stadium. Led by an entertaining guide, this tour brings Green Bay’s rich history and its team to life, the release states.

The bus will depart from the Y at 7 a.m. and will return at approximately 7 p.m. The cost for the day trip is \$125 for members and \$135 for the general public. Reservations are limited. Register by calling 715-362-9622. For additional information, contact Marilyn Duschl at 715-362-9622 or mduschl@ymcanw.org

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Leadership and Experience



Priorities:

- **Students:** academic achievement, emotional/social/behavioral supports and mental health
- **Staff:** Attract and retain high quality staff, provide professional development to continually improve classroom instruction and collaboration to address the learning needs of students
- **Fiscal responsibility:** wise decision making in budgeting, aligning budgets to priorities, helping the community understand why we must go to referendum for operating expenses
- **Open and honest communication and consensus building,** listening, valuing differing viewpoints

Leadership

- Board Vice President; Chairperson Instruction and Accountability Committee; member of Employee Relations Committee
- WI Association of School Boards (WASB) representative on the WI Council on Special Education 2020-2024 (State Superintendent's Special Education Advisory Council); co-chair for 2 years; recently recognized by WASB for my commitment to public school students and participating in professional development opportunities
- Director of Instruction: Tomahawk (6 years)
- Professional development provided to school and district teams in our area and throughout the state; mentor to school improvement teams (9 years)

- Represent the board testifying before the legislative Joint Finance Committees in 2014, 2019 and 2021 on the impact of the funding formula and proposed state budgets on our district and the need to increase funding for Special Education
- Board of Directors for Camp Manito-wish YMCA in Boulder Junction

Experience

- 18 years serving on the board
- Bring a variety of perspectives to board discussions and decision making
- Working as a board we elevated the importance of technical education & put it on par with academic programs
- Teacher in Rhinelander: Special Education (16 of 19 years); elementary (6 years)
- Presented with district staff at the WASB convention on our tech ed programs and business partnerships, to Leadership Oneida County on Board member perspectives, and to students as part of the business sponsored Mad Money
- Rhinelander Community member for 50+years; member of Nativity of Our Lord Parish

School Board elections are non-partisan by design; I would appreciate your vote. Working together we build the future for our students and our community.

Authorized and Paid for by Judy Conlin



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Youth encouraged to show art, music at expo

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Oneida County Youth Creative Arts and Communication Expo is set for Saturday, April 12, at the First Congregational United Church of Christ, from 9 a.m. to noon., in Rhinelander.

Registration is now open through Sunday, March 23, for youth in grades K-8 in public, private, or homeschool.

Participants can display or present one or more arts- or communication-based project areas and will receive feedback from community members.

This year’s event will also offer a learning station where participants can learn how to crochet a heart, add a note of encouragement, and place it somewhere in their community to brighten someone’s day.

The cost is \$20 per family. There is no visitor cost; parents and friends are encouraged to come and watch.

Projects do not have to be ready by the registration deadline. Projects can be brought on April 12, the day of the event.

“Youth often leave this event feeling so good about themselves and proud about what they have accomplished or



Oneida County 4-H volunteer Mary Puestow looks at a doll blanket and pillow that a youth sewed and brought to the 2024 Oneida County Youth Creative Arts and Communication expo. **Submitted photo**

shared with others,” said Anne Williams, Oneida County 4-H educator. “This is a great opportunity for youth to reflect on what they have learned and be inspired to explore their interests further.”

Accommodations and language access can be requested to UW-Extension Oneida County by March 28.

For more information or to sign up, visit oneida.extension.wisc.edu or call 715-365-2750.

MESSER from page 1

omit some of the planned sidewalks from the final plan.

During the March 12 meeting, Barden said tree removal should begin in mid-April.

Trees located within the city’s right-of-way will be removed, if they are damaged as part of the underground utility work. However, property owners will have the option to save trees located on their private property. According to Barden, city forester Tom Jerow will assess trees lo-

cated on private property and provide an opinion as to whether the plant has a chance of survival. Property owners will then be asked to choose whether they want to save the tree or have it removed. However, if a tree a property owner chooses to keep dies within the next year or two, it will be the responsibility of that property owner to remove it, Barden explained.

Residents with questions about the project are asked to contact Barden or project engineer Max Tibbett at (715) 420-0579 rather than the city administrator.

| WARRANTS OF THE WEEK |

The Oneida County Sheriff’s Office is asking for your assistance in locating these individuals. If you have seen or have information regarding their whereabouts, please contact the Oneida County Sheriff’s Office at 715-361-5100.



Agnes M. Cross, 41, Lac Du Flambeau. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



Adrian J. Shawano, 33, Lac Du Flambeau. Failure to pay. BOND: \$321.50



Sara M. Olds, 51, Crandon. Failure to pay. BOND: \$373



Anna M. Smith, 59, Eagle River. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



Michael L. Schram, 55, Rhinelander. Fail to appear. BODY ONLY



Friday, March 28th
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7pm- 10pm
Tickets \$30

Tickets can be purchased on Eventbrite or the Lodge front desk.



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ONEIDA COUNTY COURT REPORT

MARCH 6-12

Clairessa Selina Rae Nelis, 32, Ashland, bail jumping-misdemeanor, \$1000 signature bond, AIA March 31.

Michael J. Mikkelsen, 60, Rhinelander, OWI (3rd), \$3500 signature bond, AIA April 7.

Sawyer T. Kibler, 36, Rhinelander, operate firearm with controlled substance, \$1000 signature bond, AIA April 7.

Lisa Jane Butcher, 45, Tomahawk, possession of methamphetamine with repeater modifier, two charges bail jumping-misdemeanor with repeater modifiers, ignition interlock device tampering/failure to install/violate court order, operating while revoked (revoked due to alcohol/controlled substance/refusal), two charges possession of controlled substance with repeater modifiers, \$5000 signature bond, AIA March 24.

Augustine T. Allen, 33, Lac du Flambeau, bail jumping-felony, two charges bail jumping-misdemeanor, possession of methamphetamine, possession of illegally obtained prescription, each with repeater modifiers, \$5000 signature bond, PH March 27.

Samantha Morgan Jacob, 26, Rhinelander, bail jumping-felony, knowingly violate a domestic abuse order-injunction, operate without a valid license (2nd within 3 years), \$10000 cash bond, AIA March 17.

Larry A. Felten, 63, Rhinelander, disorderly conduct with PTAC and domestic abuse modifiers, \$150 cash bond, AIA April 3.

Nicole Marie Kerti, 39, Minocqua, disorderly conduct with domestic abuse modifier, bail jumping-misdemeanor, both charges dismissed but read in.

Michael John Luker, 33, Rhinelander, ignition interlock device tampering/failure to install/violate court order, charge dismissed but read in, hit and run, guilty due to guilty plea, 6 months WHS/POP, \$1844.56 restitution, 25 hours of community service.

Jeffrey J. Bogart, 41, Eagle River, bail jumping-misdemeanor, possession of drug paraphernalia, both charges dismissed on prosecutor’s motion, possession of methamphetamine, guilty due to no contest plea, 90 days jail.

Sarah L. Reinwand, 43, Wisconsin Rapids, retail theft-intentionally take >\$500-\$5000), charge dismissed but read in, retail theft-intentionally conceal (<=\$500), retail theft-intentionally take (<=\$500), both charges guilty due to no contest plea, 12 months WHS/POP, \$52.61 restitution.

Cody Christian Scott, 26, Argonne, theft, guilty due to no contest plea, \$100 fine.

Clare Therese Big John, 35, Lac du Flambeau, theft, guilty due to no contest plea, \$100 fine.

Robin Leona Seal, 57, Abbotsford, OWI (1st with passenger <16 years old), dismissed on prosecutor’s motion, operating with PAC >=0.15 (1st), guilty due to no contest plea, \$1144 fine, 8 months driver’s license revocation, 1 year IID.

Mark A. Kotajarvi, 42, Rhinelander, license restriction violation

- Class D or M vehicle (2nd), charge dismissed but read in, resisting or obstructing an officer, bail jumping-misdemeanor, both charges guilty due to no contest plea, 7 days jail.

Nicole Marie Kerti, 39, Minocqua, disorderly conduct with domestic abuse modifier, guilty due to no contest plea, \$250 fine.

Vicki L. Tosi, 59, Minocqua, operating with PAC (3rd), guilty due to no contest plea, 12 months WHS/POP, 14 days jail, \$1907 fine, 26 months driver’s license revocation, 26 months IID.

Justin R. Gibbs, 30, Rhinelander, bail jumping-misdemeanor with repeater modifier, intentionally mistreating animals, operating without valid license (2nd within 3 years), charges dismissed but read in, intentionally impair animal shelter-sanitation, guilty due to no contest plea, 6 months jail.

Talicia M. Wusterbarth, 40, Saint Germain, two charges disorderly conduct, 4th degree sexual assault, all charges dismissed on prosecutor’s motion.

ABBREVIATION KEY:
DPA - Deferred Prosecution Agreement
DEJ - Deferred Entry of Judgment
WSP - Wisconsin State Prison
ES - Extended Supervision
PAC - Prohibited Alcohol Concentration
IID - Ignition Interlock Device
DL - Driver’s license
AIA - Adjourned initial appearance
PTAC - Party to a crime
WHS/POP - Withhold sentence/period of probation
DRI - Dismissed but read in
PTC - Pre-trial conference
PH - Preliminary Hearing

4K registration event set for April 25

FOR STAR JOURNAL

Online registration for the School District of Rhinelander’s four-year-old kindergarten (4K) program for the 2025-26 academic year is now open.

The district will also host an onsite registration event on Friday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Rhinelander High School gym.

At the event, families can complete registration and bussing forms, meet

the 4K teaching staff, and learn more about the 4K programming offered.

Families are asked to bring their child’s birth certificate.

Many community partners will be present, showcasing their services, providing informational materials, and offering interactive activities for children and families.

To register, visit rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

School District of Rhinelander Community Education Program April Classes



Watercolor Painting - Red Slayer!

For this wonderful painting, we will paint a wet-on-wet background, then fill in the branch and dragonfly. Participants can choose the colors of the background and dragonfly. **Ages:** Grad 5-adult **Instructor:** Robin Harrison, Artist **Fee:** \$10/person **Location:** RHS Room 134 (Art Room) **Date and Time:** Wednesday, April , 5:30-7:30 pm **Registration Deadline:** Apr. 7

Acrylic Painting - Beauty!

This exotic mosaic butterfly is resting on a buttercup plant. We will start with the butterfly and fill in the background as desired. Butterflies with colors like this are a favorite for artists to paint! **Ages:** Grade 5 - adult **Instructor:** Robin Harrison, Artist **Fee:** \$12/person/class **Location:** RHS Room 134 (Art Room) **Date and Time:** Wednesday, April 16, 5:30 – 7:30 pm **Registration Deadline:** Apr. 14

Spring has Sprung: Cookie Decorating

Get into the springtime spirit and join in for a fun evening of cookie decorating! This class is designed for beginners who want to learn the basics of cookie decorating with royal icing. You will get five (plus extras) cookies to decorate, all in a spring theme—think flowers and butterflies. Everything will be provided: cookies, icing, decorations and recipes. Find your inner sugar artist and you will surprise yourself with how beautiful your cookies will look. **Date and Time:** Thursday, April 10, 5:00 – 8:00 pm **Ages:** 14 - adult **Instructor:** Dottie Reeder **Fee:** \$50/person **Location:** RHS Room 112 **Registration Deadline:** Apr. 4

Puppy Manners

You brought a puppy home. Now what? Puppy Manners class will get you started on health tips, and behaviors such as potty training, biting, jumping, etc. Puppies will learn commands such as “sit”, “down”, and “come” calls. They will learn to socialize with other puppies. This class is for puppies up to 6 months old. **Owners mush bring a 6-foot leash and the puppy’s favorite soft treats. Instructor:** Carol Lofquist, from TLC- Training with Love by Carol **Fee:** \$90/dog **Location:** Pelican Elementary School Gymnasium **Dates and Time:** Wednesdays, April 2-May 14, 6:00-6:45 pm **Registration Deadline:** March 31. **“Get Out and Walk” 100 Mile Walking Challenge** Get out and enjoy the fresh air! Get some exercise in the beautiful Northwoods environment! Walk 100 miles in seven weeks. Your walking routes are your choice. Keep track of your distance and log your miles. After the seven weeks is up, submit your completed log sheet. All who complete the challenge will be eligible for a random drawing for Chamber Bucks! All who participate will receive a gift. We encourage you, your family, and friends to take part in this fun activity! **Dates:** Monday, April 14 – Sunday, June 1 **Ages:** All **Facilitator:** Mike Cheslock **Fee:** \$10/person **Location:** Participant’s choice **Registration Deadline:** Apr. 13

Pre-registration is required. Space is limited. To register, please visit the ‘Community’ section of the School District of Rhinelander website: <https://www.rhinelander.k12.wi.us/community/community-education-classes.cfm>. Online registration is available with a credit or debit card. Paper registration is available by mail or drop off. If you have questions, please contact Community Education Coordinator Mike Cheslock at 715-365-9745, cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

| OBITUARIES |

Dorris “Dolly” Meeuwsen, 92, of Wausau, passed away on Tuesday, February 4, 2025 at Primrose Retirement Community of Wausau.

A memorial service was held at 12:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 26, 2025 at Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Home, 1302 Sixth Street, Wausau. Visitation was at 10:00 a.m. until the time of service at the funeral home. Burial will take place at a later date in Maple Grove Cemetery, Ravenna, Ohio. On-line condolences may be expressed at www.petersonkraemer.com.

In lieu of flowers the family requests memorial donations be made to a cause that was near and dear to her, Cure JM in honor of her granddaughter. Gifts can be made in her memory by visiting www.curejm.org/donate (Please choose “add a dedication” so we can thank you). Another option is the WI Humane Society (select Ozaukee campus) <https://www.wihumane.org/>

| DEATH NOTICES |

Bernard “Bernie” Dart, age 84, of Rhinelander died March 6, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

John H. Hoffman, age 89, of Rhinelander died on March 8, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

Patrick W. O’Brien, age 77, of Rhinelander died on March 7, 2025. Carlson Funeral Home

AIRPORT from page 1

While Weller is correct that he is not a pilot or flight instructor, Lueder stated he believes his understanding of aviation and how airports work make well-qualified to serve.

“You’re not going to hurt my feelings if you decide that somebody else is a better candidate or a better fit,” he added. “If you don’t feel like I’m the guy, then I’m not the guy and I’m all right with that.”

When Lueder finished speaking, alderman Gerald Anderson attempted to ask a question about potential conflicts of interest.

This touched off another discussion regarding the rules of order and proper procedure.

Ultimately, city attorney Steve Sorenson clarified that he researched the issue of conflict of interest with respect to Lueder’s business and determined there is no conflict because there would be no “monetary benefit” to him.

After Anderson stated he would be interested in the point of view of the other airport commissioners, regarding whether Lueder’s business activities would pose a concern, Sorenson clarified that the other members of the commission don’t have the right to tell the mayor and council who to appoint.

Anderson then moved to table the matter to the council’s next meeting on March 24.

The vote on that motion was unanimous.

For his part, Weller is hoping he will be able to continue to serve.

“I have nothing but sincere appreciation to the Rhinelander City Council for listening to my concerns,” he wrote in a statement to the Star Journal. “While the Council has pressed pause, for now, I’m hopeful the Council will work with Mayor Hanus to find a resolution beneficial for everyone. I’m incredibly proud of the work the Rhinelander Oneida County Airport Commission has done over the last five years. This Commission, along with the Airport Director’s office is thriving. The results speak for themselves. But, there is still work to do and I want to be a part of that. I’m hopeful the Rhinelander City Council and Mayor Hanus will see my value and re-appoint me as a Rhinelander Oneida County Commissioner.”

Lueder declined further comment on the matter.

To watch the entire council meeting, visit www.hodagtv.com.

| PUBLISHER LETTER |

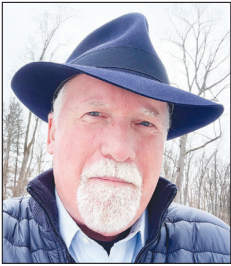
Luck O’ The Irish

Dear Reader,

Another Saint Patrick’s Day is upon us, and for one day, everyone—Irish or not—joins in the celebration. On this day, we revel in the so-called “luck of the Irish” and pass it along to everyone we meet.

But what is luck, really? Some see it as pure serendipity—good fortune striking at random, being in the right place at the right time. Luck, in this sense, feels fleeting, unpredictable, something that happens to you rather than something you create.

Yet, there’s another kind of luck—the kind that isn’t random at all. It’s the luck that comes from hard work integrity, and a commitment to doing what’s right. This kind of luck isn’t just stumbled upon; it’s earned.



It’s built through perseverance, through lifting others up rather than stepping over them. It’s the luck that carries not just the fortunate individual but those around them as well.

Of course, there’s also another version of luck—the kind that comes at the expense of others. The luck of those who cut corners, take advantage, and push others down to climb higher. But that kind of luck is hollow, fleeting, and never truly fulfilling.

So this Saint Patrick’s Day, may you find yourself on the right side of luck—the kind that brings joy, kindness, and goodwill to all. May your blessings be many, your troubles be few, and your heart be as full as a pint of Guinness.

PATRICK J. WOOD

Publisher

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

City to end running water order March 21

The City of Rhinelander announced Friday that the “Running Water Order” issued for certain water customers within the city will end effective March 21.

“The City’s Water Utility has observed that frost has released from the ground in the affected service areas, to the point that it is no longer an issue for water services,” city officials said in a press release.

“When the frost reaches a certain level during cold winters, we may issue running water orders to certain residents who live in known negatively affected areas, to help prevent the system from freezing up,” said wa-

ter department foreman Tom Roeser.”

This soon-expiring running water order was initially issued on January 27.. Water credits for customers who were advised to run their water will end on March 21.

“We really appreciate the cooperation from the affected residents,” said Roeser. “We also appreciate the conservation of water used by the utility customers to achieve the goal of frost-free operations.”

For more information, the City of Rhinelander advises contacting the water department at (715) 365- 8624.

Connect, create and explore with Nicolet College

FOR STAR JOURNAL

Nicolet College has announced the release of its latest Arts & Enrichment courses and programming offering a wide range of opportunities for community members to connect with each other. This season is brimming with classes and events designed to inspire, educate, and bring people together.

From astronomy, fishing and gardening to mosaics, ceramics and dance, the classes offer something for everyone. The Outdoor Adventure series invites participants to immerse themselves in the natural beauty of the Northwoods through various outdoor activities. Highlights include the return of the Musky Seminar, kayaking on Lake Julia, a photography hike on college trails, a Sunday brunch drawing event in the art lab and a transformative summer solstice yoga experience on the expansive college field.

Step into the art gallery at the Northwoods Center, where you’ll witness excellence from the college’s art labs in the annual student show. Then, dive into the 38th Annual Northern National Art Competition, which allows locals to compete on a national stage to deliver an ambitious, wide ranging exhibit.

Nicolet Live! brings musicians, authors, films and theater productions to the world-class stage that enrich the community through arts and culture. The spring theater production will be Reduced Shakespeare Company’s “All the Great Books (Abridged),” a roller-coaster ride through a compact compendium of the world’s great books.

A new season of Learning in Retirement classes are



A learner in one of Nicolet College’s community education classes, which enrich the lives of learners of all ages in the North Woods. Submitted photo

also planned, which celebrate lifelong learning courses and activities created by and for retirees and older community members.

Explore these offerings and purchase tickets online at nicoletcollege.edu/community.

Class fees offset instructor pay and materials costs. In its mission to serve all learners, the College offers scholarships for community classes. Full scholarships are available for veterans for any class or event, and partial scholarships are available to anyone based on need. For more details, email ce@nicoletcollege.edu or phone 715-365-4544.

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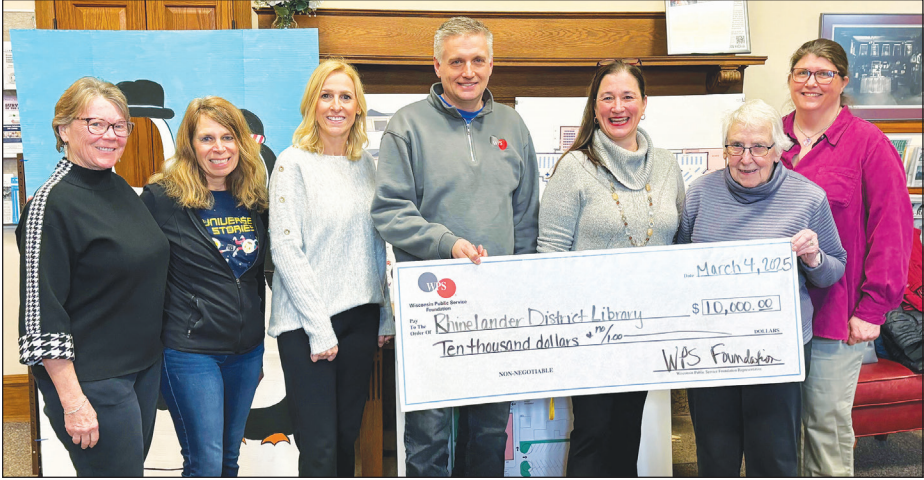
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WPS Foundation contributes to library campaign



Pictured: LeeAnnette Schmidmayr, Foundation Recording Secretary; Denise Chojnacki, Children’s Services Manager of the Rhinelander District Library; Leah Van Zile, WPS Foundation Representative; Jeremy Baker, WPS Senior Service Manager; Heather Sturtevant, Foundation Treasurer; Mary Pautz, Foundation Board Member; and Virginia Roberts, Director of the Rhinelander District Library. **Submitted photo**

FOR STAR JOURNAL

The Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) Foundation is contributing \$20,000 to the Rhinelander District Library’s capital campaign for the renovation and expansion of the 121-year-old facility on Stevens Street in Rhinelander.

On March 4, the Wisconsin Public Service (WPS) Foundation presented members of the Rhinelander District Library (RDL) Foundation with a donation of \$10,000 for 2025. The organization has also committed to a second donation of \$10,000 for 2026, library officials said in a press release.

“We are proud to support Rhinelander District Library’s campaign to modernize its spaces and serve the Northwoods for decades to come,” said Leah Van Zile with the WPS Foundation. “Libraries are essential to enhancing knowledge and supporting critical services that residents depend on. Our donation is part of our commitment to build brighter futures throughout our communities.”

As of March 10, the campaign has generated more than \$975,000.

The goal is \$7 million. “We are very grateful to the WPS Foundation for their support of our renovation and expansion,” said Virginia Roberts, Director of the Rhinelander District Library. “As we celebrate our 128th year of service to our community, support from our businesses and residents allow us to continue moving forward and provide the many services that our families, friends and neighbors rely upon.”

The Rhinelander District Library Foundation is accepting donations of any amount. Checks may be sent to Post Office Box 1225, Rhinelander, WI 54501. Donations may also be made securely online through the Foundation’s PayPal account at RDLfoundation.org.

All gifts are tax-deductible as allowed by U.S. law.

The RDL Foundation is also continuing to pursue grants from state and federal agencies, the release states. The campaign has been underway since June 2024.

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COMMUNITY CALENDAR

March 19, Business After Five: 5-7 p.m., Lakeland Realty, 48 W. King St., Rhinelander. An informal social where business people get together to network and exchange ideas while developing new relationships in the community. Held the third Wednesday of each month at a different location. 715-365-7464.

March 19, AARP Foundation Tax-Aide: 9 a.m.-4 p.m., ADRC of Oneida County, 100 W. Keenan St., Rhinelander. Free tax assistance; by appointment only. 715-369-6170.

March 19, Rhinelander Area Food Pantry: 4-6 p.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelanderareafoodpantry.org.

March 19, Line Dancing: 6-8 p.m., The Haven, Rhinelander. Every Wednesday. For more information, call Diane at 715-282-5226.

March 19, Builder's Club: 1-5 p.m., Rhinelander District Library. Legos, Magna-Tiles, and more available in the children's department. 715-365-1070 or rhinelanderlibrary.org.

March 20, Thursday Night Trivia: 7-10 p.m., Backwaters Bar and Grill, Rhinelander. Join teams of up to six to compete in a live hosted trivia game of 50 questions. Weekly on Thursdays through May 15. 715-369-5645.

March 22, Rhinelander Area Food Pantry: 9-11:30 a.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelanderareafoodpantry.org.

March 22, Indoor Farmers Market: Saturdays, 9 a.m.-noon, throughout the fall and winter at the YMCA of the Northwoods, 2003 E. Winnebago St., Rhinelander. 715-362-9622 x 118.

March 22, Holistic Wellness Fair: 10-4 p.m., Pines Event Center, Rhinelander. (715) 630-0076.

March 22, Music in the Greenhouse (Amanda Anderson): 1-3 p.m., Forth Floral. Come enjoy live music in the greenhouse. Different local musicians featured each month. (715)362-7600.

March 23, Community Open Swim: 9 a.m.-noon, Sundays through May 19, Heck Family Community Pool, Rhinelander High School. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 23, Filmmaking Meetup: 2-4 p.m. at The Hilgermann Center. Join the Northwoods Film-making Society at its next meetup. https://linktr.ee/northwoodsfilm.

March 24, Gather & Game: 9:30-11:30 a.m. and 6:30-8:30 p.m. at the Hodag Dome. Board games, puzzles and cards. All ages welcome. 715-365-9520.

March 24, AARP Founda-

tion Tax-Aide: 9 a.m.-4 p.m., ADRC of Oneida County, 100 W. Keenan St., Rhinelander. Free tax assistance; by appointment only. 715-369-6170.

March 24, Overeaters Anonymous: 1 p.m., Trinity Lutheran Church, 235 N. Stevens St., Rhinelander. 715-362-4258.

March 24, Bridge Games: noon, American Legion Hall, 121 W. Front St., Minocqua. \$4. Call Lee at 715-356-4243.

March 24, Rhinelander Area Food Pantry: 3-5 p.m., distribution. Donation drop-off hours, 8 a.m.-noon, Mondays through Fridays. 627 Coon St. Rhinelanderareafoodpantry.org.

March 24, Tiny Tot Time: 10 a.m., Rhinelander District Library. Caregivers can connect with each other and their little ones as they play and learn. 715-365-1070 or rhinelanderlibrary.org.

March 25, Y-Stitchers: 12-2:30 p.m. at the YMCA of the Northwoods. Stitch, chat, and make new connections. Bring your knitting, crocheting, or

sewing. All levels welcome. 715-362-9622.

March 25, Teen Art Experience: 4-5:30 p.m. at ArtStart. Youth ages 13+ are invited for open studio time with local artists. Participants can expect a casual art making experience with a wide variety of materials and projects to explore. Registration required. 715-362-4328.

March 25-May 22, Walking for General Conditioning: Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays, 7:15-8:15 a.m. (no class March 28 or April 18), Hodag Dome. Registration deadline: March 21. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us..

March 25-May 15, Tai Chi for Health: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8:15-9:15 a.m., Hodag Dome. Registration deadline: March 21. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 25-May 15, Balance and Strength, No Falls Approach: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10-11 a.m., Hodag Dome. Registration deadline: March 21. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 26, Bingo: 10-11:30 a.m., ADRC, 100 W. Keenan St., Rhinelander. 715-369-6170.

March 26, SPARK!: 10:30 a.m., ArtStart, 68 South Stevens St., Rhinelander.

A cultural program for people with early to mid-stage memory loss and their care partners. Registration required. 715-362-4328 or artstart-rhineland.org/spark.

March 26, Acrylic Painting, Ghost of the Forest: 5:30-7:30 p.m., Rhinelander High School, room 134 (art room). Registration deadline: March 24. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 26-April 30, Zumba with Val: Wednesdays, 5:30-6:15 p.m., James Williams Middle School Gymnasium. Registration deadline: March 24. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 31-May 12, Rally Dog Obedience, Advanced Level: Mondays, 6-6:45 p.m. (no class April 21), Pelican Elementary School Gymnasium. Registration deadline: March 27. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

March 31-May 12, Nosework for Dogs: Mondays, 7-7:45 p.m. (no class April 21), Pelican Elementary School Gymnasium. Registration deadline: March 27. Visit the community section at rhinelander.k12.wi.us. Contact: Mike Cheslock, 715-365-9745 or cheslmik@rhinelander.k12.wi.us.

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This is a management position in which the employee plans for the daily operations of the office, supervises the support staff in implementation, applicable benefit preparation, and maintains a flow of information and services to the Veteran community of Price County. This includes coordinating benefits with other departments, local, state and federal. The County Veterans Service Officer serves as the Veterans and their dependents advocate to local, state, and federal programs and benefits. This position takes direction from the County Administrator and the Executive Committee.

This is a full-time, exempt position with a starting annual salary of \$64,209.60 (Grade 9), and full benefits package. Benefits include Wisconsin Retirement System with 6.95% employer match, income continuation insurance, choice of multiple health insurance plans including a zero deductible plan, 22 days of paid leave within the first year, 10 paid holidays per year, paid maternity/paternity leave, and quarterly employee lifestyle enhancement reimbursement perk. Dental/vision, flex spending, WI Deferred Comp, life, short-term disability, accident, and cancer/critical illness coverages are available.

A full description of minimum requirements and application instructions can be found on the Price County website's employment opportunities page at www.pricecounty.wi.gov, by emailing a request to hr@pricecounty.wi.gov or by calling 715-339-5131.

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Hodag Highlights

HAWGS AND DAWGS FOOTBALL CAMP

The Hodag Dome again was the site of the Hawgs and Dawgs football camp on March 8. There were four sessions beginning with the lineman camp guiding approximately 90 players in grades 6-12 in various offensive and defensive drills. The camp instructors included six linemen from the University of Wisconsin Badgers as well as some high school and college coaches. Tyler Beach, a former Badger, was with the Steelers and Titans of the NFL last season and returned to the Dome. The youth portion of the camp, grades 1-6, overlapped the line camp and had four Hodag college players assisting with the youth along with high school coaches. The returning Hodags were Drake Martin, Joe Fugle, Peyton Erikson, and Connor Lund.

In the morning was also the Passing Academy where quarterbacks worked on all aspects of being a quarterback.

The last session of the day was the Perimeter Camp. This camp had specialized drills tailored to quarterbacks, wide receivers, defensive backs, running backs, and linebackers.



Former Hodag and UW-Whitewater player Drake Martin directs a youth running back drill.



Parker Lee practices tackling.



Badger Nolan Davenport holds a bag as Mason Stein participates in a drill.

SPRING PRACTICE BEGINS

The spring prep sports season kicked off on Monday, March 10 with almost 100 Rhinelander High School student-athletes attending track and field practice. New girls head coach Andy Wyss was introduced to the program by head coach Aaron Kraemer and began by leading the athletes in warmups. The first indoor meet of the season is scheduled for March 20 in Wisconsin Rapids.



A group of track athletes runs back on to the turf after completing a warmup lap around the outside of the Hodag Dome.

NEW RICHMOND DOWNS HODAGS 62-55

The season is over for the Rhinelander High School boys basketball team as New Richmond defeated the Hodags 62-55 in a regional final Monday, March 10 at the Jim Miazga Community Gymnasium.

New Richmond built an early lead but the Hodags fought back to take a 34-31 advantage into the locker room at the half. The game was close throughout the second half and the score was tied numerous times as the teams traded baskets. At the 3:50 mark of the second half the score was tied at 55. The Hodags would not score again as New Richmond scored a basket and made 5 of 6 free throws down the stretch to claim the regional title and continue playing for a chance to go to state.

The Hodags could not stop New Richmond's leading scorer Jack Charbonneau who led both teams in scoring with 27 points on 10 field goals, two 3s and a free throw. For the Hodags, Devon Feck scored 14, senior Truman Lamers 13 and Abe Gretzinger 10. Senior Seth Nofftz chipped in 6 second-half points in the last game of his career.



Junior Jatyn Barkus blocks a shot by New Richmond's leading scorer Jack Charbonneau in the first half.



Devon Feck works his way around the New Richmond Tiger defenders to score 2 of his team leading 14 points.

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