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Some nativity scenes weren't complete until Christmas Eve or Christmas Day, when the baby Jesus was added to the display, in recognition and remembrance of the birth of Jesus Christ, the reason for the Christian Christmas season. That was the case for this nativity scene at a home on Center Ave. in Merrill. **Tina L. Scott photo.**

Merrill City Clerk resigns effective Jan. 3, 2022, at 4:31 p.m.

Heideman cites his love for Merrill, reduced spirit of cooperation in City government, and lack of civility in disagreements

TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

Merrill's City Clerk, Bill Heideman, submitted his letter of resignation on Monday, Dec. 20, 2021. His last day of work at City Hall will be Monday, Jan. 3, 2022, and his resignation becomes effective when he "clocks out" for the last time at 4:30 p.m. that day.

The upcoming Spring Election will be held on Apr. 5, 2022, and Heideman had been undecided about running for office again. He decided he will not, but that also begs the question: Why resign now instead of just waiting until his term of office expires the end of April 2022?

Heideman was elected to the office of Merrill's City Clerk more than 23 years ago, in April 1998. He remembers having a party with family, friends, and supporters to celebrate that night. "After the election returns were in, and it was apparent that I had won, my sister Barb asked me at the party if she could speak to me privately for just a minute," he recalled. "She then told me two things that remain with me to this day: 1) 'Don't ever forget all the people you now represent.' And 2) 'Don't ever forget how much you love Merrill.'"

"I can't honestly say I remember her advice every day, but I can honestly say that they were a guiding influence," Heideman said. Barb passed away less than two years af-



Merrill's current City Clerk, Bill Heideman, will resign from office effective Jan. 3, 2022.

ter that night and that conversation, he said, "But her passing did not erase her advice from my memory."

A difficult decision

"Heideman has served as the elected City Clerk since May 1, 1998. He is both honored and humbled to be the only full-time elected official in the City of Merrill," the City of Merrill's web page reads.

Heideman said he ran for office nearly 24 years ago because he loves Merrill and the City's people. It's the place he calls home. And he still loves Merrill – the place and the people.

But the changes he has seen in City government, and the way the

City's government is run today, are no longer something he is proud of. "In fact, I am ashamed," Heideman said.

"My decision to resign was not made in haste, nor was it an easy decision," he said. "However, after deep thought and prayerful consideration, I came to the conclusion it was the right thing to do. It was also the right time."

"When I took office in 1998, there seemed to be a spirit of cooperation in City government," Heideman said. "Yes, there were disagreements. It was not all rainbows and lollipops. But, in my opinion, it certainly was a different atmosphere than exists today. Back then people might and did disagree, but by and large [they] did it in a civil manner." The lack of civility in City Council meetings and by some City officials, both elected and appointed, has been duly noted with increased frequency in recent months. And it is not just City employees who are noticing; residents are commenting, writing letters, and lodging complaints.

"We should be addressing and making decisions on current issues as well as planning for the future," Heideman said. "Instead, valuable time continues to be spent addressing problems. I'll be blunt about this. In many cases, the problems were of our own making. The people of our fine City deserve better."

See **CLERK** page 2



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Two cats die in Merrill apartment fire

Structural damage limited to one unoccupied apartment unit

TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

A Christmas Eve Day fire resulted in the death of two pet cats at an apartment building on Memorial Dr. in the City of Merrill, but no human injuries were reported.

The Merrill Fire Department (MFD) responded to a report of a structure fire at 705 N. Memorial Dr. at 6:45 a.m. on Friday, Dec. 24, 2021. Merrill FD Engine-61, 63-Truck, and Med-62 arrived to find heavy smoke coming out of the windows of the four-unit apartment building.

"Firefighters forced entry into the apartment, extinguished the fire, and searched remaining apartment units for possible occupants," said MFD Chief Josh Klug. "Only two apartments were occupied at the time of the fire, and those occupants evacuated without injury."



Multiple fire departments and emergency personnel responded to an early morning fire at an apartment complex on Memorial Dr. on Dec. 24.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.

The fire originated in the kitchen of one of the unoccupied apartments and, according to MFD, the cause of the fire was "unintentional and undetermined at this time."

"All occupants had an alternative place to stay for the night if needed," Klug said. "With damage primarily limited to the apartment unit with the fire, it's optimistic that the other residents will be able to re-occupy their apartments soon."

In addition to MFD, the Cornish Fire Department, Pine River Fire Department, Merrill Police Department, Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Merrill Street

Department, Tomahawk EMS, Wisconsin Public Service, and off-duty Merrill firefighters responded and assisted with the incident.

"This is our department's fourth structure fire since Thanksgiving, which means we now have four red bulbs for our Keep the Wreath Green fire prevention campaign," Klug said.

This was the fifth fire in the Merrill area, counting last week's fire on Hwy. 64 east of Merrill in the Town of Pine River which resulted in a death, but was outside the MFD's jurisdiction, so it is not counted for purposes of this wreath.

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Suspect in custody, charged with hit-and-run death of 27-year-old Athens man

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Wednesday, Dec. 22, 2021, the Taylor County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) announced they had arrested 28-year-old Paul J. Schmeiser of Curtiss, Wis., and charged him with Hit and Run, duty upon striking a person, in relation to the death of Titus Kottke. A press release from the TCSO confirmed Schmeiser was taken into custody Wednesday and scheduled to be in court that same day for a bond hearing. He is being cooperative with law enforcement the release said.



Paul J. Schmeiser, age 28, of Curtiss.

Titus Kottke, age 27, of Athens was killed in the early morning hours of Sunday, Oct. 31, 2021. The Taylor County Sheriff's Office had received a report of a person laying in a pool of blood near the intersection of Elm Ave. and Hamm Dr. in the Township of Holway in Taylor County. The call came in at 6:08 a.m., and the man was pronounced dead at the

scene as a result of multiple injuries, despite medical first responders' efforts to perform CPR on the victim. An investigation led to the identification of the deceased victim as Kottke, and an autopsy determined Kottke's injuries "were consistent with being struck by a motor vehicle," according to the release, and confirmed the TCSO's initial suspected cause of death.

"As the investigation continued, Detectives were able to accurately account for Kottke's whereabouts throughout the evening leading up to his death," the press release stated. He was last scene alive, walking along the road about a mile from where his body was found, at approximately 3:30 a.m. on Oct. 31.

Photo courtesy of the Taylor County Sheriff's Office.

"As part of an exhaustive investigation, a suspect was developed, and several search warrants were executed," the release said.

That investigation resulted in the arrest of Schmeiser.

NOTICE

CITY OF MERRILL CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP

January 3-7, 2022

During this week place your Christmas tree curbside on your garbage collection day.

Remove all ornaments, lights, stands and plastic bags from your tree before placing it curbside.

Do not place trees curbside prior to 4pm the day preceding your Christmas tree pickup day.

Trees that are buried in snow or frozen down will not be collected.

Dustin Bonack, Street Superintendent

Chimney Fire in Town of Scott extinguished

Quick action prevents further damage

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On the evening of Monday, Dec. 20, 2021, at 6:33 p.m. the Merrill Fire Department responded to a report of a chimney fire at W4793 Pine Ave. in the Town of Scott. Engine-61, Tender-65, and Medic-62 arrived on scene.

"Firefighters extinguished the fire in the chimney using fire extinguishers and chimney bombs and then used a chain to clean the chimney," Merrill Fire Chief Josh Klug said in a press release on Tuesday morning. "Fire crews made sure the fire did not spread outside of the chimney and used a ventilation fan to clear the house of smoke."

The chimney fire was in a two-story farmhouse, so roof access was difficult," he added. A quick response on the part of the caller who reported the fire and the Merrill Fire Department resulted in the best possible outcome. "No injuries and no damage to the home," Klug said.

The Merrill Fire Department received assistance from Tomahawk EMS and Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, as well, he added.

"This is the third structure fire since Thanksgiving in our fire jurisdiction, which means there are now



"This is the third structure fire since Thanksgiving in our fire jurisdiction, which means there are now three red bulbs on our Keep the Wreath Green fire prevention wreath," Merrill Fire Department Chief Josh Klug said on Dec. 21, 2021. "We urge the public to practice fire safety throughout the rest of the holiday season." Since Klug's comments on Dec. 21, a fourth structure fire occurred in the area, and there are now four red bulbs on the wreath.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.

three red bulbs on our Keep the Wreath Green fire prevention wreath," Klug said. "We urge the public to practice fire safety throughout the rest of the holiday season."

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CLERK from page 1

I have decided I no longer want to be associated with this type of activity. In fact, I am ashamed."

"Christmas time is an annual reminder that we all fail at times," he added. Heideman tries to be a humble man. He tries to be a faithful Christian and a faithful public servant. Now, he has made a difficult decision, and he is at peace with it.

Resigning, not retiring

Heideman is quick to point out he is not retiring. He is resigning from his current role as an elected official, from the role of City Clerk for the City of Merrill. And now he's looking forward to new opportunities. "The passion to contribute still burns," he said, "And there is still gas in the tank."

"I want and plan to keep working, either in a part-time or a full-time role," Heideman said.

His past experience encompasses a wide variety of skills and skillsets, from computer programming, accounting, and data processing, as well as soft skills including interpersonal and leadership skills, and many other attributes he has developed in both prior positions and the City Clerk position.

"I was a computer programmer from 1984 to 1990, and then did accounting work from 1990 until my election to City Clerk in 1998," Heideman said. "The City Clerk position certainly requires

both of those skills, so I can safely say I have been engaged in accounting and computers for the last 37 years. I enjoy both of those things and will be seeking to continue using my experience as well as learning new things."

"Since graduating from NTC with a degree in Data Processing in 1983, I have continued to take online classes as time permits," he said. "Not surprisingly, they are accounting and computer-related courses."

"I still enjoy learning new things," he added. "In fact, the more I learn, the more I realize I don't know anything!"

There are so many new things to discover in our fast-changing world, he said. And he thinks he still has something to offer. "Not old, but experienced," were the words he used. The City of Merrill has certainly benefited from that experience for the last 23+ years, and no doubt a new employer and new opportunities away Mr. Heideman.

To the citizens of Merrill

"It has been an honor to serve as City Clerk for the last 23 plus years," Heideman said. He wants Merrill citizens to know that. "In 1998, you showed faith in me by electing me and then reelected me five times. Hopefully, I have not betrayed that trust. No doubt, I have made mistakes along the way, but I can say that I have always tried to do not only my best, but what was best for the people of Merrill. It is a wonderful place to live, and I am proud to be a part of that."

"I am not sure who my successor will be, but I have no doubt they will perform high-quality work," he added. "Happy 2022 to all! God bless you and the City of Merrill. See you around!"

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Kindhearted Home Care offers a solution to New Year's weight-loss resolutions

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

It's that time of year again. The New Year is right around the corner. And many people are making New Year's resolutions to change their lives for the better.

Year after year, one of the most popular New Year's resolutions is to lose weight and get in shape. Unfortunately, statistics show 40 percent of those people will give up on their New Year's resolutions in less than a month.

Four years ago, Kindhearted Home Care in Merrill, introduced a 12-week community weight loss challenge called "The Solution to Your Resolution," and they are facilitating the program again for 2022. Their goal: To help Merrill get 2022 off to a positive start.

The 2022 weight loss challenge will run from Jan. 3 through Mar. 25, 2022, and is organized in teams of four to six people that will compete to lose the most weight. Organized teams can sign up together, and individuals who want to participate but don't already have a team can sign up to be placed on a team, organizers said.

The sign-up deadline is Jan. 3 to get in on the challenge.

Teams are encouraged to come up with clever names. There will be a prize for the best team name, in



The gym at Kindhearted Home Care provides opportunities for clients to work out.

Submitted photo.

addition to prizes for winners who lose the most weight, at the end of the program. Winners will be determined based on a percentage of team weight loss, organizers said.

How does it work?

Teams will weigh in weekly and report their totals to Kindhearted Home Care, with the first and last weigh-ins being held at Kindhearted. The weekly results will be posted by team name on the Kindhearted Home Care Facebook page.

The competition will also feature specific weekly challenges over the 12-week period.

Kindhearted Home Care offers participants a fun, supportive environment to make positive lifestyle changes, and by running "The Solution to Your Resolution" for 12 full weeks, they increase the chances that participants will incorporate permanent changes that will give them lasting results.

To sign up individually or as a team, email info@kindhearted-homecare.com or stop in at Kindhearted Home Care, 120 S. Mill St., Merrill.

The cost to participate is \$50.00 per team with 100% payout over multiple prize categories.




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John Piotrowski



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House fire in Town of Skanawan; seven people escape uninjured

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

A house fire on Stevenson Rd., West of Grundy Rd., in the Town of Skanawan was reported on Dec. 22, 2021. The call came in to Dispatch at approximately 12:37 a.m. and Tomahawk Fire Department, Tomahawk EMS, and the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office immediately responded.

"Upon arrival, the rear of the house was fully engulfed in flames," a press release from the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office said. "It was discovered that the seven occupants of the house were able to safely evacuate the residence. All occupants reported no injuries."

Based on the on-scene investigation, "it was reported that the fire started in the attic. One of the occupants woke up to the noise of

crackling and the smell of smoke. The occupant woke the other six occupants and evacuated the house and called 911."

The Town of Russell Fire Department, Town of Nokomis Fire Department, Wisconsin Public Service, and the American Red Cross also responded to assist with this incident.

Merrill Chamber Holds Annual Recognition Banquet

CLYDE R. NELSON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MERRILL AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On Thursday, Oct. 14, 2021, the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce held its Annual Celebration and Awards Banquet to honor those businesses that were voted on by its 200 plus members for their contributions to the Merrill Area. This year's event was held at Northwoods Veterans post with over 150 members, employees, and guests in attendance. Those in attendance were entertained by the Chamber's very own Ken Neff, serving as emcee.

At this year's banquet, the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce honored winners from 2020 and 2021. The various categories of awards are based upon the number of employees, and the categories range from Large Businesses, those with greater than 76 employees, to the Non-Profit members of the Chamber.

2020 awards

The following are the 2020 Business of the Year award recipients:

Large Business of the Year winner was Merrill Area Public Schools. The list of nominees also included: Church Mutual Insurance, Northcentral Technical College, City of Merrill, Bell Tower Residence, and Agra Industries.

Mid-sized Business of the Year winner was Kwik Trip East Main Street location. The list of other nominees included: Reindl Printing, Brickner's Park City, Park City Credit Union, Mitchell Metal Products, Fabiano Brothers, and Ascension [now Aspirus] Good Samaritan Hospital.

Small Business of the Year winner was Les & Jim's Lincoln Lanes. The list of other nominees included: Los Mezcales, Lange Auction Realty, and Sawmill Brewing Company.

Hometown Business of the Year Award was given to two members in 2020. The winners were Ana Blair's Boutique and Hugo's Pizza. The list of other nominees included: Courtside Furniture, First Street Coffee Station, The Dugout, Westside Market, Auto Jockeys, Oak Park Dental, NAPA Auto Parts of Merrill, and Chips Hamburgers.

Not-for-profit Business of the Year winner was Veterans of Foreign Wars & Auxiliary. The list of other nominees included: HAVEN, Inc., Merrill Area United Way, Merrill Rotary Club, O'Tannenbaum Tour, Holy Cross Sisters USA Province, Merrill Lions Club, Gleason Community Club, Parkside Preschool, and River District Development Foundation of Merrill.

See AWARDS page 11

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OBITUARIES



Lynne Ellen Scott, 79, of Moshawk, MI, passed away on Dec. 19, 2021 after a brief battle caused by a bleed from a second aneurysm that was inoperable. She was in Mississippi with her daughter while recovering from a previous aneurysm when the second bleed reared its ugly head. Lynne was born on Nov. 20, 1942 to Sidney A. More and Gertrude Scott in Merrill, Wis. She had one brother, Dean R. Baehman and had 4 children. Although she wore many hats,

she said her greatest accomplishment was raising her children, always putting them first in everything she did.

After retiring, she bought her house in the UP Michigan where she made her home with many friends and community for almost 30 years. She was a strong woman, with a great sense of humor. Just as strong in her faith she often engage in conversations that would last for hours. When you first met her, by the time you left, you felt like you had known her your whole life. Everyone called her "Mom". She loved her animals and you would always see her throwing out seeds for the chipmunks, fruit for her deer, and you could find her house lined with bird feeders especially for her hummingbirds. She spent her time researching genealogy and crafting for any and all occasions often helping by buying back the things she donated to local charities. She said once she realized they were hers already, she always liked them better the second time around.

Lynne was predeceased by both parents and her only brother. She is survived by her daughter Karen (Sandy) of Ocean Springs, MS, and sons Keith of Biloxi, MS, James (Amanda) of Chippewa Falls, WIS and David (Shellie) of Gulfport, MS and a boatload of grandkids and great-grandkids. Details of funeral arrangements and a celebration of her life are still in the making.



Isabelle M. 'Issie' Hoff, age 91, of Merrill, passed away on Thursday, December 16, 2021, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

Issie was born August 17, 1930 in Marathon County to Louis and Viola (Graveen) Langhoff. She attended Immanuel Lutheran Church and School in the Town of Corning through the eighth grade. She worked at Fromm's Mink Farms as a young lass. She was a waitress at Hinz's Cork & Dyne in their early morning coffee shop and enjoyed her work as a cook for St. John Lutheran School in Merrill. She also joined the fish fry crowd at Harold and Marge's American Legion working as a waitress and in food prep. After her children were grown, she joined the crew at Merrill Wire Products as a welder on the second shift until her retirement.

In 1947, she met the love of her life, Robert Hoff at a wedding dance at Hackbarth's Hall. They married on October 1, 1949, at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Merrill, Wisconsin. They lived together almost inseparable for over 70 years. They lived on the farm and together raised five children, residing there for over 40 years. Together they enjoyed dancing, roller skating, country music festivals, Mollie B polka parties and camping in their RV. Prior to retirement, they sold their property and homes in the Town of Scott and moved to the city of Merrill where she continued to live independently.

Issie was an avid Brewer and Packers fan and rarely missed a game on TV. Very lucky, she was a fan of the scratch off lottery tickets. She enjoyed playing cards especially Sheephead, Skat and Rook. Scrabble and Rummy Royal were also favorites. Usually one could find a jigsaw puzzle in process on a table somewhere in her home. She was an excellent cook and favorites of many were here German potato salad, porcupine meatballs, jalapeno bread and cranberry cake with hot butter sauce. She was a great believer in the homeopathic world of herbs and minerals. It was a daily routine to get in all her favorites and she was quick to offer her opinion on what might be an excellent choice for any suggested malady. Before her vision faded, she enjoying knitting and crocheting as well.

Issie was a guiding light. She set the example of what a good wife, mother, and friend should be. She always did her best to be patient with all of her children, and there were five, so that was no easy feat. She set a shining example of the kind of unconditional love required to see a marriage through good times and bad. She was always willing to pitch in and do whatever was needed whether you were family, neighbor or friend. As we all know, Issie had a deep faith and love of the Lord. Such a rich heritage she passed on to her children and grandchildren along with an excellent work ethic, knowing what was right and wrong, and sticking together as family.

Issie is survived by her children, Sharon (Randal) Jaeger of Merrill, Pamela (Donald) Wiegel of Oconomowoc, WI, Steven (Sandy) Hoff of Merrill, Renae (Paul) Wiesneski of Merrill, and Michael (Suzy) Hoff of Merrill; grandchildren Jennifer (Brad) Borchardt, Theresa (Derek) Micke, Sharisa (Joe) Wetherell, Aaron (David) Chavez (Wiegel), Breigh (Shawn) Voigt, Nathan (Jess) Hoff, Chelsey (Darrin) Schleif, Michael (Spring) Wiesneski, Nick (Stefanie) Wiesneski, Molly Hoff-Davis, Danno (Amber) Hoff, Derek (Kim) Hoff, Drew Hoff, and Desirae Hoff; great-grandchildren, Jennisa, Madison, Hudson, Hannah, Holland, James, Aida, Lewis, Ivan, Ashley, Isabella, Nolan, Lincoln, Mayvree, McCoy, Anna, Amaris, Emily, Ivy, Ginny, Emma, Avery, Grace, Lily, Maya, Zoe, Harper, Violet, and Kide; step great-grandchildren, Zach and Ethan. She is further survived by her brother, Louis Langhoff Jr.; sisters, Marion Simon, Shirley Borchardt, and Clarice (Ervin) Boehm; and a host of nieces and nephews and other beloved relatives and friends.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Robert Hoff on April 5, 2020; her father and mother, Louis and Viola Langhoff; her father-in-law and mother-in-law, Ernest and Ada Hoff; two grandsons, Eric Jaeger and David Hoff; siblings, Margery (William) Klammer, Vernetta (Milton) Kleinschmidt, Jean (Lawrence) Bulbol, and Florence (David) Langhoff; sister-in-law, Geraldine Langhoff; and brothers-in-law, LaVern Borchardt and Richard Simon.

The funeral will be at 11:00 A.M. Thursday, December 23, 2021, at St. John Lutheran Church, Merrill. The Rev. David Szeto will officiate. Burial will be in Snow Hill Cemetery, Town of Scott, Lincoln County. Visitation will be from 4:00 P.M. until 7:00 P.M. Wednesday at the Taylor-Stine Funeral Home, Merrill, and after 9:30 A.M. Thursday at the church.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Robert Edward Eckardt

In a humble farmhouse in Birnamwood on Saturday, October 15th, 1938, Robert (Bob) Edward Eckardt was born to Caroline (Ecker) and Anton Eckardt. He was the third child followed by two brothers who passed away at birth. His childhood was filled with hunting chipmunks, digging worms to catch fish and at one point drank too much "grape juice" which was actually his mother's medicinal wine. He was born a farm boy and a farmer he became. In 1948, he was the happiest 9-year-old boy when his dad bought a little white farm with 279 acres of land and hunting woods along the Wisconsin River in the Town of Maine. On this little farm he learned all that a farmer had to learn. He milked cows, did field work, fixed any and all pieces of equipment and engines, harvested all sorts of wildlife, trapped and tanned hides, shot bow, fished, lumber jacked and got into mischief with his best friend in life, his brother Jack. He walked to Red Granite school up the road and often had the job of fetching the school day's water from the spring at the farm up the road. He attended Wausau High School.

In November of 1959 he was introduced to the love of his life, Rosemary Sczygelski, while at a dance at Schmidt's ballroom. They were engaged after attending Rosemary's prom on May 14, 1960, and were married on the crisp windy day, October 22, 1960, at St. Francis Catholic Church on Main Street, in Merrill, Wisconsin. She was his perfect complement as they became Farmer and Farmwife making their livelihood together on his beloved little white farm which they bought from his parents. They raised five children together and expanded the farm by two barn additions, pole barn, a 70-foot silo, a 40-foot Harvester, a 70-foot Harvester, an 80-foot-wide circle manure pit, clearing one hundred acres for farmland and building an addition to the farmhouse to fit his family. He was a substitute school bus driver, covering the route for his brother Jack, and then he had his own route for a couple years. The farm officially became Eckardt Corporation in 1980. If that was not busy enough, he ran his own business, Eckardt Implement, from 1985-1989 as the only Allis Chalmers dealership in the area. He took a turn at public service, as the Town of Maine Chairman from April 1991 - 1993. He earned his scuba certification and scuba dived for the Lincoln County Sheriff's department. They sold the dairy cows in 1997 and young stock in 1999 to become full-time ginseng farmers.

In 2009, he officially retired from ginseng farming at the age of seventy and took up collecting and restoring around forty-seven antique Allis Chalmers Tractors and other antique farming equipment.

Bob was known by many names: Bobby, Dad, Big Dad, Uncle Bob, Buffalo Bob, Marshall (Dillon), Buck Eliminator. Bob was a beloved neighbor and friend and was often the first to be called when an expert tractor mechanic was required. He and Rose were active members of the Rib Mountain Bowman, where they made life-long friendships. They also spent their vacations as active Gold Wingers, traveling many joyful miles across the United States and Canada. Bob spent many retirement hours playing sheephead with his card buddies and chatting with many neighbors and friends who would stop by.

Through all his life, Bob was an optimist. If you asked him how he was, he would undoubtedly say, "Tree-mendous." He would greet you heartily on the phone, "Huntmore, Fishmore, Doolittle Incorporated, how may I help you?" and give any of the following send offs, "KGL705 over and out" or "Drive safe, look twice and third time".

He was called home to glory surrounded by his wife, children, oldest grandchild, and youngest great grandchild to be born July 2022.

He will be cherished by his beloved wife, Rosemary. Children: Janet Schmidt, Allan (Eileen) Eckardt, Karen (Paul) Cournaya, Gary (Sandi) Eckardt and Jenny (Collin) Niemeyer. Grandchildren: Sean Schmidt, Jocilyn (Matt) Klockziem, Gwen Schmidt (Jax Zebik), Justin, Jared and Aaron Eckardt, Rebecca (Casey) DeHart, Sarah (Shawn) Hoehn, Deveny and Sierra Eckardt, Karalyn (Matt) Hoenecke, Elly (Kaleb) Troyer, Laura (Jake) Thunder, Robert "Bobby" Niemeyer. Step Grandchildren Kelly (Melissa) Goetsch, Adam (Karissa) Goetsch, Peter Goetsch. Great Grandchildren: Alexis and Alyvia Klockziem, Kelly Yonke, Mason and Tanner DeHart, Henry and Aaron Hoehn, Jenna Hoenecke, Elijah Thunder and expecting 2 more in 2022. Step Great Grandchildren Audrey, Caroline, and Mina Goetsch

He followed these family members home to heaven: his mother and father, brother Jack Eckardt, sister Carol Goetsch, infant brothers Michael and Joseph Eckardt, daughter-in-law Lynnise (Hornung) Eckardt, grandchild Jordan Eckardt as well as several brothers-in-law and sisters-in-law.

The funeral Mass will be celebrated at 11:00 a.m. on Thursday, December 23, 2021 at St. Anne Catholic Church, Wausau. Rev. Tom Lindner will preside. Visitation will be on Thursday from 9:00 a.m. until time of services at the church.

Peterson/Kraemer Funeral Home, 1302 Sixth Street, Wausau is in charge of arrangements. Online condolences may be expressed at www.petersonkraemer.com



John A. Burgener, age 78, of Merrill, passed away on Saturday, December 18, 2021, at his home while under the care of Compassus Hospice. He was born on May 26, 1943, to the late Herman Burgener, Jr. and Violet Rose (Vanderford) Burgener in Merrill, WI.

John grew up on a farm in the town of Schley. He attended and graduated from Merrill High School with the class of 1961. John married Sharon Schmidt on a cold winter day on January 29, 1966, at St. Stephens Church. They raised 5 children and were later blessed with 13 grandchildren. He loved his family dearly and was so proud of each and every one of them.

John and Sharon farmed in the early years of marriage while John also hauled pulp and served in the National Guard. John worked as a millworker at Wausau Papers for over 30 years, until his retirement. John served as an Alderman for the City of Merrill for 12 years. John and his family are members of Trinity Lutheran Church. John was an avid baseball fan, namely a New York Yankees fan. Watching baseball was his favorite pastime. John was happy to visit the Field of Dreams and enjoyed the Field of Dreams special that he was able to watch while in the hospital this past summer. He enjoyed car rides and going out to eat at their favorite restaurants. John loved playing cards with his family and friends, even though he often went by his own rules! John is remembered for his witty sense of humor and his rough exterior, but also his very loving and soft interior. John will be sadly missed, but always in the hearts of his family and friends.

John is survived by his wife of 55 years: Sharon Burgener; daughters: Wendy (John) Johnson, with their children: Benjamin and Jacob; Wanda (Kent) Bloomer, with their children: Derek and Brianna; Angie (Mike) Stolz, with their children: Brandon and Eric; and Sheila (Dennis) Polak, with their children: Adam, Nolan, Grant, and Jack; and son: Joedy (Michele) Burgener, with their children: Austin, Abi, and Autumn; sisters: Betty Loeffler, Connie (LeRoy) Fischer, and Mary (Russ) Jicinsky; brother: Rod Burgener; sister-in-law: Marilyn Burgener; and brother-in-law: Richard Kuehn; along with numerous nieces, nephews and cousins. He was preceded in death by his infant son: Jon Jay Burgener; his parents; his in-laws: Ben and Gerda Schmidt; sister: Shirley Kuehn; brother: William Burgener; and brother-in-laws: Roger Schmidt and Matt Loeffler.

A Celebration of Life and private family inurnment for John will be held at a later date.

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

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OBITUARIES



Pamela (Pam) Sue Lohff
Pang Cha Chun born April 20, 1943 in Busan South Korea passed away at her home in Whitewater, Wisconsin on Sunday December 12, 2021. Required by Japanese imperial decree, she was given the name Yoshika, many who knew her called her Yoshi. Emigrating to the United States in 1969, she gained her U.S. Citizenship, and proudly carried the papers with her until the day of her death reflecting her forever name - Pamela Sue Lohff

(PAM)

Pam resided in Merrill, Wisconsin for many years where she worked at the Weinbrenner Shoe Co. as a sample clerk until her retirement, also in Necedah, and lastly Whitewater. Pam enjoyed gardening and tending to her vegetables and many flowers. She enjoyed knitting & crochet, making just about everything. She was a great cook and her amazing Korean recipes were enjoyed by many.

Pam is survived by her sons, Rodney (Tammie) Lohff of Whitewater, WI, Chad (Michelle) Lohff of Wausau, WI, her daughter Susanne (Scott) Boden of Twin Falls, ID, and her grandchildren Lawton (Mariah) Lohff, Lauren Lohff, Kami (Jake) Sluder, Chase Boden, Morgan Boden, and special friend Larry Hicks of Whitewater. She was preceded in death by her grandson Justin Mallory.

Funeral Services are provided by Nitardy Funeral Home of Whitewater, WI. A private memorial will be held. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to the American Red Cross. Online condolences can be made at www.nitardyfuneralhome.com



John L. Brieden, age 89, of Merrill, passed away Monday, December 20, 2021, at Aspirus Tomahawk Hospital.

John was born August 14, 1932, in Highland Park, Illinois, son of the late John Frank and Anna (Danaubauer) Brieden. John served in the United States Air Force. He enlisted on January 23, 1952 and was honorably discharged on January 22, 1956. He married Barbara 'Irmgard' Karl on April 27, 1957, at St. James Church in Highwood, Illinois.

She survives.

John worked as an electrician with IBEW Local 150 in Illinois. His work as an electrician was so good that the contractors sought him out and all the apprentices wanted to work alongside him. In Local 150, he was known as 'The Legend.' He retired at age 57 to enjoy life.

John enjoyed shooting guns at the Lincoln County Sports Club gun range. He also enjoyed pheasant hunting with his bird dogs. John was an outdoorsman; he taught his daughter, Audrey, how to reload bullets, how to work with the bird dogs, and about firearm safety and responsibility. He also taught Audrey common sense politics. He was a great dad to all his daughters; Audrey always said "I love you daddy," and he replied "I love you too baby."

John will be remembered as a man who had a terrific sense of humor. He was adored by everyone, especially his grandsons, and he loved his son-in-law, Jon. John loved to share stories with everyone. He knew what was important in life.

John was a member of St. James Church in Highwood, Illinois and became a member of St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church when he and Barbara moved to Merrill more than 40 years ago.

Survivors include his wife of 64 years, Barbara Brieden of Merrill; two daughters, Audrey (Jon) Sinnett of Mukwonago and Sharon Brieden of Merrill; three grandchildren, Chad (Kailey) Sinnett and their daughters Maysie and Laynie, Mike (Megan) Sinnett and their son Ian, and Clay Sinnett (Jennifer Leonard) and her daughters Holley, Riley, Lucy, and Chloe. John was preceded in death by his parents, John and Anna Brieden; and a daughter, Barbie Brieden.

A private memorial service will be held at a later date. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Robert "Bob" Koth, 97, died peacefully at home in Merrill, Wisconsin, on December 21, 2021. He was born in a farmhouse outside of Tomahawk, Wisconsin, on August 26, 1924, the sixth boy in a family of eleven children. He was confirmed on June 9, 1940, at St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Tomahawk.

Bob graduated from Tomahawk High School in 1942. On the 4th of July, 1943 he left home upon being drafted into the U.S. Army, joining six of his brothers, five already serving overseas, during World War II. All seven Koth brothers returned safely to Tomahawk at the conclusion of the war. A plaque recognizing their service to our country is on display at Tomahawk's Veterans Memorial Park. Bob was honorably discharged in March, 1946 as a Sergeant 1st Class with the Army Engineers. His tour of duty had taken him to New Guinea and the Philippines. On numerous occasions he encountered and saluted General Douglas MacArthur, a man he greatly admired, while performing his duties in Manila. Bob earned the Bronze Star and various campaign and service ribbons.

Shortly after returning from the war, Bob began working at Weinbrenner Shoe Company in Merrill, WI. He was soon promoted to Production Manager. In the spring of 1948, Evelyn Kanitz, a new Weinbrenner employee, was assigned to his department. Bob and Ev were engaged on Christmas Eve, 1949, and married on June 10, 1950. Together they raised four children, Steve, Ed, Tom, and Norma Jean.

Bob was later employed at Pied Piper Shoe Company in Wausau in the production department, and then Merrill Candy Company, as an accountant. In 1966 he began a career with the U.S. Postal Service, starting as a part-time clerk and subsequently serving as Superintendent of Postal Operations, Acting Postmaster, and ultimately, Finance Director at the Wausau Post Office.

Being a very active member of his church and community, Bob was honored to receive the City of Merrill Award for Community Service in 1973. He was proud to have been the American Red Cross Chapter Chairman for 20 years during which time he assisted many local servicemen and women in crisis, frequently taking middle-of-the-night phone calls from overseas military bases. In 1995 he received the American Red Cross Special Citation for Exceptional Volunteer Service, the first such citation issued by the Lincoln County Chapter. From its inception through 18 years, Bob was the chief instructor in the local Wisconsin Hunter Safety Program, teaching firearms safety to over 800 young hunters in Lincoln County. He served on the Boards of Directors for Park City Credit Union, the Wisconsin Association of Fairs, and the Lincoln County 4-H Leaders Association. He also served on the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors and the St. Stephen's Church Council.

While Bob and Ev enjoyed traveling across the United States, they always returned in time for Bob to maintain his expansive flower and vegetable garden. Bob was a true lover of nature and would hike miles in the forest. He enjoyed hunting, fishing, making maple syrup and time spent at the family cabin around the campfire.

Bob is survived by his wife, Evelyn, of 71 years and their four children, Steve (Carol) of Green Bay, Ed (Micki), Wausau, Tom (Megan O'Day), Merrill, and Norma Jean (Pat) Nelson, Menasha, eight grandchildren, thirteen great-grandchildren, three great-great grandchildren and many nieces and nephews. He is further survived by one brother and sister-in-law, Floyd and Elaine Koth of Tomahawk, sister-in-law and brother-in-law, Marion and Bill Beyer of Gleason, Wisconsin and brother-in-law Robert Wogsland, Tomahawk. Bob was preceded in death by his parents, Walter and Mary "Mayme" (Crass) Koth, eight brothers: Walter Jr., Harold, Ellsworth, Herman, George, Oscar, Herbert, Donald, and three sisters: Delores Wogsland, Dorothy and Mabel (both having died shortly after birth).

The Taylor & Stine Funeral Home is assisting with arrangements. A private family service will be planned at a future date.

The family wishes to thank Kindhearted Home Care and the home hospice providers from Interim Health Care for their outstanding compassion and care. Memorials in recognition of Bob Koth may be sent to: Never Forgotten Honor Flight, 225780 Rib Mountain Drive #234, Wausau, Wisconsin 54401. In its first year in north central Wisconsin, Never Forgotten Honor Flight provided Bob with a trip to the Washington D.C. World War II War Memorial, which Bob found deeply touching.

"Do not grieve and cry 'he is no more.'
Rather, celebrate and live in thankfulness to our Lord that he was."
- Hebrew Proverb

See OBITUARIES page 6



Allen "Al" Robert Robl, age 62 of Medford, Wisconsin passed away on Sunday, December 5, 2021 at Unity Point Health Meriter ICU in Madison, Wisconsin. He was born on June 6, 1959 to the late Harold (Guy) and Shirley (Wery van Strydonk) Robl of Gleason, Town of Schley.

He attended the Merrill schools and worked at AbbylandFoods, Inc., as an ammonia tech.

Allen is survived by his children: Victor (Amanda) Robl of Merrill, WI, Nicole (Jerry Robinson) Robl of Merrill, WI, Faith (James) Robinson of Merrill, WI, Zachary Robl of Wisconsin Rapids, WI, Noah Robl of Medford, WI and Autumn Robl of Medford, WI, girlfriend: Virginia Berndt of Medford, WI, siblings: Sue Robl, Town of Harrison, WI, Bev (Karl) Shaeve, of Minocqua, WI, Rick (Louise) Robl, of Merrill, WI, Amery Robl of Merrill, WI, Bill Robl of Merrill, WI, Ed Robl of Merrill, WI, Mike Robl of Black River Falls, WI, and Jerry (Caroline) Robl of Merrill, WI, and 7 grandchildren.

Cremation to take place. No services are planned at this time.

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



William L. 'Bill' Dexter, age 86, of Sheboygan, formerly of Gleason and Bloomville, passed away Friday, December 17, 2021, at Meadow View Heath Services, Sheboygan.

Bill was born May 7, 1935, son of the late Bernice Lee. He married Arlene Henrich on January 6, 1955, in Michigan. She preceded him in death on July 2, 2009. Bill served his country in the United States Navy. He enlisted in 1952 and was honorably discharged in 1955. One of his biggest accomplishments during his time in the Navy was floating the LST (Landing Ship, Tank) from Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin to Norfolk, Virginia.

Bill worked as a Breeder for the former Midwest Breeders. Bill also ran heavy equipment and sold trucks for a while. Bill and Arlene owned and operated 'Dexter's Village Tap' in Gleason. After selling the bar in 1978, they moved to Bloomville. Bill also ran his business Vid-Craft for many years.

He played guitar and sang for many years with various local bands. Many people will remember Bill for his outgoing personality; he was happy, funny, helpful, and was always a gentleman. Bill was a local historian and history buff with his focus being Gleason, Bloomville, Dudley, and Harrison. Bill was a longtime member of Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Gleason.

Survivors include his son, Scott (Tammy) Dexter of Sheboygan; three grandchildren, Isabella, Alexa, and William 'Will' Dexter, all of Sheboygan; and several cousins. Bill was preceded in death by his wife of 54 years, Arlene Dexter; mother and stepfather Bernice (Henry 'Heiney') Ratzburg; and infant daughter, Tracy Lynn Dexter.

The funeral service will be held at 2:00 P.M., Wednesday, December 22, 2021, at Luther Memorial Lutheran Church, Gleason. The Rev. Greg Laska will officiate. Burial will take place in Luther Memorial Lutheran Church Cemetery, Town of Russell, with graveside military rites conducted by V.F.W. Post 1638 Honor Guard. Visitation will begin at 11:00 A.M., Wednesday at the church. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Patricia 'Patty' V. Krahn, 85, of Merrill, passed away Saturday, December 18, 2021, at Pine Crest Nursing Home.

Patricia was born on April 29, 1936, in Merrill to the late William and Gladys (Batchelder) Welk. Patricia married Milton Krahn on June 1, 1957, in Merrill, and he preceded her in death on January 3, 2015. Patricia was a homemaker for many years. She also ran a daycare out of her home, and later worked at the former Eddie's Bakery and Church Mutual. Patricia enjoyed gardening, taking walks, and caring for her children and grandchildren. She loved the holidays especially Thanksgiving and Christmas. Patricia was involved with the Lincoln County ARC.

Patricia is survived by her children, Sheryl Krahn of Merrill, Kyle (Karen) Krahn of Ten Sleep, Wyoming, Kent Krahn of Tomahawk, and Susan Duellman of Granton; grandchildren, Rhiannon, Jason, Joshua, Chloe, and Sam; great-grandchildren, Madeline, Jaxon, Avery, Aubree, and Michael; and brother, William (Lois) Welk of Oshkosh. Patricia was preceded in death by her husband, Milton Krahn; parents, William and Gladys Welk; and granddaughter, Hannah Mae.

A celebration of life for Patricia will be held in April of 2022, details will follow at a later date. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com

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OBITUARIES

OBITUARIES from page 5



Dorothy H. Richardson of Waukesha ran into the arms of Jesus on Friday, December 17, 2021 at the age of 90. She was born on August 24, 1931 in Merrill, Wisconsin, the daughter of Fred and Grace (nee Bersin) Pike. On July 19, 1952, she married Francis V. Richardson in Doering, Wisconsin. He preceded her in death on July 24, 2010. Dorothy enjoyed spending time at church, Bible study, and sharing the message of salvation. Her personal relationship with Jesus was important to her, and she wished for everyone else to have the same kind of relationship. Dorothy will be remembered fondly for her huge heart. She was generous, extremely kind, honest, and reliable. She was always thinking of others and her countless acts of love will be immensely missed.

Dorothy will be greatly missed by her children, Glenn (Virginia) Richardson of Waukesha, Larry (Sherry) Richardson of Indiana, Marie (Norb) Novocin of Delaware, Dennis (Dede) Richardson of Florida, Joan (David) Whysol of Sullivan, Christine (Randy) Malone of Pewaukee, and Jeff Richardson of Waukesha. She is further survived by 16 grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren, her sisters Eleanor Kreitman, Shirley (Lane) Foote, and Beverly Turpen, nieces, nephews, other relatives, and many friends. In addition to her parents and her husband Francis, she was preceded in death by her twin sister Delores Hedtcke, and her siblings Alfred Pike, Frances Steinbach, Norma McPartland, and Betty Geiss.

Visitation was on Thursday, December 23, 2021 from 9:30 AM until the 11:30 AM funeral service at Bridge Church, 1314 S. Grand Ave., Waukesha. Burial was at Prairie Home Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Dorothy's name are appreciated to the Bridge Church.

Randle-Dable-Brisk Funeral Home, Crematory and Preplanning Service is honored to serve the family. For further information, please call the funeral home at 262-547-4035 or visit our website at www.randedable.com for directions or to leave the family an online tribute message.

PUBLIC NOTICE TO ALL CUSTOMERS OF THE MERRILL WATER UTILITY

The Merrill Water Utility has filed an application with the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSCW) to increase water rates. The increase is necessary due to a 21.1 percent increase in gross plant investment and a 30.9 percent increase in operating expenses since the last water rate case was completed in 2013.

The total increase in water revenues requested is \$302,521 which will result in an estimated overall rate increase of 19.8 percent over the water utility's present revenues. If the request is granted, the water bill for an average residential customer with a 3/4-inch or 1/2-inch meter who uses 1,100 cubic feet of water per quarter will increase from \$66.03 to \$84.45, or 27.9% (including the public fire protection charge).

A telephonic public hearing on the application has been scheduled for Friday, January 7, 2022, at 11:00 a.m. This hearing has no physical location. Parties and Commission staff appear by audiovisual connection over the internet. Parties and Commission staff may use the audio-only telephone connection as a backup, or if no practicable internet connection exists. Members of the public attend by audiovisual connection over the internet, or by audio-only telephone connection.

Join by audiovisual connection at: https://us02web.zoom.us/my/pschearings

To join by telephone: 1. Dial: +1 312 626 6799 2. Enter: 809 513 2930 # (Meeting ID)

Each participant shall provide their name, and status as either a party representative, Commission staff, or a member of the public. Each participant using the internet connection shall provide this information in the "Join Meeting" dialog screen, or by renaming the participant's screen name after gaining admittance to the hearing. Each person connecting by telephone shall provide this information immediately after gaining admittance to the hearing.

Upon connecting to the hearing, each participant will enter a waiting room and await admittance to the hearing. Before commencing the hearing, the ALJ will admit each participant who connected before the designated start time. The ALJ will admit each participant who connects after the hearing begins at the earliest opportunity that does not disrupt the hearing. Each member of the public shall remain muted until the ALJ invites that person to comment.

The Commission will livestream the audio of this hearing on its website. The livestream allows anyone to listen to the hearing without connecting to it as described above. To access the livestream, go to the Commission's website at http://psc.wi.gov, and select "Live Broadcast" button. The live broadcast webpage provides neither: (1) an opportunity to make a comment, nor (2) closed captioning.

A person may testify in this proceeding without becoming a party and without attorney representation. A person may submit this testimony in only one of the following ways:

- Web Comment. File a comment on the internet. Go to the Commission's web site at http://psc.wi.gov, click on "File a Comment". On the next page select the "File a comment" link that appears for docket number 3610-WR-105. Web comments shall be received no later than Tuesday, January 11, 2022.
Oral Comment. Speak over the telephone during the public session. The Administrative Law Judge may receive an oral comment from any member of the public in attendance after the close of any party and Commission staff testimony. The Administrative Law Judge will receive an oral comment by unmuting each phone connection one at a time and inquiring into the each caller's desire to comment.
Mail Comment. Send a comment by U.S. Mail. All comments submitted by U.S. Mail shall be received no later than Tuesday, January 11, 2022 and shall be addressed to: Attn: Docket 3610-WR-105 Comments, Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, WI 53707-7854.

All documents in this docket are filed on the Commission's Electronic Records Filing (ERF) system. To view these documents: (1) go to the Commission's E-Services Portal at http://apps.psc.wi.gov, (2) enter "3610-WR-105" in the box labeled "Quick Single Docket Search," and (3) select "Documents".

If you have any questions, please contact the Merrill Water Utility at (715) 536-6561.

Published December 23 & 30, 2021

WNAXLP

LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

CITY OF MERRILL COMMON COUNCIL MINUTES TUESDAY DECEMBER 14, 2021 Regular Meeting City Hall Council Chambers 6:00 PM 1. Call to Order Mayor Woellner called the meeting to order at 6:01 P.M. Attendee Name, Title, Status, Arrived Paul Russell, Alderperson - First District, Present Steve Hass, Alderperson - Second District, Present Rick Blake, Alderperson - Third District, Present Steve Osness, Alderperson - Fourth District, Present John M. Van Lieshout, Alderperson - Fifth District, Present Mike Rick, Alderperson - Sixth District, Present Mark Weix, Alderperson - Seventh District, Present Steve Sabatke, Alderperson - Eighth District, Present Derek Woellner, Mayor, Present 2. Silent Prayer 3. Pledge of Allegiance 4. Roll Call 5. Public Comment Period None. 6. Minutes of previous Common Council meeting(s): 1. Minutes of November 9, 2021 meeting Motion (Osness/Hass) to approve. Alderman Sabatke noted that the minutes indicated that he was in attendance "Remote" at the meeting. He was actually at the meeting in-person. City Clerk Heideman acknowledged that Alderman Sabatke was there in-person, and requested that he be allowed to amend the minutes accordingly. Without objection it was so ordered. RESULT: APPROVED AS AMENDED 7. Revenue & Expense Reports(s): 1. Revenue & Expense Report for period ending November 30, 2021 Motion (Hass/Van Lieshout) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 8. General agenda items: 1. Employee Years of Service Recognition Phillip H. Skoug (Fire Department), 20 years City Clerk Heideman read a certificate of recognition for Phillip Skoug. 9. Board of Public Works: 1. Consider 3.0% adjustment to Water & Sewer Service Fees for 2022. The Board of Public Works recommends approval. Motion (Van Lieshout/Rick) to approve.

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RESULT: APPROVED 10. Health and Safety Committee: 1. Consider application from B's Nest, LLC, Duane Yorde, Agent, for a Class "B" (beer) and a "Class B" (liquor) license for B's Nest, 1404 W. Main Street, effective December 17, 2021. The Health and Safety Committee recommends approval. Motion (Russell/Rick) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 11. Personnel and Finance Committee: 1. Consider request from Merrill Professional Police Association to make change(s) in the 2022-2023 union contract, related to residency. The Personnel and Finance Committee recommends amending the first sentence in Article 3 of the contract, by changing the date from 1/1/2016 to 1/31/2016. Motion (Osness/Blake) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 2. Consider adjustments to hourly Certification Pay for Utility Employees. The Personnel and Finance Committee recommends approving the new certification pay schedule, as presented. Motion (Osness/Hass) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 3. Consider reclassification of Wastewater Treatment Plant Lead Operator position. The Personnel and Finance Committee recommends approving the reclassification of the Wastewater Treatment Plant Lead Operator from Grade 11 to Grade 12. Motion (Rick/Osness) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 12. Placing Committee Reports on File: 1. Consider placing the following committee reports on file: Airport Commission, Board of Public Works, City Plan Commission, Health & Safety Committee, Historic Preservation Committee, Library Board, Marketing & Communications Committee, Merrill Enrichment Center Committee, Parks & Recreation Commission, Personnel & Finance Committee, Police & Fire Commission, Redevelopment Authority, Tourism Commission and Transit Commission. Motion (Van Lieshout/Rick) to place on file. RESULT: PLACED ON FILE 13. Mayor's Appointments: 1. Nicole Johnson to the Merrill Area Housing Authority, term to expire November 10, 2025. Motion (Russell/Blake) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 2. Election Officials for 2022-2023 Motion (Hass/Rick) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 14. Ordinances: 1. An Ordinance amending Code of Ordinances Chapter 14, Article V, Section 14-123 through 14-158, related to trees and shrubs (Ordinance #2021-19). City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a first reading by title only,

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followed by a synopsis. Motion (Hass/Blake) to suspend the rules and give the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only. Carried. City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a second reading and a third reading by title only. RESULT: APPROVED [UNANIMOUS] MOVER: John M. Van Lieshout, Alderperson - Fifth District SECONDER: Steve Osness, Alderperson - Fourth District AYES: Russell, Hass, Blake, Osness, Van Lieshout, Rick, Weix, Sabatke 15. Resolutions: 1. A Resolution approving a Conditional Use Permit for placement of one doublewide housing unit in Whispering Pines, 2801 Thielman Street (Resolution #2714). WHEREAS, Whispering Pines MHC WI, LLC has requested a conditional use permit pursuant to the Merrill Zoning Code Chapter 113, Article IV, Section 113-100 for the purpose of the placement of a doublewide housing unit on the following described property: Lt 1 CSM 731 V3 P315 D0331602, City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin, Commonly known as 2801 Thielman St. herein referred to as the "Premises"; and, WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission scheduled a hearing on the application on December 7, 2021, due public notice having been given and opportunity given to those interested to speak on the application; and, WHEREAS, the City Plan Commission has reviewed the Application, found that it does meet the requirements of Merrill Zoning Code, Section 113-100 and has recommended approval of said application; NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 14th day of December, 2021, that a conditional use permit shall be issued to Whispering Pines MHC WI, LLC for the purpose of the placement of one doublewide housing unit. Motion (Hass/Sabatke) to approve. RESULT: APPROVED 2. A Resolution declaring the City of Merrill to be a Constitutional Republic City. Alderman Osness is bringing this resolution directly to the Common Council. WHEREAS, the Constitution of the United States protects our rights, endowed by our creator, as well as guarantees liberties to American citizens, including the establishment of justice, the promotion of the general welfare and securing the blessings of liberty; and, WHEREAS, the Constitution espouses many principles upon which the United States is founded, namely the separation of powers, individual rights, and the rule of law; and,

Legals 7700

WHEREAS, the Constitution of the State of Wisconsin provides that all people are by nature free and independent and have inalienable rights, including enjoying and defending life and liberty, acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and pursuing and obtaining safety, happiness, and privacy; and, WHEREAS, John Adams, the second president of the United States, wrote, "the very definition of a Republic is 'an Empire of Laws, and not of men.' That, as a Republic is the best of governments, so that particular arrangement of the powers of society, or in other words that form of government, which is best contrived to secure an impartial and exact execution of the laws, is the best of Republics;" and, WHEREAS, we the Common Council of the City of Merrill believe in the separation of powers, individual rights, and the rule of law as outlined in the United States Constitution, including the freedom for local government to have local control over issues related to the citizens who reside within the City's jurisdictional boundaries; NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 14th day of December, 2021, that the City of Merrill is declared to be a Constitutional Republic City; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Common Council of the City of Merrill that any executive orders issued by the State of Wisconsin or by the United States federal government that are overreaching or clearly violate our constitutionally protected rights will not be enforced by the City of Merrill against its citizens. Motion (Osness/Rick) to approve. Mayor Woellner distributed an amended resolution. The amended resolution was as follows:

A RESOLUTION OF THE MERRILL COMMON COUNCIL DECLARING THE OBVIOUS

WHEREAS, we are a city inside a country with a constitutional republic form of government; and, WHEREAS, every member of the Merrill Common Council has sworn an oath to uphold the constitution; and, WHEREAS, our government has well-proven systems of correcting oversteps of authority, specifically an entire branch of government known as the judicial system, designed to keep the executive and legislative branches in check; NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 14th day of December, 2021, that the members of the council will uphold their sworn oath; BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, by the Common Council of the City of Merrill that any executive orders or laws at the state or federal level that are overreaching or clearly violate constitutionally protected rights will be reviewed by the City Attorney, who will provide a recommendation to the Council. Recommendations may include joining other governments to provide resources and assistance in a lawsuit, suing alone, or closely observing relevant ongoing cases. As required by the rule of law, any questionable executive order or statute will be enforced until the time that the court has ordered a stay or overruled it. AND FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED by the Common Council of the City of Merrill that with exhausted annoyance, let us no longer introduce frivolous resolutions like this one, which just state the obvious. Whether it be for grandstanding, or a personal ego boost, resolutions that serve nobody are not just neutral or inert, they are indeed damaging, tarnishing what should be a serious process addressing serious issues.

Motion (Russell/Blake) to approve the amended resolution. On roll call vote, motion failed 0-8.

Motion (Hass/Weix) to table. On roll call vote, motion failed 3-5. Voting Yes - Alderman Hass, Alderman Blake and Alderman Weix.

Motion (Hass/Weix) to postpone indefinitely. On roll call vote, motion failed 2-6. Voting Yes - Alderman Hass and Alderman Weix.

A vote was then held on the motion to approve the original resolution. This roll call vote resulted in a 4-4 tie. Voting Yes - Alderman Osness, Alderman Van Lieshout, Alderman Rick and Alderman Sabatke.

Mayor Woellner broke the tie by voting No. Therefore, the motion to approve the original resolution failed.

16. Mayor's Communications Mayor Woellner made several comments related to the resolution considered in the previous agenda item.

17. Adjournment Motion (Rick/Osness) to adjourn. Carried. Adjourned at 6:48 P.M. Published Dec. 30, 2021 WNAXLP

PET OF THE WEEK



Meet Nilla! She was brought to the shelter along with 6 other cats after their barn was destroyed by a tornado and they needed shelter for the upcoming winter. Nilla can be very shy but with time and love she is slowly coming around. Nilla gets along great with her kitty friends and seems to be more comfortable with friends around. She would be great in a quiet home with other cats to hang out with! Nilla's adoption will include her spay, vaccinations and microchip. Come visit Nilla soon!

SPONSORED BY RiverCountry CO-OP Merrill Country Store 1400 Logan Ave. Merrill • 715-536-2491

Visit the Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N. Memorial Dr., in Merrill. Hours: Mon. - Sat. 12-4PM; Sun. 12-2PM. Call the shelter at 715-536-3459, visit us on the web at www.furrypets.com.

MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is Emma Myers Daughter of Leigha Janssen & Josh Myers Emma is in the 3rd Grade at Washington Elementary School. She was nominated by Ms. Christian.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why? I enjoy math because I understand the word and division problems. I like math so much that I practice at home and even use math when baking.

What is your favorite part of school? Why? I love hanging out with friends. I also like CKLA (literacy) learning root words and information about medieval times.

What would you like to do/ become someday? Why? I want to go to baking school, and own my own bakery one day.

Emma is a very hard working student every day. She is inquisitive, focused, thoughtful, and compassionate. Emma is a great role model for her classmates and is always doing her best. - Ms. Christian

Student of the Week Sponsored by: INTERFLEX GROUP 1401 W. Taylor St., Merrill (715) 536-5400

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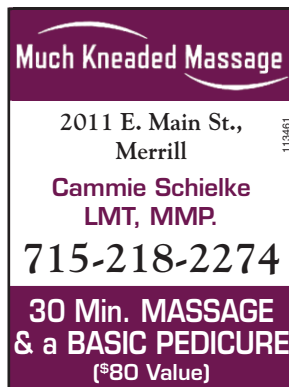
FIRST BABY of 2022



Contest Rules:

1. One of the baby's parents must be a resident of Lincoln County.
2. The winner will be the first baby born in the new year.
3. Parents may enter by informing the Foto News within 72 hours of the baby's birth.
4. In case of a tie, a drawing will be held to determine the winner.
5. By entering this contest, the winner grants permission for their and their baby's names and likenesses to appear in the Foto News.

The Foto News, along with the following Lincoln County merchants, will present the following prizes to the first baby born in the year 2022.



112373

113958

113751

113461

113972

113115

113250

113284

113090

113964

113969

113956

STEPPIN OUT

S&S BAR **Open Daily 9 am - Close**
 418 Grand Ave., Merrill

THIS WEEK'S DRINK SPECIAL:
RAIL OLD FASHIONS
 \$4 PINT MIXERS;
 \$2 TUB MIXERS; \$2 SHOTS

Low carry out prices on Booze, Beer & Ice
Part-Time Bartender Wanted

Hall Rental Available • 715-536-4664

DINNER@FIVE
 A COMMUNITY TABLE AT SAINT STEPHENS

Join us every Monday at 5:00PM for a community meal open to all.

Saint Stephens United Church of Christ
 903 E 2nd Street, Merrill.
 Free will donations accepted.

Monday, Jan. 3rd Menu:
 Hot Dogs, Brats, Chips, baked beans, and a pickle.

The Eagles Club
 1205 N Lake St. • Merrill, WI 54452
 Open to the Public • (715) 536-7471

DINNER SPECIALS DEC./JAN.
TUESDAY NIGHTS
 Jan. 4th - **Liver N Onions**
 Jan. 11th - **Bourbon Chicken**
 Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

FRIDAY NIGHTS
 Dec. 31st - **Bluegills**
 Jan. 7th - **Breaded Scallops**
 Dinner served: Friday 4:00-8:00 PM
CLIP-N-SAVE

CARRYOUT AVAILABLE
 • MONDAY: Bar Open at 3pm
 • LUNCH AVAILABLE: TUES. & FRI. 11am-2pm
 WED. & THURS. 11am-8pm
 Specials • Fish Fries • Homemade Soup
 • DINNER MENU: TUES. 4-8pm & FRI. 4-8pm
 • SATURDAY: Bar Open at 3pm
 • SUNDAY: Bar Open From 11am-7pm

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JAN. BOOZE OF THE MONTH
JACK DANIELS
 \$5.50 - 16 oz. Pint

LIVE MUSIC JAN. 8TH
DOUG SHEENE
 8 PM

MEAT RAFFLE JAN. 8
MERRILL BASEBALL BOOSTER
 1 PM

OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
New Year's Eve Dec. 31
 Live Music 7:30 pm-12:30 am
 Country-Variety Band

All you can eat surf & turf, includes complimentary bottle of Champagne **Only \$50** (for couples)

NEW! TRIVIA NIGHT
 Thursday Nights 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm
 Dec. 30th General

Chicken Available on Wed., Thurs., Sat. & Sun.
 Buckets for \$1.35/pc Available in 8, 12, 16 or 20pc

All You Can Eat BBQ Ribs & Chicken Every Wednesday

MONDAY Chicken or Shrimp Fettuccine Spaghetti & Meatballs
FRI FISH FRY 2 & 3 Piece Cod Jumbo Shrimp Walleye
SUN BRUNCH BUFFET 11am-3pm AYCE Adults \$12.99
BROASTED CHICKEN 4 Piece with Potato for \$11.99 Available Sun./Thurs./Sat.

THURSDAY Wing Night
SATURDAY NIGHT Steak Night

GREEN BAY GAME TAILGATE SPECIALS
 Watch all the games in December on our HUGE 14ft TV Screen • Touchdown Shots

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 Fri. & Sat.: 7:00 p.m. & 9:45 p.m.
 Sat. & Sun.: 1:00 p.m. & 3:30 p.m.

SING 2
 "PG" 1 Hour 52 Min.
 Everyday: 7:00 p.m.
 Fri.: 1:00 p.m.
 Fri. & Sat.: 7:00 p.m. & 9:15 p.m.
 Sat. & Sun.: 1:00 p.m. & 4:00 p.m.

THE MATRIX RESURRECTIONS
 "R" 2 Hour 28 Min.
 Everyday: 7:00 p.m.
 Fri.: 1:00 p.m.
 Fri. & Sat.: 7:00 p.m. & 9:45 p.m.
 Sat. & Sun.: 1:00 p.m. & 3:45 p.m.

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

New Year's Day

DEAR READER,

New Year's was originally celebrated by the Babylonians in 4000 BCE. The Roman Emperor Julius Caesar made it official in 46 BCE. As background, the month of January was named after Janus the Roman god who had two faces - one looking backward and the other looking forward. Julius thought the New Year should be celebrated in January since Janus was also the god of doors and gates which metaphorically could mean opening up the "door or gate" to another year.



PATRICK J. WOOD
PUBLISHER

While there is an extensive history of New Year's Day being the impetus for action, today we celebrate a sense of renewal. Like Janus's two faces, we look back on the year we are closing and how we handled it through a mixture of good and bad; and we look ahead to another year and how we might do it better by changing a few things.

Thus, we make resolutions to target the best version of ourselves both physically and mentally. Most New Year's resolutions last for an average of two weeks and then we revert back to the frailties of being human. Perhaps we can work harder to stretch it a little longer in 2022.

Happy New Year.

Author of "Dear Reader" and "Tapestry of Love and Loss"

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

TO THE EDITOR:

Tis the Season

Recently we were shopping at County Market in Merrill for a church chili fundraiser and also to restock our kitchen. There were many, many other shoppers also stocking up for Christmas and thus long lines at the checkout. Gail was paying our bill with a church scrip card and the rest with a personal check. The check was refused because of an unrecognizable banking number. This caused confusion and delay for other customers waiting to checkout. A gentleman in the next checkout aisle gave our cashier lady a handful of cash to pay our remaining bill and left ... Nobody present recognized this individual. We immediately stopped at our bank (Nicolet Bank) to find out why our check was refused. We were told this problem is not new in this electronic banking world. Our bank had recently changed its name to Nicolet Bank, thus a different routing number not recognized by the store, and we had just started the use of new checks. Out of this confusing and embarrassing situation, the true Spirit of Christmas was present and the greatest gift for all of us ... pay forward. A huge THANK YOU to the unknown gentleman.

- Ron & Gail Behm
Gleason, Wis.

City website. I suggest you do the same. Is it any wonder Merrill isn't growing or has the reputation it does? Between the recent belittling of an elected Alderman by the City Administrator and the Mayor throwing public tantrums, pounding on desks, lecturing Council members, spewing expletives, and collectively suggesting anyone who had the audacity to vote for Donald Trump is a "bunch of buffoons who threatened our democracy on Jan. 6," can you blame them?

How can the City continue to tout its "Rules of Civility" or Value Statements suggesting they work together in a "respectful manner," be "accountable for what they do and say," and "provide professional, respectful service to those who live, work, or visit" here if these are the examples being set by our leadership? This latest outburst is just another disgraceful example of why our citizens need to get involved and demand our leaders be held accountable for their actions. They need to go. Continued complacency by our citizens only empowers them. What you allow is what continues. It is your community, and it is time to stand up and demand better.

- LaDonna Fermanich
Merrill, Wis.

The views and opinions expressed are those of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Merrill Foto News, its publishers, Editor, or staff.

TO THE EDITOR:

After attending in person, I watched the last 20 minutes of the video of the Dec. 14 City Council meeting from the

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY

*Letters must be 250 words or less (There will be no exceptions to this. Any letter longer than 250 words will not be printed.)
 *All letters must include full name, address and phone number of the composer. Phone numbers and addresses will not be published, but will be used for verification purposes if necessary.
 *Letters will be published at the discretion of the Editor. While letters on most any topic will be published, any letters deemed derogatory, inflammatory, slanderous, or involving vulgar language, will not be published.
 *Letters will be published on a "first come, first served" basis. Any letters which we are unable to publish in the printed newspaper will be run online at www.merrillfotonews.com and may be printed in the paper at a later date if possible.

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DECEMBER 31 RST

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 Hats, Tiaras, & Leis
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\$49 per lane (up to 6 people per lane)

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 Shoe Rental Included
 Hats, Tiaras, & Leis
 Shifts starting at **8pm and 10:30pm**
\$79 per lane (up to 6 people per lane)

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STAND UP COMEDY
VINCE CARONE
 with special guest Ben Hamilton
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 DOORS OPEN AT 7PM | SHOW STARTS AT 8PM
 Tickets \$15 in advance | \$20 at the door
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Please send announcements, news briefs, photo submissions and letters to the editor to:
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MERRILL Foto News **CLASSIFIEDS** **Deadline: Monday at 11:30 a.m.**
Phone: 715-536-7121
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Schools and Instruction 7100
TRAIN ONLINE TO DO MEDICAL BILLING! Become a Medical Office Professional online at CTI! Get Trained. Certified & ready to work in months! Call **920-600-8950** the Mission, Program Information & Tuition is located at CareerTechnical.edu/consumer-information. (M-F 8am-6pm ET) (WCAN)

Announcements 7005
WCAN (Wisconsin Community Ad Network) and/or the member publications review ads to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, many unscrupulous people are ready to take your money! **PLEASE BE CAREFUL ANSWERING ANY AD THAT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!** For more information, or to file a complaint regarding an ad, please contact **The Department of Trade, Agriculture & Consumer Protection 1-800-422-7128 (WCAN)**

Firewood 7244
DRY OAK & Hard Maple- \$240/cord. Over 15 miles, extra. Have hard wood in wood shed over year old. Clean and no bark. 715-351-1888 or 715-873-4196.

Firewood 7244
Firewood DRY OAK & Hard Maple- \$240/cord. Over 15 miles, extra. Have hard wood in wood shed over year old. Clean and no bark. 715-351-1888 or 715-873-4196.

Health Care 7115
 Train online to do medical billing! Become a Medical Office Professional at CTI! Get trained & certified to work in months! 888-572-6790. The Mission, Program Information and Tuition is located at CareerTechnical.edu/consumer-information. (M-F 8-6 ET)

Antiques and Collectibles 7214
JANESVILLE NEW YEAR ANTIQUE SHOW & SALE Sat. Jan 8th 9-5pm, Sun Jan 9th 9-3pm. CRAIG CENTER - ROCK CO FAIRGROUNDS 1301 Craig Ave Janesville, WI **25 Quality Dealers!**: Adm. \$5/ both days (WCAN)

Announcements 7005
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Jewelry 7218
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EMPLOYMENT

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Patient Attendant - Seasonal Temporary
Marshfield Medical Center - Weston
 Casual / Variable shifts / Temporary

The Patient Attendant - Float under the direction of a Registered Nurse is responsible for assisting in providing a safe environment for an identified patient who is at an increased risk to cause harm to self. The Patient Attendant - Float is required to staff on any patient care units that Float Pool provides support to, as assigned by the Staffing Office/Supervisor.

Unit Attendant - Seasonal Temporary
Marshfield Medical Center - Weston
 Casual / Variable shifts / Temporary

The Unit Attendant works with the medical team under the direction of a Registered Nurse within a hospital unit to assist the staff and serve the patients in a variety of ways. The Unit Attendant has responsibilities involving both direct and indirect patient care.

Both positions require:

- High school diploma or equivalent
- Basic Life Support (BLS) certification provided by the American Heart Association; at time of hire preferred

Apply at:
www.marshfieldclinic.org/careers

Reference Keyword: Patient Attendant or Unit Attendant

Marshfield Medical Center - Weston
3400 Ministry Pkwy, Weston, WI 54476

Marshfield Clinic Health System is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, protected veteran status, age, or any other characteristic protected by law.



Talent Tuesdays

Tuesday, January 4, 3-5 p.m.

Marshfield Medical Center - Weston

3400 Ministry Pkwy, Weston, WI 54476

(Entrance 1 off of Cranberry Boulevard)

Stop in and talk with recruiters and connect with hiring managers. No appointment necessary.

Positions available include:

- RN (Various) • LPN • MA/CMA • CNA • NP / PA • PT / OT • MT / MLT • Triage Coordinator
- Respiratory Therapist • Research Coordinator • Pharmacy Tech. • Central Service Tech.
- Paramedic - ED • EMT - Critical Care Transport • Emergency Medical Tech. • EKG Tech.
- Phlebotomist • Phlebotomy Coordinator • Care Team Coordinator • Patient Attendant
- Social Worker • Unit Attendant • Patient Access Representative • Occupational Health Unit Clerk
- Appointment Coordinator • Patient Care Floater • Support Functions Float • Lab Tech. Asst.
- Neuropsychologist • Operations Manager • Lab Operations Manager • Learning Analyst
- Respiratory Therapy Assistant • Radiologic Tech. • CIRV Tech. • Cardiovascular Sonographer
- Hyperbaric Tech. • Ultrasonographer • Surgical Tech • Telemetry Tech. • G.I. Tech. • Security
- Room Services Coordinator • Cook • Food & Nutrition Svcs. Aide • Environmental Services
- Clinical Dietitian • Network Engineer • Lab Technical Specialist II - Chemistry / Immunoassay

Where your work matters.



Marshfield Clinic Health System

For a full list of open positions or to apply online visit: marshfieldclinic.org/careers

Marshfield Clinic Health System is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action employer. All qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, veteran status, age, or any other characteristic protected by law.



- 1st shift starts at \$18.11
- 2nd shift starts at \$19.61
- Earn up to an additional \$1.50 per hour with our new Attendance Bonus Program
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Top Left: The Freyer Family recently donated supplies to the Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS). "Thank you for your ongoing support of our shelter pets!" LCHS staff said.

Top Right: The Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS) would like to thank Dee Dennis, from Wausau VFW, for making these snugly little blankets for our cats. "They will enjoy them so much!" LCHS representatives said. Pictured: Tiffany from LCHS and Dee Dennis.

Left: Evelyn Loewe donated a bunch of supplies to the Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS). Liz at LCHS wants to thank her for her awesome donation! "The animals and staff appreciate all of these supplies!" she said.

Right: The Lincoln County Humane Society would like to thank Landon Bultman and his family for bringing in these wonderful donations in December.

Submitted photos.

AWARDS from page 3

2021 awards

The following are the 2021 Business of the Year award recipients:

The Large Business of the Year winner was Weinbrenner Shoe Company. The list of nominees also included: Church Mutual Insurance, Sierra Pacific, Agra Industries, S.C. Swiderski, Merrill Area Public Schools, Park City Credit Union, Bell Tower Residence, Lincoln Wood Products, Northern Wire, and Wisconsin Public Service Corp.

Mid-sized Business of the Year winner was Brickner's Park City. The list of nominees also included: Dave's County Market, Reindl Printing, Kwik Trip East Main Street location, Ruder Ware, and Mitchell Metal Products.

Small Business of the Year winner was Bob's West 64. The list of nominees also included: Breaman Merrill Ford, AmericInn, Les & Jim's Lincoln Lanes, Lora Bladow RE/MAX Excel, Los Mezcales, Jokin' Joe's, LLC, Urban Construction Company, Health in Motion, and VIP Office Products.

Hometown Business of the Year winner was Sawmill Brewing Company. The list of nominees also included: Merrill Foto News, Bluejay Radio WJMT, Hargrave Appliance Center, Courtside Furniture, Chips Hamburgers, Westside Market, In the Lite Electric, Riverside Athletic Club, Z Best Car Wash, Ziebell's Door Company, D's Dogs, and Pine Ridge Convenience Store.

The Not-for-Profit Business of the Year winner was Lincoln County Fair Association. The list of nominees also included: Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Northcentral Wisconsin, O'Tannenbaum Tour, Parkside Preschool, Merrill Community Homeless Center, Pine River Fire Department, The Friends of Vincent Foundation, The Salvation Army of Merrill, Merrill Area Farmer's Market, HAVEN, Inc., Merrill Area United Way, Merrill Youth Softball Association, and Veterans of Foreign Wars & Auxiliary.

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Merrill Varsity Wrestling Team

Bathke takes Championship at Mount Horeb; Jenson and Ball take second and third in their weight classes

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Saturday, Dec. 18, 2021, the Merrill Bluejay Wrestling Team traveled to the 2021 Mount Horeb Varsity Invitational where they competed against 14 teams.

“Even though the Merrill Wrestling Team was short handed and had some wrestlers competing in their first Varsity matches, many competed well, and three were able to make the podium,” Head Merrill Varsity Coach Brian Suchocki said.

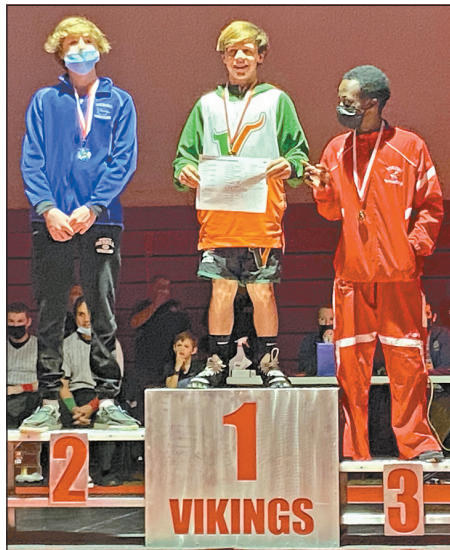
“Wyatt Bathke (195, 8-4; 26.0 team points) led the way with five pins and the Championship,” he said. “Wyatt had a great day of wrestling. He showed what he is capable of, and I felt this was the most diverse wrestling he has done. Wyatt didn’t rely on one move or technique.”

“Joey Jenson (106, 5-1; 20.0 team points) is getting his footing on Varsity,” Suchocki said. “Joey wrapped up four pins before falling in the Championship. It is great to see Joey gain experience and confidence as the season progresses.”

He continued: “Brian Ball (170, 6-5; 17.5 team points) took third place. Brian finished the day with a dominant performance for third place. Each time Brian competes, he gets better. We are looking forward to seeing him continue this upward trend.”

“Other place finishers were Jon Hart (120, 5-6; 9.0 team points) sixth place, Brady Norton (132, 3-3; 9.0 team points) seventh place, and Callum Wheeler (145, 3-2; 9.0 team points) seventh place,” Suchocki said. “Jon, Brady, and Callum did a great job competing. These three young wrestlers are doing a nice job competing.”

Other Merrill Varsity finishers: Austin Depies (160, 0-2); Mikal Plautz (220, 0-2); and Kieran Hehling (285, 4-6; 4.0 team points).

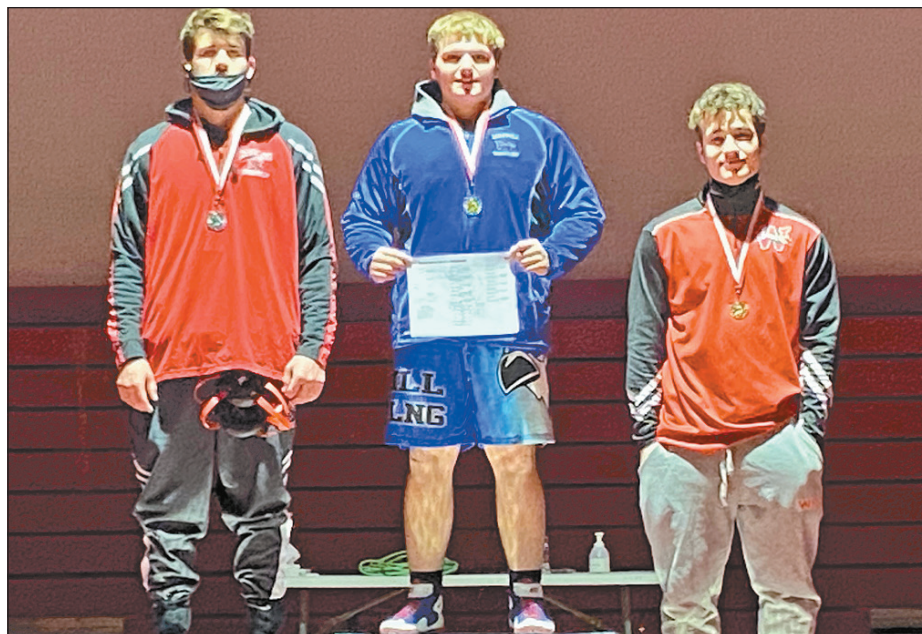


Joey Jenson of the Merrill Bluejays took second place in his weight class.



On Dec. 18, Merrill's Brian Ball took home a third place from Mount Horeb.

Submitted photos



Merrill's Wyatt Bathke stands in first place on the podium, coming away with a Championship at the Mount Horeb Invitational on Dec. 18.

2021-2022 Merrill High School Winter Sports Schedule

Basketball Girls (Varsity, JV, & JV2)

No Scheduled Activities for this Week.

Basketball Boys (Varsity, JV, & JV2)

Tues. Jan. 4	Ashland (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Tues. Jan. 4	Ashland (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm

Ice Hockey Boys (Varsity & JV)

Thurs. Dec. 30	Waupaca Expo-Multiple (JV)	Away	10:00 am
Tues. Jan. 4	Tomahawk (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 6	D. C. Everest (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 6	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm

Ice Hockey Girls (Varsity & JV)

Thurs. Dec. 30	Madison-Culver's Cup (Varsity)	Away	T. B. D.
Tues. Jan. 4	Northland Pines (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 6	ECA Stars (JV)	Away	4:45 pm
Thurs. Jan. 6	ECA Stars (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm

Wrestling Boys (Varsity & JV)

Thurs. Jan. 6	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	6:00 pm
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112388

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Kieran Hehling, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Kieran first became a wrestler in his Freshman year of high school when he wrestled JV, then took a break from the sport and returned this year to wrestle on the MHS Varsity Wrestling Team. He is working hard on his skills during practices, and his Coach said it's showing in his performance during matches. Kieran says his greatest strength is "being willing to just get after it every day." In Freshman year, he played JV Football for the Bluejays, but isn't currently involved in any other school sports.

Outside of school, however, Kieran started training in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) this past year, and he plans to keep pursuing MMA and hopes to make a career out of it. "I want to have my first big professional fight by the time I'm 29," Kieran said.

In his free time, he enjoys working out at Anytime Fitness, listening to music ["heavy metal is the favorite at the moment"], playing board games and video games, going for walks, and hanging out with friends.

The son of Rebecca Hehling of Merrill, Kieran plans to get a job at Sierra Pacific or Agra after high school graduation and to focus on his MMA training.



Kieran Hehling

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