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Merrill's Holiday Decorating Contest 2022 winners

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

Merrill's Dec. 21, 2022, City Lights Bus Tour took all those who signed up for the tour on a drive past 16 sparkling area residential homes and 4 glowing area businesses that participated in the First Merrill Holiday Decorating Contest, sponsored in partnership by the City of Merrill and the Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce. All 75 seats on the 3 Merrill Go-Round Buses were reserved, and some callers were told the buses were full when then called to reserve a seat, so the City and the Merrill Transit System were very pleased with the turnout.

Riders on the bus voted for the homes and business decorations they liked best, with each rider getting a ballot to complete. Those votes were tallied and determined the winners of this year's contest.

In the residential decorating category, the Merrill Holiday Decorating Contest winners are:

First place – The home of Kenneth and Verjean Van De Zande at 105 W. Riverside Ave., Merrill.

Second place – The home of Neil and Laurel Steinagel at 411 E 8th St., Merrill.

Third place was a tie, with two homes receiving an equal number of votes. The two homes selected to

See **CONTEST** page 7



First place winner in the residential category: The home of Kenneth and Verjean Van De Zande, 105 W. Riverside Ave., Merrill.



One of the third place (tie) winners in the residential category: The home of Randall Lambrecht, 1003 Jefferson St., Merrill.



One of the third place (tie) winners in the residential category: The home of Shauna Bush-Cooper, 118 N. State St., Merrill.



Second place winner in the residential category: The home of Neil and Laurel Steinagel, 411 E 8th St., Merrill.

Tina L. Scott photos.

MHS Business and DECA students warm hands and hearts with "Cheer Kits"

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

Merrill High School (MHS) Business and DECA students created and distributed more than 2,000 "Cheer Kits" before Christmas to bring a little cheer to the Merrill School district's students and community members. Each kit contained gloves, hats, candy, cocoa, and/or other goodies with a positive mental health note: "Keep this Cheer Kit to warm your hands or, to warm your heart, pass it on to another in need."

"It made a lot of people happy," said Amber Winter, DECA and Business Club President. "Our business classes enjoyed the process and learning about ethics, community service, business processes, organization, and warehouse logistics by setting up production lines to assemble the kits. We had to plan, fundraise, and order nearly 6,000 items to make the 2,000 kits. The classes put together almost 200 kits per hour."

"DECA club members contacted community sponsors and grants for funding and distributed the kits through partner organizations they felt were important to reach as many people as possible," Mrs. Olivia Dachel, DECA advisor and MHS Business & Computer Science Teacher said.

"The kits were distributed through the elementary schools with the MHS Raise Your Voice Club during

See **CHEER** page 7



Austin Hotchkiss, dressed as an inflatable Santa, hands out Cheer Kits and warm winter wishes to elementary and middle school students with the MHS Raise Your Voice Club to promote positive mental awareness.

Photo courtesy of DECA Club.

Packers kick off annual Tundra Tales reading program

Grant program again being offered; registration deadline Friday, Jan. 20

Registration is now open for the Green Bay Packers 13th annual Tundra Tales at-home reading program for students in grades 4K through 5. The registration deadline is Friday, Jan. 20, 2023, and the program will run from Jan. 30 through March 5, 2023.

The Tundra Tales program aims to support children reading at grade level by third grade and developing life-long reading habits by encouraging children to read outside of school. Students in 4K through fifth grade must

read or be read to for 60 minutes every week, outside of school, for four weeks (a total of 240 minutes). An extra week to achieve the total goal has been included to accommodate school schedules.

Educators and coordinators can offer their participants one four-week segment. Participants who achieve the final goal will receive a Packers Hall of Fame voucher good for one free participant admission and one free adult admission.

Each public or private Wisconsin school classroom registered for Tundra Tales that has a 75 percent or higher completion rate for the program will be eligible to receive a \$100 grant to use toward literary resources for their school or classroom. Additionally, each school

See **PROGRAM** page 3

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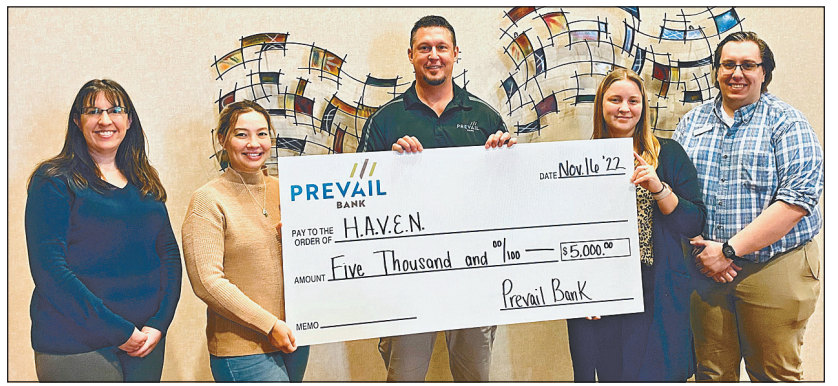
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Prevail Bank donates to HAVEN

Prevail Bank, with locations in Baraboo, Eau Claire, Marshfield, Medford, Owen, Phillips, Stevens Point, Wausau, and Wisconsin Rapids, recently donated \$5,000 to HAVEN, Inc., a domestic abuse and sexual assault agency/shelter here in Merrill, to support their programming, services, and facility expenses.

"HAVEN's services are invaluable; they're providing the means to break the cycle of violence," said Catherine Leifeld, Regional Marketing Specialist at Prevail Bank of Medford.

"We are proud to support HAVEN and the individuals and families of Lincoln County," said Jarrod Spinnato, Prevail Bank Branch Manager of Wausau. "We're a community bank that is passionate about economic development, financial stability, and the welfare and growth of individuals, families, and



Prevail Bank presented HAVEN, Inc., with a \$5,000 check in support of their services and programming. Pictured L to R are: Stacy Schoepke, Prevail Bank Relationship Banker; Kim West, HAVEN, Inc. Executive Director; Terry Barnett, Prevail Bank Commercial Lending Officer; Megan Farkas, Prevail Bank Teller Operations/Security Officer; and Graham Sweet, Prevail Bank Universal Banker. **Submitted photo.**

businesses."

"We provide shelter and services to persons who have experienced domestic abuse or sexual violence," said Kim West, HAVEN's Executive

Director. "Families who choose to stay with HAVEN are taking the steps to break the cycle of violence and protect their children from fu-

See **PREVAIL** page 4

North Central Community Services Program Board announces appointment of Gary Olsen as NCHC Executive Director

North Central Health Care (NCHC) and the North Central Community Services Program (NCCSP) Board announce the appointment of Gary Olsen to serve as the organization's Executive Director, effective December 29, 2022. Olsen was unanimously appointed by the Executive Committee of the NCCSP Board and will replace Mort McBain, who served as NCHC Interim Executive Director since

April 2022. Olsen joined North Central Health Care in May 2022 as the organization's Finance Director.

"While serving as NCHC's Finance Director, Mr. Olsen has quickly shown his ability to navigate a complex organization and effectively collaborate with leadership in Marathon, Lincoln, and Langlade Counties," said NCCSP Board Chair, Kurt Gibbs. "His background in government leadership and finance provides a solid foundation that will continue to propel the organization forward as NCHC

continues to navigate the unprecedented impacts of Covid-19 and enter the final phases of renovations for the Wausau Campus in 2023. We are pleased to have Gary lead this dedicated team of employees at NCHC."

Olsen has more than 28 years of experience in government leadership roles, including serving as the Senior Accountant at Shawano County for 7 years, Finance Director at Langlade County for 16 years, and as Village Administrator for the Village of Rothschild for 5 years.

"I am honored to accept the role as NCHC's Executive Director and look forward to a bright future for this organization. Nothing has impressed me more in the last several months than the impact NCHC has on the lives of so many in Central Wisconsin who seek services for mental health, recovery, long-term care, and developmental disability needs," said Gary Olsen. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve in this new capacity on behalf of our three partner counties, those we serve, and the team of talented, hard-working employees at NCHC."

The NCCSP Board and North Central Health Care leadership would like to extend their appreciation to Mort McBain, who served as Interim Executive Director since April 1, 2022. McBain was responsible for the oversight of administrative functions, which included hiring a Finance Director and producing NCHC's 2023 Budget as well as ensuring continued commitment to patient care, quality, and safety for the organization.

NCHC manages Pine Crest Nursing Home in Merrill, among other facilities in Lincoln, Marathon, and Langlade Counties (Merrill, Wausau, and Antigo).



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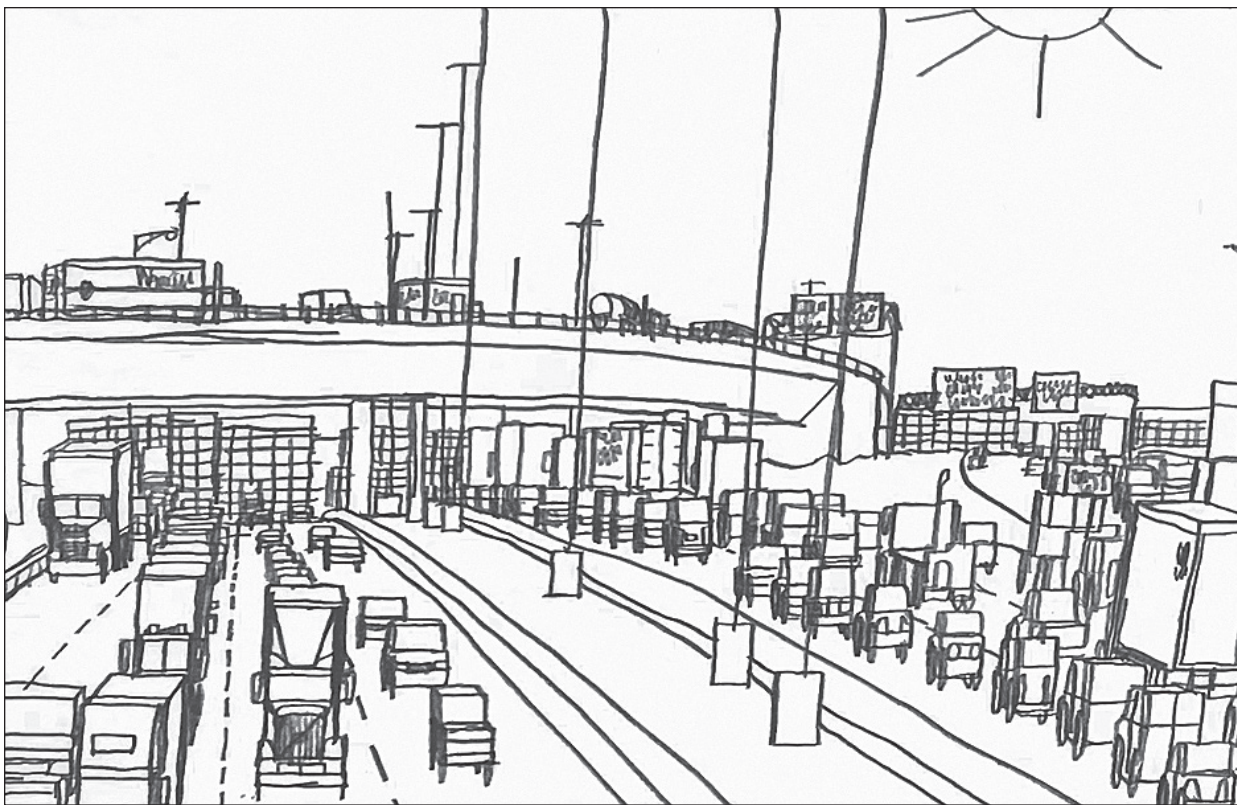


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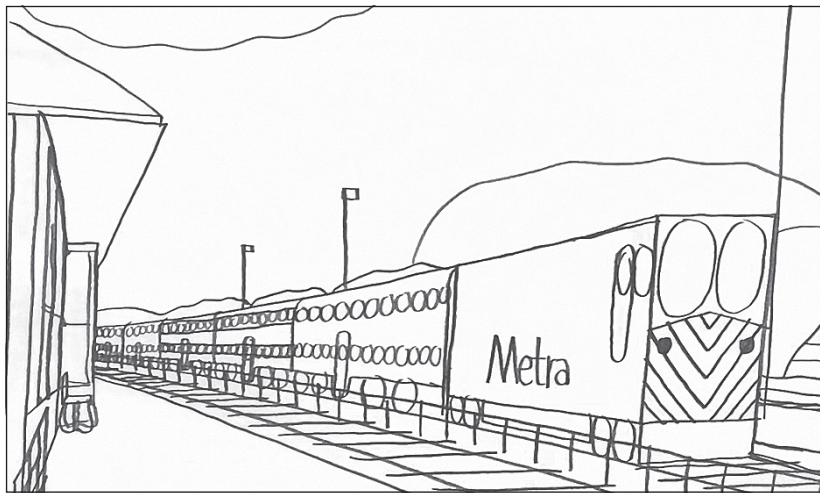
Artwork by Chase Davis.

Beyond Books: Community ArtShare - "It's all about perspective"

The T.B. Scott Free Library in Merrill will start the new year of Beyond Books: Community ArtShare with an exhibit entitled: It's All About Perspective, by Chase Davis, which will be on display the months of January and February.

Chase is a local artist born and raised in Merrill. At the age of three, he was diagnosed with autism. His mom, Julie, says he will always need some assistance with his day-to-day life, but he has come a long way from the early years. He has had a love of trains, planes, and semi-trucks since very young. She said that autistic individuals can become obsessive about their interests, and Chase's love turned into drawings. Julie believes it is calming for Chase to draw his favorite things.

Chase offers a wonderful perspective in his drawings. His favorite medium is a simple #2 pencil on paper which has resulted in a few hundred sketchbooks filled with his creations. Local railroad enthusiasts have been supporting and encouraging Chase



throughout the years with gifts of calendars and magazines which he uses for inspiration.

When Chase was in high school, some of his drawings were made into Christmas cards which were sold around town. He made over \$900, which he then donated to his specials needs classroom for field trips and extras for the classroom. Chase was also featured in a national

railroad magazine called, *Railfan & Railroad*.

When Chase breezes into the library, the staff always asks him how he's doing, and he always enthusiastically answers, "Living the dream!" The art he draws on paper, and the happiness he creates just by being himself, is a wonderful gift.

And in the end, it's all about perspective.

PROGRAM from page 1

that has five classrooms or more complete the program will be entered to win one of five \$1,000 grants for literacy resources at the school.

Grants are funded by Green Bay Packers Give Back and are available for public and private schools in Wisconsin only. Checks will be made out to schools or districts, with letters specifying how funds should be distributed to individual classes. To release funding, the Green Bay

Packers Community Outreach department must have a W9 on file. W9 forms are available upon request.

Program information will be available on packers.com/tundratales. The deadline to turn in final tracking sheets is Monday, March 6.

Homeschoolers, virtual schools, after-school programs, parent-teacher organizations, and families have also participated in the program and are encouraged to continue doing so.

For more information, visit packers.com/tundratales.

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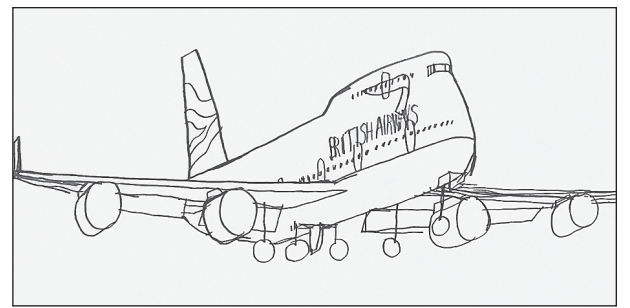
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OBITUARIES



Brian S. Lenz, 55, passed away of natural causes on Wednesday, December 14, 2022. Brian was born on August 28, 1967, in Wausau, son of Reinold and Marlene (Parsch) Lenz. Brian graduated from Merrill Senior High School and UW-Whitewater. He worked professionally in a variety of fields including lending, hospitality, and sales. He resided in the Milwaukee area most of his adult life, but also lived and worked in the Twin Cities for a number of

years. Brian will be remembered most for his outgoing and engaging personality, being able to have a conversation with just about anyone on any subject, and for being a generous friend and family member. He was an avid sports fan, who enjoyed attending games and watching them with friends. He commissioned a fantasy football league with his Merrill friends for many years. While he was quick to make new friends anywhere he went, he always appreciated his old friends and family the most. He was an uncle to five nieces and nephews who would attest that he was a very fun uncle. He left us way too soon and will always be missed and loved.

Brian is survived by his parents, Reinold and Marlene Lenz; sister, Brenda Lenz (Mark Giese); brother, Brad (Gina) Lenz; five nieces and nephews; aunts and uncles, Gerri Loy, Larry (Eunice) Parsch, Lyle Rusch, and Lois Obermeier; and many cousins. Brian was preceded in death by his grandparents, William and Helen Lenz, and Lorence and Betty Parsch; aunts and uncles, Miram Lenz, Jean Rusch, Chuck Parsch, Gerry Parsch, and Vern Obermeier.

Private family services 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



Esther Leona Natzke, age 89, of Merrill, passed away peacefully under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, at Pinecrest Nursing Home in Merrill, WI.

Esther was the youngest of seven children born to Henry and Ernestine (Winter) Natzke on November 4, 1933, in the Town of Corning. Esther lived in the Town of Corning until 2008 when she moved to Merrill. She helped her

brother, Arnold, on his dairy farm and in his later years she was his caregiver.

Esther had a very personal relationship with Jesus and was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Merrill where she sang in the church choir for many years. She loved to sing and could harmonize to most any song. She was a member of the local Red Hat Society and red was also her favorite color. She loved to play sheephead at the Merrill Enrichment Center. Watching the Packers and Brewers was always a joy for her. She treasured the time she was able to spend with her family and friends, and her "Esther Bars" were always a favorite treat for her great-nieces and great-nephews.

Esther will forever be remembered by her sisters-in-law, Ethel Natzke and LuEllen Natzke; nieces, Norma (Larry) Baumann, Beth (Ron) Kautz, and Deb (Dan) Seidl; nephews, John, (Sherry) Kudick, Steve Natzke, Phil (Kelly) Natzke, and Mike (Kelley) Natzke; and other family and friends.

Esther was preceded in death by her parents; sisters, Frieda Natzke and Edna (Vern) Kudick; brothers, Arnold Natzke, Ervin (Dorothy) Natzke, Martin Natzke, and Harold Natzke; and nephew, Raymond Kudick.

A Funeral Service was held for Esther at 11:00 AM on Saturday, December 31, 2022, at Trinity Lutheran Church (107 N State St, Merrill, WI 54452) with Rev. Scott Gustafson officiating. A public visitation was held from 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM on Friday, December 30, 2022, at Waid Funeral Home as well as from 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM prior to Esther's funeral service at the church.

Interment will take place at 11:00 AM on Monday, January 9, 2023, at Merrill Memorial Park.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Esther's name to Trinity Lutheran Church and School in Merrill or the charity of your choice.

Esther's family would like to thank the staff at Pinecrest Nursing home, providers and staff at Marshfield Clinic, and the caregivers with Aspirus Comfort Care and Hospice Services for the wonderful care and concern they have shown her over the years.

If you would like to leave a message of sympathy for Esther's family, please visit her obituary page at www.waidfuneral.com.



Deborah A. Johnson, age 60, of Rothschild, WI passed away unexpectedly on Thursday, December 22, 2022 in Rothschild, WI.

Funeral Services will be held at 11:00 AM on Monday, January 2, 2023 at Ritchay Funeral Home in Wisconsin Rapids, WI. Rev. Joshua Pegram will officiate the service. Visitation will be held from 9:30 AM until the time of service at 11:00 AM at the funeral home.

Deb was born on March 14, 1962 to Donald and Delores (Hemmrich) Loeffel in Wausau, WI. After high school she attained multiple degrees from Northcentral Technical College in Wausau and served her working career as a librarian for the Marathon County Public Library. She married Martin Johnson on September 19, 2020 in Rothchild, WI. Deb loved spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren. Family always came first for Deb, and being a mom and grandmother was her favorite thing in the world. Deb enjoyed reading, crocheting, sewing, country music and the outdoors. She also always loved snuggling her two dogs, Tucker and Dino.

Deborah is survived by her husband, Marty; children, Tara (Jimmy) Wagner, and TJ (Jenny) Fecteau; step-daughter, Sarah Schulman; grandchildren, McKenzie Wagner, Makayla Wagner, Avery Fecteau, Josh Ixtepan, Andre Ixtepan, and Sam Shulman.

She was preceded in death by her parents and grandparents. Her family would like to thank the Rothschild PD and Ritchay Funeral Home for their assistance in this difficult time.

Top baby names of 2022

Naming a newborn is a key step in welcoming the littlest and latest addition to the family. There are thousands of names for parents to choose from, but in the end, each name given to a child is special and unique, as they carry it with them throughout their life.

From Jan. 1 to Dec. 22, 2022, the Aspirus Health System welcomed 2999 babies into the world. A total of 1556 different names were given to those newborns and Aspirus has gathered the most popular baby names given throughout the system.

Here are the top baby names of 2022:

- | Boy | Girl |
|----------------|-----------------|
| 1. Henry (24) | 1. Ella (13) |
| 2. Oliver (19) | 2. Eleanor (13) |
| 3. Owen (17) | 3. Olivia (13) |

Aspirus cares for mothers and babies throughout the entire pregnancy, from the first prenatal visit through delivery.

The newborn intensive care unit (NICU) at Aspirus Wausau Hospital provides the added reassurance that world-class care is available within the Aspirus system if a baby needs specialized care after he or she is born.

For more information, visit www.aspirus.org/birthing-services.

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Billions and Trillions of Stars

Dear Reader,

Scientists estimate that in the observable universe, there are about 1 billion trillion stars. The entire universe holds between 30 and 70 billion trillion stars. In light of this, does it matter what we do today?



Here we are on this glowing green and blue planet revolving around a solitary star in one of the spiral arms of our obscure galaxy. And what are we doing with the precious gift of time that has been granted to us? We are fighting and clawing for survival in a world of limited resources, trying to gather an over-share for ourselves when others are homeless or starving, and at times committing genocide on innocents who deserve the gift of life.

Is this necessary? Is there really not enough for all of us? Can we move beyond these absurdly foolish and horrifyingly genocidal pursuits to a higher sense of spirituality?

We have to remember the broader context of our common humanity and focus on sharing and cooperating with one another, in order to help each other live a better life. Perhaps that is the best thing we can do as we orbit this one small sun among many billions of stars.

PATRICK J. WOOD
PUBLISHER

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

PREVAIL from page 2

ture harm. Prevail Bank's donation is greatly appreciated and will certainly assist us in breaking the inter-generational trauma that is so prevalent in Lincoln County."

The Charitable Contributions program of Prevail Bank is available for local non-profits that help local people in need, especially those with low-to-moderate incomes; stimulate communities financially; and/or enhance the standard of living of those less fortunate. If an organization is interested in applying for funds for a major initiative, go to: Prevail.bank/resources/community. Prevail Bank is continuously looking for ways to give back, help their customers pursue their dreams, and make things better in central Wisconsin.

Other non-profit agencies awarded donations this fall by Prevail Bank's Charitable Contributions Committee, include: The Children's Museum of Eau Claire, the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Greater Chippewa Valley, Central Wisconsin's Children's Museum (Stevens Point), Taylor County Supportive Housing, Inc. (Medford), Friends of the Old School, Inc. (Owen), Stevens Point Fire Fighters Charitable Foundation, Santa's Elves Foundation (FiField), Keep Area Teens Safe (KATS) (Wausau), the City of Medford (in support of a downtown revitalization project), United Way of the Greater Chippewa Valley, Marshfield Area United Way, United Way of South Wood & Adams Counties, Sandbox Child Care & Preschool (Medford), Medford Area for Tomorrow, Inc. (MATI) (in support of a new park stage), The Personal Development Center, Inc. (PDC) (Marshfield), Wood County Health Department (Wisconsin Rapids) (in support of its Bike Share Program), and The Farming for the Future Foundation (Stevens Point).

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Rep. Callahan to Chair Assembly Committee on Consumer Protection

On Dec. 16, 2022, State Representative Calvin Callahan (R-Tomahawk) received his committee assignments from Republican leadership and learned he will serve on the following committees during the 2023-'24 Legislative Session:

- Assembly Committee on Consumer Protection – Chair
- Assembly Committee on Insurance – Vice-Chair
- Assembly Committee on Forestry, Parks & Outdoor Recreation – Vice-Chair
- Assembly Committee on Corrections – Member
- Assembly Committee on Labor & Integrated Employment – Member
- Assembly Committee on Sporting Heritage – Member
- Assembly Committee on State Affairs – Member



Callahan

• Assembly Committee on Ways & Means – Member

“I am thrilled to learn that I will be the Chair of the Assembly Committee on Consumer Protection this coming session,” Rep. Callahan said. “I’m looking forward to leading my legislative colleagues on this important committee. I am confident that we will come up with solutions to issues involving Wisconsin consumers, as the committee has done in the past. The committee will continue to be a watchdog for Wisconsin consumers’ privacy and a supporter of fair and transparent business practices that promote a strong economy throughout the state.”

The 35th Assembly District includes all of Langlade and Lincoln Counties, as well as portions of Marathon, Oconto, Oneida, and Shawano Counties.

CAMPUS BRIEFS |

Area students named to UW-Whitewater Dean’s List

Reed Dombeck and Nicole Grawey of Merrill were named to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Dean’s List for the 2022 fall semester. These students have demonstrated their academic abilities by receiving a grade point average of 3.4 or above during this semester.

LEGAL NOTICES |

<p>Legals 7700</p> <p>STATE OF WISCONSIN CIRCUIT COURT WAUKESHA COUNTY Summons Case No. 2022CV001562 Judge Brad D. Schimel Foreclosure of Mortgage: 30404 Nationstar Mortgage LLC 8950 Cypress Waters Blvd. Coppell, TX 75019 Plaintiff, v. Kathleen A. Orlikowski 520 Windstone Drive, Unit 205 Hartland, WI 53029 Kathleen A. Orlikowski 247751 County Road O Merrill, WI 54452 Defendant. THE STATE OF WISCONSIN, To each person named above as a defendant: You are hereby notified that the Plaintiff named above has filed a lawsuit or other legal action against you. The complaint, which is also served upon you, states the nature and basis of the legal action. Within 40 days after December 22, 2022 you must respond with a written answer, as that term is used in chapter 802 of the Wisconsin Statutes, to the complaint. The court may reject or disregard an answer that does not follow the requirements of the statutes. The answer must be sent or delivered to the court, whose address is Waukesha County Courthouse 515 W. Moreland Blvd., Waukesha, WI 53188-2428, and</p>	<p>Legals 7700</p> <p>to Codilis, Moody & Circelli, P.C., plaintiff’s attorneys, whose address is 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 200, Burr Ridge, IL 60527. You may have an attorney help or represent you. If you do not provide a proper answer within 40 days, the court may grant judgment against you for the award of money or other legal action requested in the complaint, and you may lose your right to object to anything that is or may be incorrect in the complaint. A judgment may be enforced as provided by law. A judgment awarding money may become a lien against any real estate you own now or in the future, and may also be enforced by garnishment or seizure of property. Dated: December 15, 2022. Codilis, Moody & Circelli, P.C. 15W030 North Frontage Road, Suite 200 Burr Ridge, IL 60527 (414) 775-7700 pleadings@il.cslegal.com 50-22-01014 NOTE: This law firm is a debt collector. Codilis, Moody & Circelli, P.C. Attorneys for Plaintiff Electronically signed by Shawn R. Hillmann WI State Bar No. 1037005 Emily Thoms WI State Bar No. 1075844 Published 12/22/22, 12/29/22 & 1/5/23 WNAXLP</p>
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Wisconsin DOC launches behavioral motivation system at juvenile facilities

Court-appointed Lincoln Hills School/Copper Lake School Monitor believes it will have positive impact

MADISON, Wis. - The latest Monitor’s Report for Lincoln Hills School/Copper Lake School discusses the new behavioral motivation system the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) has implemented at the schools to reinforce prosocial behavior among youth, the latest example of the Evers Administration’s commitment to upgrading conditions at the facility and improving outcomes for youth in the criminal justice system.

The behavioral motivation system is rooted in positive reinforcement, providing youth in DOC care the chance to earn rewards for good behavior. The youth earn behavior grades based on their prosocial and antisocial behaviors in a given week, with the grade determining the amount of rewards and privileges they earn the following week.

The Monitor’s Report, filed on Dec. 6, 2022, notes some youth are still struggling with the change.

“The youth also indicated they liked the old system because they could ‘buy’ the things they wanted versus now—where they are required to earn the things that they wanted through following the rules/being on good behavior and exhibiting pro-social skills,” the Monitor wrote, adding that she has seen similar systems used in other juvenile correctional jurisdictions and believes it “will have a positive impact on conditions of confinement for youth over time.”

The 15th Report from the Monitor also looked at staffing, particularly safety staffing at the schools, which has been a point of concern for the Monitor and DOC this year. This latest Report notes that while staffing levels continued to pose problems intermittently during this reporting period (August–October), recent hires in the safety ranks have significantly boosted staffing levels.

Some days and times during the reporting period, vacant positions coupled with day-of call outs from safety staff required keeping youth in their rooms for longer than normal and providing education in the housing units instead of the school building.

“When there were adequate staffing levels, youth went to school, were outside, in music lab, in the recreation unit, and out of their rooms,” the Report stated.

“Some days we could not meet our goal to have youth out of their rooms for at least 12 hours every day,” DOC Secretary Kevin Carr said. “While we appreciate the Monitor supporting our decision to modify operations to ensure the safe supervision of youth, this Administration will continue to seek every avenue to recruit new staff to Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake so we can safely meet the standards we have set.”

Some of those recruiting efforts are already paying off. DOC has seen an increased interest in youth counselor and youth counselor-advanced positions, with the Monitor’s Report stating the agency filled 21 of these safety positions during the reporting period. That includes 17 who graduated from the Division of Juvenile Corrections training academy in mid-November and are completing the on-the-job portion of their training.

“At the time of the site visit, (the) majority of the units had adequate direct-care staffing,” the Monitor wrote. “The significant hiring in the youth counselor classifications should provide for more available staff which will hopefully result in youth spending more time out of their room, off units, and in the school area.”

That statement proved to be prophetic in the weeks following the Monitor’s visit. Here is a look at the per-

centage of out-of-room time received during the week of Nov. 28 for youth in general population living units at Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake:

- **Rogers Unit** – 70.24 out of 84 scheduled hours (84%)
- **Miller Unit** – 68.57 out of 84 scheduled hours (82%)
- **Hughes Unit** – 74.58 out of scheduled 84 hours (89%)
- **Roosevelt Unit** – 84 out of 84 scheduled hours (100%)
- **King Unit** – 84 out of 84 scheduled hours (100%)

“We’re trending in the right direction,” said Division of Juvenile Corrections (DJC) Administrator Ron Hermes. “We’ve been able to meet our goal of at least 12 hours of out-of-room time for more youth, more often. The influx of new hires should help us keep moving in that direction and meet the standards this Administration has set.”

Other highlights from this reporting period include:

- Continued positive attitude of both youth and staff. The Monitor noted a positive body language and tone during her in-person visit, and wrote that random reviews of 50 videos from the housing units showed staff engaged with youth in multiple activities.
- The education department at the facility has been evaluating recommendations from an education consultant and developing strategies to implement those suggestions.
- DOC altered its staffing schedule. Staff prefer the new schedule, which also allowed the agency to reduce the amount of modified programming time when youth are in their rooms and cannot do their education work in the school building.
- DOC is in “substantial compliance” with two more elements of the consent decree.

The Monitor was appointed by the courts following a 2015 FBI investigation and a 2017 lawsuit against the Walker Administration related to conditions at Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake, resulting in financial settlements and a consent decree containing dozens of benchmarks for the DOC to meet. Conditions under the previous administration also led to the passage of 2017 Act 185. Among other things, the legislation called for closing Lincoln Hills/Copper Lake and building smaller state-run juvenile correctional facilities.

The DOC is currently working with the City of Milwaukee and area legislators to gather community input on a proposed site for a new juvenile facility in north Milwaukee. The agency recently hosted three informational sessions where subject-matter experts answered questions about the design and safety of the proposed facility, as well as programs offered to youth in DOC care. More meetings are scheduled before the City makes a final decision on approving the site. Artist renderings and more about DOC’s plans for juvenile corrections is available at: <https://doc.wi.gov/Pages/AboutDOC/Act185.aspx>.

NOTICE OF CAUCUS TOWN OF SCOTT

Notice is hereby given that the **Caucus for the Spring Election** in the Town of Scott, Lincoln County, WI, will be held at the Scott Town Hall, N563 Lake Road, Merrill, at **6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, January 10, 2023**. Qualified electors of the Town of Scott may nominate and vote for candidates to fill the following offices in the Spring Election:

- Town Board Chairperson
- Town Board Supervisor (2)
- Town Clerk
- Town Treasurer

Debra Lemmer, Town Clerk
Town of Scott, Lincoln County, WI
Published January 5, 2023

NOTICE
CITY OF MERRILL
CHRISTMAS TREE PICKUP

January 9-12, 2023

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

Notice of Town Caucus
Town of Corning
To be held Tuesday, January 10th, 2023
at 7:00 pm at the Corning Town Hall

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that a caucus for the Town of Corning will be held at the Corning Town Hall on Tuesday, January 10th, 2023 at 7:00 P.M. The purpose of the meeting is to place in nomination candidates for the following town offices to be voted on for the spring election which will be held on Tuesday the 4th day of April 2023 at 7 P.M. Offices are for the term of two years to succeed the present incumbents listed, whose term of office will expire April 18th, 2023.

Office	Incumbent
Town Board Chairperson	John Kudick
Town Board Supervisor	Jeff Simon
Town Board Supervisor	Todd Luedtke
Town Board Clerk	Rickey Hass
Town Board Treasurer	Katie Giese

Rickey C. Hass, Clerk
Please Recycle
Published January 5, 2023

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WNAXLP

TOWN OF ROCK FALLS
NOTICE OF CAUCUS JAN 10th, 2023

There will be a caucus for nomination of candidates for the April 2023 elections of all officers town of Rock Falls,

7pm. Jan 10th, 2023 at
the Rock Falls town hall
W5895 Rock Falls Dr., Irma, Wi.

Published Dec. 28 & 29, 2022 &
Jan. 4 & 5, 2023

WNAXLP



Movie Reviews

BY CHRISTOPHER STAMM
GUEST MOVIE REVIEWER

Doctor Sleep

(Now streaming on multiple platforms)

★★★★★

This film is rated R – for language, disturbing violence involving a child, and adult themes

Happy New Year, everyone! Welcome to 2023. Let's hope it's better than 2022 or 2021 or 2020. Yeah, it's been a rough couple of years, but every day

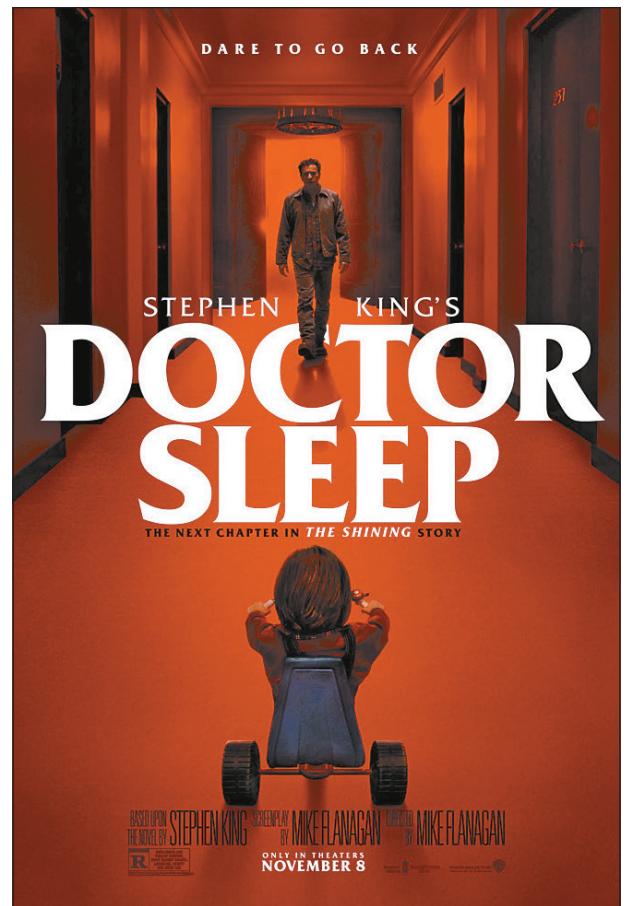
brings new opportunities, so let's be positive, folks!

Having spent the last two weeks of December on vacation, I had a chance to watch some old favorites and one really stood out for me, so I decided to write a review of this one.

Doctor Sleep is a straight up sequel to *The Shining* and, frankly, in my humble opinion, it eclipses its predecessor by a country mile.

We all know the story of *The Shining*, so no need to revisit that. *Doctor Sleep* picks up 25 years later, and Danny Torrance has not done well in life, haunted by his memories of the Overlook Hotel. He has crawled into a bottle and never looked back. An event occurs, and he finally hits rock bottom and decides a change is needed.

Jump ahead a few years and Danny is clean and sober and working at a hospice where he uses his talents to ease people into the next life, and they call



him *Doctor Sleep*.

He is also made aware of a little girl who has the same "shine" as he does and is just as powerful, but the problem is, he isn't the only one who is aware of her, and that's where the story gets moving.

This is a fantastic film, everyone, and well worth the watch. But be warned: there is some very disturbing content in this one, and I mean disturbing with a big fat capital D, involving the murder of a child shown in brutal and graphic fashion. Mind

you, it is not gratuitous; it does serve a purpose in the film, to show just how evil and ruthless Danny's adversaries are, but nonetheless, I was profoundly unnerved by that sequence. Nobody said going back to the Overlook Hotel would be pleasant, now did they?

You have been warned. Propelled forward by an excellent story line, incredible performances, and outstanding direction, *Doctor Sleep* gets the full five out of five stars from me.

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

PUSS IN BOOTS
"PG" (1HR 40MIN)
FRIDAY: 7:00PM
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY:
1:00, 3:15, 7:00PM
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER
"PG13" (3HR 12MIN)
FRIDAY: 7:00 & 9:00PM
SATURDAY AND SUNDAY:
1:00, 7:00 & 9:00PM
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

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JAN. 10TH - SPAGHETTI & MEATBALLS
JAN. 17TH - CHIMP'S
Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

FRIDAY NIGHTS
JAN. 6TH - COCONUT SHRIMP
JAN. 13TH - WALLEYE
Dinner served: Friday 4:00-8:00 PM
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Devil's Creek Stump Jumpers donate to Merrill Food Pantry

Club members Jeff and Priscilla Krall present a \$200 donation to Sister Celine Goessl (center) of the Merrill Food Pantry on behalf of the Devil's Creek Stump Jumpers Snowmobile Club.

Submitted photo.

ALL SHOCK UP

RONNIE B ELVIS
ELVIS TRIBUTE SHOW
JANUARY 7 | 6:30 & 8PM

DRESS IN THE ERA OF ELVIS (1950'S-1970'S)
RECEIVE \$15 REWARDS PLAY 5PM-12AM

Visit Ho-Chunk Gaming Wittenberg on Saturday January 7, 2023 to participate in Elvis' Birthdate celebration. Earn 25 points and be eligible to spin the wheel for your chance to win Rewards Play or a set of 4-Pint Elvis Etched Glasses; up to 3x while supplies last.

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Honey Ham Spiral Cut - Frozen 9 lbs. ONLY \$1.49 a lb.	String Cheese Mozzarella 168 ct. - 1 oz. ONLY \$14.89	Bugles - Nacho 14.5 oz. ONLY \$2.69
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French Fries Frozen Crinkle Cut 5 lbs. ONLY \$8.49	Chicken Leg Quarters - Frozen 10 lbs. ONLY 89¢ a lb.	Chicken Nuggets Fully Cooked - Frozen 32 oz. ONLY \$5.99

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CONTEST from page 1

Second place winner in the business category: Inclusa, 101 E. 1st St., Merrill.

Tina L. Scott photos.

share third place honors are the homes of Shauna Bush-Cooper at 118 N State St. in Merrill and the home of Randall Lambrecht at 1003 Jefferson St. in Merrill.

The winners of the residential category received Chamber bucks to use at businesses in the Merrill area: \$100 in Chamber bucks for first place, \$75 in Chamber bucks for second place, and \$25 in Chamber bucks to each of the third place winners.

In the business decorating category, the winners are:

First place – Park City Credit Union, 501 S. Pine Ridge Ave., Merrill.

Second place – Inclusa, 101 E. 1st St., Merrill.

Third place – Strive 4 Life, LLC, 730 E. 2nd St., Merrill.

The winning businesses in the business decorating category will receive a small plaque.

“Thank you to everyone who made Merrill’s small-town charm sparkle this holiday season!” said Chantel Kuczmariski, Communications Consultant for the City of Merrill.

“In an effort to make Merrill’s



First place winner in the business category: Park City Credit Union, 501 S. Pine Ridge Ave., Merrill.

Tour of Lights Bus Ride more exciting, we thought hosting a city-wide holiday decorating contest would encourage more people to decorate their homes and businesses, and make it more fun for riders by having them be the judges,” said Brad Brummond, Merrill Transit Administrator.

Mission accomplished. This year the buses were full to capacity for this fun, free event for all ages.

Want to take your own tour of the holiday lights? To view a map listing all the homes and businesses that participated in Merrill’s Holiday Decorating Contest, visit: www.merrillchamber.org or go to: <https://www.facebook.com/merrill.chamber1/photos/a.1503934533174796/3460869820814581>. Many other homes are also decorated but were not registered as contest participants.

CHEER from page 1

December’s Mental Health Monday,” she said. “We had intended for every elementary and middle school student to receive one, but not all students wanted to take a kit.” She said they then distributed kits, in an effort to reach other community members in need, through the Food For Kids program administered by St. Stephens UCC (280-300 kits) and through the Trinity Lutheran Church Food Pantry (80 kits).

Additional kits were provided to the Merrill Police Department for distribution and at MHS prior to the Christmas break.

Support for the project came from the Merrill Community Foundation Beyond Crayons & Computers Grant Program.

Special appreciation goes out to our additional sponsors and community partners: Church Mutual, Crossbridge Community Bank, Walmart, The AmericInn, The Throwline, Raise Your Voice, Trinity Lutheran Food Pantry, the Food for Kids program, area Boy Scouts, and the Merrill Police Department, Mrs. Dachel said.

“It is not often that classes can participate in a project of this scale, experiencing so many foundational business concepts while making a positive difference in our community,” she said. “A teacher could not be more proud of their students.”



Business and DECA Club students work together to assemble Cheer Kits they distributed to children in the community. Photo courtesy of DECA Club.

FFA MEMBER OF THE MONTH

Claire Duley, a Junior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named FFA Member of the Month for December 2022.

Claire joined FFA when she was a Freshman and has participated in field trips, fundraising, and activities since then. “I joined FFA because the future of agriculture is very important to me,” Claire said. “I live on a pretty decent-sized cattle farm with both dairy and beef. I always wanted people to understand why I do what I do on the farm, and to show them that farming isn’t some big factory operation all the time.”

“I am the fourth generation of our farm under my dad,” she said. “I show cattle, both beef and dairy, I help people stay educated about what’s going on in the agriculture industries and communities.”

When not in school, Claire works full time on the family farm. In her free time, she enjoys working with her show animals, baking, catching up with friends, and playing cards with her grandparents. The daughter of Mark and Amy Duley of Merrill, Claire hopes to one day take over the family farm in the Town of Pine River, “with a job as a MA on the side until I get to that point,” she said.



Claire Duley

Congratulations from this sponsor:

Gail Abegglen
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FFA Members highlighted in this feature are selected by the Executive Committee of the FFA, not by the sponsor.



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Pet of the Week

Ginger came to LCHS when her owner could no longer care for her. She is very sweet, laid back and gets along great with other cats! **Ginger** is about 10 years old so she needs a warm, cozy home to live out her sunset years. She is fixed, microchipped and up to date on her vaccinations. Come meet **Ginger** today!

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Visit all the adoptable animals at 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, or visit us on the web at www.furypets.com.

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Share Today. Shape Tomorrow.

Looking for Volunteers to make a difference in a youth’s life!

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New Year - New Career!

Don’t miss your opportunity to recruit new employees by advertising your open positions in the Foto News **New Year - New Career!** Special Section.

Publishes: Thursday, January 12th & 19th
Deadline: Friday, January 6th

GET 25% OFF the 2nd week in the Merrill Foto News! Run your ad on January 12th at regular price. Run the same ad in the Foto News on January 19th for 25% off the regular price.

BOTH WEEKS -- ADD MORE MARKETS AT 25% OFF! Run the same ad in any additional papers and get 25% off the Merrill Foto News regular ad price.

MERRILL Foto News

Contact: Jennifer Gartmann - 715-218-1644
Dinah Schneider - 715-905-1001

MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week’s Featured Student is **Kinsley Young**
Daughter of **Kyle & Kimberly Young**
Kinsley is in 2nd grade at Trinity Lutheran School.
She was nominated by Bridget Thompson.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
I like all of the subjects, but mostly I like writing and spelling because this year we have pen pals and I love it!

What is your favorite part of school? Why?
I like lunch, but I also really like just the whole learning part, even though I have to do a lot of work.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why?
I would like to play football in high school and college, but then would also like to be a scientist someday. I haven’t really decided yet because I have a lot of time. I have a lot of choices!

Kinsley is a phenomenal student! She is always on task and independent in her work. She has a strong work ethic in the classroom and is also respectful to teachers and kind to her peers. She has excellent reading abilities!
~ Bridget Thompson

Student of the Week Sponsored by:
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CLASSIFIEDS

Deadline: Monday at 11:30 a.m.
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Detert is appointed to the Professional Standards Council

Trisha Detert, Merrill High School Principal, was recently appointed to the Professional Standards Council for Teachers (PSCT) as a representative of the Association of Wisconsin School Administrators. Appointments are subject to confirmation by the Wisconsin Senate, however, Detert's term is



Detert

See DETERT page 12

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Merrill Wrestlers host Northern Exposure



Callum Wheeler, going 7-0 at Northern Exposure.



Brett Suchocki with the pin.

Photos courtesy of Merrill Wrestling Team.

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Wednesday, Dec. 28, and Thursday, Dec. 29, 2022, the Merrill High School Wrestling Team hosted the Northern Exposure Dual Meet Tournament.

"Merrill went 6-1 taking fifth place," said Merrill Varsity Wrestling Coach Brian Suchocki. "Due to a tiebreaker scenario, Merrill ended up in the fifth place match; however, Merrill was able to beat second place Beaver Dam."

"We wrestled solid throughout the tournament," he said. "We had our opportunities to make the finals. We are continuing to improve."

"We lost that fifth match on day 1 against Wisconsin Dells, and I don't think we had our best dual, so it was really important that we came back on day 2 to compete at a high level," Suchocki said. "We wrestled a solid Beaver Dam team and had some really exciting matches. With two matches left, we were down 32-33."

"It was nice knowing we were finishing the dual with two seniors, Gage Lassa and Brian Ball," he said. "Gage picked up a big pin, putting us up by five points. This was Gage's first competition since joining our team. It was impressive he ended up 7-0 at the tournament."

"Brian followed that up with an exciting triple-overtime win to give us an eight-point victory. Brian also went 7-0

for the tournament."

"We had four wrestlers go 7-0 at the tournament," Suchocki said. "Ryder Depies and Callum Wheeler were the other two. Ryder dominated his competition, and Callum also had a very strong performance."

Five wrestlers also went 6-1: Jon Hart, Brett Suchocki, Brady Norton, Austin Depies, and Carson Brooks.

"As a team, our results were good," Suchocki said, "but our main goal as a team is to give full effort and learn throughout the season."

Varsity wrestlers records at Northern Exposure:

- Allison Hunter 3-4
- Joey Jenson 3-4
- Jon Hart 6-1
- Brett Suchocki 6-1
- Brady Norton 6-1
- Callum Wheeler 7-0
- Noah Clifford 2-3
- Hunter Oppen 4-3
- Gage Lassa 7-0
- Brian Ball 7-0
- Austin Depies 6-1
- Carson Brooks 6-1
- Ryder Depies 7-0
- Noah Klug 1-1
- Mikal Plautz 1-3
- Ian Dreikosen 4-2
- Jace Olson 2-2

On Thursday, Jan. 5, 2023, the Merrill wrestlers face off against SPASH.

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2023 Merrill High School Winter Sports Schedules

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, and JV2)			
Fri. Jan. 6	Stevens Point (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Fri. Jan. 6	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Sat. Jan. 7	Ashland (JV & JV2)	Away	3:00 pm
Sat. Jan. 7	Ashland (Varsity)	Away	4:45 pm
Tues. Jan. 10	WI Rapids Lincoln (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Tues. Jan. 10	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Girls Basketball (Varsity & JV)			
Fri. Jan. 6	Stevens Point (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Fri. Jan. 6	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Tues. Jan. 10	WI Rapids Lincoln (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Tues. Jan. 10	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Boys Hockey (Varsity and JV)			
Thurs. Jan. 5	Marshfield (JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 5	Marshfield (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 12	D. C. Everest (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 12	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Girls Hockey (Varsity and JV)			
Thurs. Jan. 5	Northland Pines (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Tues. Jan. 10	Medford (JV)	Away	6:00 pm
Boys Wrestling (Varsity and JV)			
Thurs. Jan. 5	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	6:00 pm
Sat. Jan. 7	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	8:00 am
Thurs. Jan. 12	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	6:00 pm
Girls Wrestling (Varsity)			
Thurs. Jan. 5	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 12	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:

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"Thank you to Oliver!" the staff and volunteers at the Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS) said. Oliver donated all these needed supplies to the LCHS for his 10th birthday!

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ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Conor Sayles, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Conor is a third-year member of the Merrill Varsity Dance Team, and he and his duet partner won first place in the D2 Hip Hop Duet competition at Little Chute in December. Conor started dancing when he was 10 years old, in the 5th grade, at what was then Dorinda's Dance Studio, now Brooke's School of Dance, taking a Hip Hop class. Since then, his love of dancing grew, and now he takes two Hip Hop classes, along with Jazz, Tap, and Lyrical classes. He is considering going out for track in the spring but has not decided for certain.

At school, Conor is on the Student Council, and he also works part-time at Culvers. "I don't have a lot of free time," he said, but when he does, "I love to paint on canvases, I'm just really artistic." He said he loves to work, to hang out with his friends shopping in Wausau, going thrifting, watching movies, and having big sleepovers, like their recent "Friendsgiving" and Friends' Christmas events with secret Santa. He also likes to spend time with family on holidays, and "I love to go fishing with my dad and hunting (deer, rifle). My mom lives in Michigan, and I go visit her on my breaks and visit friends there. She lives on Lake Superior, so I go swimming a lot."

The son of Caroline Sayles of Lanse, Michigan, and Kirk Sayles of Merrill, Conor has a 1.6 GPA and plans to attend cosmetology school after graduation, with plans to open a salon here in Merrill with a friend after they complete their cosmetology education. He was offered a scholarship for a school for dance, he said, but it was kind of far away and he didn't really think that's what he wanted to do, so he turned it down. "I don't think I'm ready for that," he said. "I want to do hair, nails, and makeup."

Conor Sayles

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Eve, Claire, and Kitana recently donated some much-needed supplies to the Lincoln County Humane Society. The staff, volunteers, and pets are grateful!

Submitted photos.



Above: A truck bed full of donations were recently brought in to the Lincoln County Humane Society (LCHS), made in memory of Bobbi Grund from Adam and the Grund Family. "Thank you so much for thinking of the pets," LCHS staff said. Right: Jane and Eugene Rowe donated a bunch of cleaning supplies and pet food to the Lincoln County Humane Society on Nov. 26, 2022. "We are incredibly grateful for this generous donation. Thank you, Jane & Eugene!" LCHS Manager Liz said.



On Oct. 16, 2022, the Merrill Eagles #584 held a Pancake Breakfast Benefit for Briah Leach. Proceeds from the Breakfast were presented to the Leach family by Auxiliary representative Sue Heckendorf (far left) and Aerie representative Bryan Plautz (far right). Receiving the checks (center) are Courtney Ravn, Briah Leach, and Jeremy Leach.

Submitted photo.



MAC Home received a donation from the students in the National Junior Honor Society at Trinity Lutheran School from a candy cane sale that was held throughout December. The students raised \$926 to donate to MAC Home and also made fleece blankets to donate for their clients.

Submitted photo.

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DETERT
from page 10

effective immediately. Pending Senate confirmation, Detert's three-year term will continue through Dec. 9, 2025

The Council serves in an advisory capacity to the State Superintendent in matters related to educator preparation, licensing, and educator development.

"We are very proud that Mrs. Detert was asked to serve on this important council for the State of Wisconsin and have no doubt that she will do an outstanding job of representing our district and community," said Shannon Murray, Superintendent of Merrill Area Public Schools.

Mrs. Detert will maintain her role as Principal while serving in this capacity. "I am honored to serve on the Professional Standards Council," Mrs. Detert said, "This opportunity will allow me to grow my leadership skills and positively impact education in Wisconsin."



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