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Local author chat with Tom Burg, new writers group begins at T.B. Scott Saturday



TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

Thomas E. Burg of Merrill, formerly a Special Agent with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) (1967-1999) and now an author, will be at the T.B. Scott Free Library in Merrill this Saturday to talk about his books, including the recent release of his second crime fiction novel.

See **T.B. SCOTT** page 7



Ken Schneider, Valerie Caylor, and Tom Barker take the oath of office in front of Judge Robert Russell.

Michael Caylor Jr. photo.

County officials sworn in

On Tuesday, Jan. 3, 2023, Sheriff Ken Schneider, Clerk of Court Tom Barker, and newly-elected Coroner Valerie Caylor all took their oaths of office before Judge Robert Russell in the Branch II Lincoln County Courtroom in an official swearing-in ceremony.

Schneider, a 32-year veteran of the Sheriff's Office is starting his second term after defeating a primary challenger and two challengers in the general election.

Barker is starting his first elected term as the Lincoln County Clerk of Court after being appointed to that position in September of 2021 to fill the term of Marie Peterson who resigned to take a job with the State of Wisconsin. Barker is a former detective with the Lincoln County



Former Lincoln County Coroner Paul Proulx wishes former Deputy Coroner and new Lincoln County Coroner Valerie Caylor well after she takes her oath of office.

Sheriff's Office, having served with that agency for 17 years.

Caylor, formerly a Deputy Coroner, succeeds incumbent Paul Proulx who chose not to run and is officially retired from the County after having served nearly 50 years between the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office and the Coroner's Office. Caylor, who is a critical care flight paramedic, has served with the Marathon County Medical Examiner's Office and Lincoln County Coroner's Office prior to being elected to the position in November.

Barker and Caylor both ran unopposed on the ballot.

All three are members of the Republican Party.

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MERRILL Foto News



Holiday Decorating Contest

Strive 4 Life LLC was the third place winner of the business decorating category in the Merrill Holiday Decorating Contest. A photo was not available as of press time last week.

Submitted photo.

New Year - New Career!

Check out the Employment Section in today's paper for job opportunities.

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MERRILL Foto News

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76th Alice in Dairyland applications open through February 3

MADISON, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade, and Consumer Protection (DATCP) invites individuals with a passion for promoting agriculture to apply for the 76th Alice in Dairyland through Feb. 3, 2023.

As one of the most widely recognized communications professionals in Wisconsin agriculture, Alice in Dairyland travels extensively throughout the state promoting Wisconsin's agriculture industry and its impact on the state economy. In this highly visible and fast-paced position, Alice in Dairyland serves as a full-time spokesperson, cultivates relationships with television, radio, and print media outlets throughout the state, writes and delivers speeches at events, and utilizes social media to tell the stories of Wisconsin agriculture. Additional duties include developing and executing marketing plans, delivering classroom presentations, and networking with industry professionals.

Alice must also learn and retain information about the diversity of Wisconsin agriculture and be able to tailor that information to educate both urban and rural audiences.

"My time as Alice in Dairyland has grown my appreciation and passion for Wisconsin agriculture," said 75th Alice in Dairyland Taylor Schaefer. "As Alice in Dairyland, I have had the opportunity of a lifetime to expand my knowledge about Wisconsin's diverse, vibrant agriculture communities and share that with the citizens of Wisconsin. I have created countless connections and built on skills that will help me in my career and beyond."

Alice in Dairyland applicants should have an interest in Wisconsin agriculture, at least three years of experience,



Schaefer

education, or training in communications, marketing, education, or public relations, and public speaking experience. Applicants must also be female, Wisconsin residents, and at least 21 years old.

This one-year, full-time contractual position starts July 5, 2023. The chosen candidate will travel extensively and be in-person weekly at DATCP's Madison office. The annual salary for Alice in Dairyland is \$45,000 and includes holiday, vacation, and sick leave, and use of a vehicle while on official business. Reimbursement is provided for an individual health insurance premium up to \$450 a month and professional travel expenses.

To apply, provide a cover letter, completed application form, resume, 150-

word personal bio, and contact information for three professional references to DATCPAlice@wisconsin.gov or PO Box 8911, Madison WI 53708-8911 by 4:30 p.m. on Feb. 3, 2023. Application materials are available on the Alice in Dairyland website: <https://www.aliceindairyland.com/>.

Qualified applicants will have a preliminary interview on Feb. 18, 2023, at DATCP's Madison office or via Zoom. Top candidates are required to attend a two-day in-person program briefing and press announcement March 10-11, 2023, and the three-day final interview process May 11-13, 2023, in Walworth County.

Questions about the position or application process can be directed to DATCPAlice@wisconsin.gov. For more information about the Alice in Dairyland program, visit <https://www.aliceindairyland.com/> and follow Alice online on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

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WisDOT holding public involvement meeting on Lincoln County project

Officials will discuss intersection options for US Hwy. 8 between Cty. L and Klade Rd.

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation (WisDOT) is holding a public involvement meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 17, 2023, from 5:00-6:30 p.m. to discuss proposed options for US Hwy. 8 between Cty. L and Klade Rd. in Lincoln County. The meeting

will be held in the Tomahawk City Hall Council Chambers, 23 N. 2nd St., in Tomahawk.

To participate virtually, residents can call 1.888.475.4499; use access code: 903 385 0484; and use passcode: 54487.

To join online via computer or smart device, participants should go to: www.zoom.com, click "JOIN," and then enter the above access code and passcode.

A brief presentation is scheduled to begin at 5:00 p.m. followed by an open-house format.

Options will be discussed pertain-

ing to the deterioration of asphalt on US 8 and improving safety at the intersections of the highway with Lincoln Cty. L and at Klade Rd. Options for improving the Hiawatha Trail crossing of US 8 will also be presented.

Construction is scheduled for 2027.

For more information regarding traffic impacts, transportation news, and improvement project updates in Wisconsin's North Central Region, go to: <https://projects.511wi.gov/region/north-central/>.

Community members input wanted: Help create a healthy Lincoln County

Live Well Lincoln wants input from Lincoln County residents on the health issues that are affecting the residents in Lincoln County. "Live Well Lincoln includes partners from various sectors and the missing piece to our puzzle is not having you aboard," said Live Well Lincoln representatives in a recent press release. Live Well Lincoln's partners represent Lincoln County Health Department, Aspirus Health, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin, and Lincoln County Department of Social Services. But now they need and want individuals from within the community to get more involved, as well. "We are inviting the public to participate in the development of our Community Health Assessment to make Lincoln County the healthiest county in Wisconsin," they said.

"Community input will allow us to find new perspectives on the overall health issues and allow Live Well Lincoln to put these different strat-

egies in place in order to address health challenges within our communities. We invite you, as a member of our community, to allow your voice to be heard and participate in the development of a five-year community health plan for Lincoln County."

The process for developing the community health plan started in the fall of 2022 when the public was asked to complete a community health opinion survey. Over 755 community members completed the survey either online or via a paper copy. Results of that survey showed the public's greatest health concerns to be:

- Mental Health
- Obesity (Physical Inactivity/Poor Nutrition)
- Awareness/Support for the Aging Population

On Jan. 26, 2023, partners from various sectors of the community will meet to review these health priorities. There will also be a dis-

cussion on community strengths, assets, barriers, and opportunities for improvement.

The next step in this process is community action planning. Live Well Lincoln is inviting the public to join local coalitions to participate in workgroups for these selected health priorities of mental health, obesity (physical inactivity/ poor nutrition), and awareness/support for the aging populations. "You can be a part in making a difference to the residents of Lincoln County," said Shelley Hersil, Health Officer and Director of Lincoln County Health Department. "Coming together is critical in taking action on making healthy changes to Lincoln County as a community and to start improving the health of all the residents."

Anyone interested in serving on a workgroup, providing feedback on those health priorities,

See **HEALTHY** page 16

Another SIZZLING Bacon Sale!

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CIRCULATION AUDIT BY
CIRCULATION VERIFICATION COUNCIL

Park City Cares Foundation supports students through Community Scholarship and Grant Program

The Park City Cares Foundation recently approved grants for local technical colleges and awarded scholarships to high school students in the community. The Foundation is connected to Park City Credit Union, and it aims to enhance the community by providing opportunities for financial literacy and educational growth. One way in which the Foundation achieves this mission is by offering scholarship and grant opportunities to students and community-based projects.

To date, the Foundation has awarded \$2,500 in scholarships to high school students in the area. In November, the Foundation also granted \$3,400 to the STEM Center at Northcentral Technical College for funding a desktop CNC machine. The STEM Center at Northcentral Technical College is a hands-on learning space that features advanced technology, collaborative learning spaces, 3D printing, a science lab, and Nanotechnology. This new CNC machine gives younger students the ability to manufacture projects without having to travel to larger labs.

"We look forward to hearing how the desktop CNC machine brings awareness and strengthens the STEM programs in our community," said Park City Cares Foundation President Jack Mikunda.

The Park City Cards Foundation has continued its efforts to support STEM programs in the community by approving a request for \$2,429 for the Rhinelander Fab Lab. Michael R. Wojtusik, Technology, Engineering and Manufacturing Fab Lab Director said the grant will be used to purchase a Makerbot Replicator and 3D printer and filament. The Park City Cares Foundation also donated \$1,200 to Lincoln County 4H to strengthen its program and offer students more opportunities to learn.

To be considered for a grant or scholarship from the Foundation, interested individuals can go to parkcitycu.org/park-city-cares-foundation to submit an application. Individuals can also join the



Park City Cares Foundation with the Lincoln County 4H. L to R: Jack Mikunda, Sue Kunkel, Melissa Yates, Mandy Clark, Sarah Sturm, Trish Collins, Jim Richardson, and Shawn Achterberg. Submitted photos.



Park City Cares Foundation with the Rhinelander Fab Lab. L to R: Sue Kunkel, Sarah Sturm, Shawn Achterberg, Michael R. Wojtusik, and Jim Richardson.



Park City Cares Foundation with Northcentral Tech College. L to R from the Foundation: Jack Mikunda, Jim Richardson, Mandy Clark, Sarah Sturm, Trish Collins, Shawn Achterberg, Iain Cameron, Vicki Jeppesen, and Sheila Rossmiller.

Foundation on their webpage by applying and making a minimum donation of \$5.00. The Foundation

notes that the "financial contributions and volunteer hours donated by our Foundation members and

community partners" are what makes their mission possible.

To learn more about the Park City Cares Foundation, go to www.parkcitycu.org/park-city-cares-foundation

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Pet of the Week



Hazel here! Just wondering what a good girl has to do to find a forever home I keep hearing about? I've seen so many of my friends find them, and they look so happy. I can't wait for mine! I'm a 3.5 year old lab/pit mix. I came to LCHS from another shelter where I had been since August of this year. I have lots of playful energy. I realize that not everyone is ready for that energy, but there just has to be someone out there who is looking for a hiking buddy? A running pal? Someone to play fetch with? But don't worry, because after I have a chance to run outside, I'm totally ready to cuddle up on the couch. I promise to be the best girl that I can when I find my new home. I will love you with all of my heart!

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Visit the **Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N. Memorial Dr., in Merrill. Hours: MON. - SAT. 12-4 PM & SUN. 12-2 PM. Call the shelter at 715-536-3459, or visit us on the web at www.furrypets.com.**

Al-Anon offers hope and recovery to all people affected by the alcoholism of a Friend or Loved One.

Weekly meetings: Mondays at 7PM
Location:
Ascension Episcopal Church
218 Pier St., Merrill

Free mental illness support groups available statewide

The National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Wisconsin is expanding its mental illness support groups to help people who live with a mental illness and their family members throughout the state.

Program Director, Emilie Smiley, said a new online model is being introduced to reach people in rural areas of Wisconsin who otherwise would not have access to in-person support groups.

"Mental illness does not discriminate," she said. "There are people all throughout Wisconsin without access to proper support. We hope these support groups can help bridge the gap."

Smiley says many people feel isolated and alone. "We want people to be able to reach out for help when

they need it," she said. "These groups provide a place that offers respect, understanding, encouragement, and hope."

NAMI Wisconsin is offering both peer and family support groups that will take place on Zoom monthly. There is no cost associated with attending, and it is open to all residents in Wisconsin. Family Support Groups are on the fourth Thursday of the month from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m. Peer Support Groups are on the second Thursday of the month from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Links to register can be found at: <https://namiwisconsin.org/being-together/>.

NAMI Northwoods serves Lincoln, Marathon, and Langlade Counties and also offers an in-

person peer support group on the second Monday of the month at 2:00 p.m. at Grace United Church, 535 South 3rd Ave. in Wausau, and at Bigby Coffee in Rib Mountain on the fourth Wednesday of the month from 5:30-6:30 p.m. No need to register; just come. To contact NAMI Northwoods, email: nami-northwoods@gmail.com or call 715.432.0180.

NAMI Wisconsin is the state affiliate of the National Alliance on Mental Illness, the nation's largest grassroots mental health organization. NAMI Wisconsin is dedicated to improving the quality of life of those affected by mental illness and to promoting recovery. Learn more at namiwisconsin.org.

January Critic's Choice Movie

The Critic's Choice Movie event at the T. B. Scott Free Library kicks off the new year on Wednesday, Jan. 25, 2023, at 1:00 p.m. with a great film based off the very popular book by Delia Owens. Set in the marshes of North Carolina beginning in 1952,

this murder mystery is sure to keep you guessing. Kya has grown up isolated in the marshes. In the nearby town of Barkley Cove, she is known simply as "The Marsh Girl."

When she ventures into town, she catches the eye of the star quarter-

back and they start dating. When he is found dead, she becomes the prime suspect. But did she do it?

There will be free refreshments to enjoy, and the Merrill Transit buses are always ready for your call if you need a ride.

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is **Gwendolyn Herman**
Daughter of **David & Sarah Herman**
Wendy is in 1st grade at St. John Lutheran School. She was nominated by Mrs. Kathy Hahn.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
My favorite subject is math, because its fun and I get A's.

What is your favorite part of school? Why?
Lunch is my favorite part of school, because I'm hungry by lunchtime. My favorite lunch is spaghetti.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why?
Some day I want to become a doctor or a vet. Mostly because I want to help people and animals be nice and healthy.

Wendy always has a smile on her face. She is very good at asking questions and participating in class. Wendy wants to do her best every day!

~ Mrs. Kathy Hahn

Student of the Week Sponsored by:
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OBITUARIES



Joyce Rose Ryder, age 71, of Merrill, formerly of Sheboygan Falls, WI, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, at her residence after a short, but courageous battle with pancreatic cancer, while surrounded by her loving family and under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. She was born on February 26, 1951, to the late Marvin and Arlene (Strong) Moenning in Sheboygan Falls, WI. Joyce attended and graduated from Sheboygan Falls High School before meeting the love of her life and best friend, Joseph Ryder. The two exchanged marriage vows on August 14, 1971, in Sheboygan, WI. They enjoyed every minute of their 51 years together. He survives.

Joyce worked as an office bookkeeper and with administration for most of her adult life, with various employers in the area, including Northcentral Healthcare, WJMT, Ministry Healthcare and Oasis Recovery, all in Merrill. She loved being outdoors enjoying the fresh air and nature, especially camping, fishing, and hunting. Joyce looked forward to their trips to Camp Holiday Campground. She also enjoyed doing needlepoint, crocheting, knitting and cross stitch. Joyce volunteered her time with the Make-A-Wish Foundation and the Wisconsin Conservation Education Foundation. Joyce is remembered for her hugs and contagious smile. She had a deep love for her family, especially her bond with her daughters and granddaughters; they were her "blessings". Joyce was a woman of strong faith and had a true heart of gold. She was a kind, giving and instinctive person that seemed to always know the right time to call. Joyce was a member of Hillside Church in Merrill. She lived her life to the fullest with her family and although she will be missed, the memories created with her family will make them "happy when skies are gray".

Joyce leaves behind her loving and devoted husband of 51 years: Joseph 'Joe' Ryder of Merrill, her daughters: Kelly (Brian) Thompson, with Leah, of Wausau and Rebecca (Brandon) Hunter of Merrill, 2 granddaughters: Allison and Madlyn Hunter, sisters: Donna Lampe and Gladys (Michael) Richards, both of Sheboygan, WI, as well as many nieces, nephews, and good friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, sister: Marlene Moenning, infant brother: Arthur and brother-in-law: Jerry Lampe.

The funeral service for Joyce was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, at 1pm at Hillside Church, 1501 North Pier Street, Merrill, WI. Rev. Tom Edwards Jr. officiated. Visitation was held on Tuesday, January 10, 2023, from 10:30am until the time of the service, also at the church. Burial at Bethany Cemetery in the town of Birch took place the following day, Wednesday, January 11, 2023, at 11am.

In lieu of flowers, family requests that donations be directed to the Wisconsin Conservation Education Foundation, <http://www.wiconservationfoundation.org>.

The family would like to thank the Aspirus Hospice team for their incredible support and care shown to Joyce and her family during her final days.

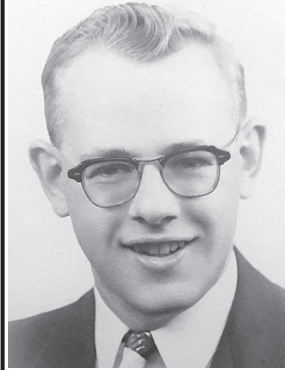
Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at www.waidfuneral.com.



Frederick August Schepp passed away peacefully while surrounded by his family on December 28th, 2022. He was 90.

Fred was born on October 12, 1932 to Frederick H. and Evelyn C. (Dehlinger) Schepp in the town of Pine River, Lincoln County. He Married Jamie L. Birkholz on August 10, 1963 in St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, town of Goodrich, Taylor County.

Fred Graduated from Lincoln County Normal School, and then earned a Bachelor's Degree in Education from UW Stevens Point. He also earned a Masters in Education from UW Superior. Fred taught in many rural schools in both Lincoln and Marathon Counties. He enjoyed a 37 year career in Elementary Education, serving thousands of students during that time. His last 20 years teaching were in the Merrill Area Public School system.



Before his marriage he was an active member of Trinity Lutheran Church in the town of Hewitt, Marathon County, where he was a member of the youth group, a Sunday School Teacher, and organist for 10 years. As a teenager Fred was an active member of the Pine River Sunrise 4-H Club, and he also served as an adult leader in that club for several years.

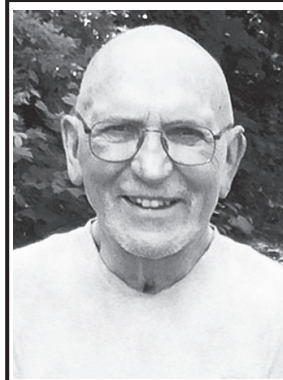
Fred raised his family on an 80 acre hobby farm west of Merrill in the town of Corning. There he was an active member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, serving as Bible School Superintendent, organist, Elder, and Financial Secretary. Fred was an artist who enjoyed photography and painting with oils and acrylics. Paintings were often gifted to relatives and friends as wedding or anniversary gifts. Fred designed an extensive landscape focused on wildlife habitat around his Merrill home. His design included a rock garden with a waterfall he constructed out of rocks from the property. He transplanted many native trees, flowers, and shrubs into the landscape and purchased others that were recommended for a wildlife sanctuary. He included many flower beds and vegetable gardens into his landscape design. He often used flowers from these gardens to design floral arrangements for the altar at church. Many relatives and close friends asked him to design floral arrangements for their weddings.

Genealogy was another hobby that Fred enjoyed. He was an active member of the North Pines Genealogy Group. Over the years he has compiled an extensive genealogy record going back 8 generations. Fred was a member of the Merrill Historical Society, the Wisconsin State Genealogy Society, WEAC, WREA, and NEA RETIRED. He was a charter member of the Brickyard School Committee, working with all the first grade classes of MAPS as they visited the Brickyard School in the fall of each year. He often served as a Docent for the Merrill Historical Society's original Pinery when the elementary school groups came to the museum on class trips.

Fred is survived by son David Schepp, Neenah; daughter Kristin Weisenfeld, Merrill; Sister Karen Stolz, Wausau; Grandchildren Ryan Weisenfeld, Portland Oregon; Rebecca (Weisenfeld) Willis, Merrill; Emma Schepp, De Pere; Trista Schepp, De Pere; Great Grandchild Bennett Willis, Merrill, and many nieces and nephews. Fred was preceded in death by his wife Jamie, his parents Frederick H. and Evelyn, brothers Wayne and Lyle, nephew Kerri, and niece Michelle.

The family would like to thank the doctors and nurses on the 3rd floor of St. Mary's Hospital in Green Bay for the excellent care of Fred, as well as the caregivers and staff at both The Renaissance Assisted Living and Rennes Health and Rehab Center, De Pere.

A celebration of life is being planned for the Spring of 2023 in Merrill, WI. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family with local arrangements.



Eugene Kurth Woller

June 24, 1946 – Dec. 28, 2022
MOUNT HOREB – Trusting in his Savior Jesus Christ for his salvation and eagerly anticipating the joy of heaven that awaited him, Eugene Kurth Woller, 76, of Mount Horeb, Wis., left this world unexpectedly on Wednesday, Dec. 28, 2022, while celebrating Christmas with his son's family in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Eugene was born on June 24, 1946, in Merrill, Wis., to Leonard and Mildred (Wendt) Woller. Eugene was baptized and confirmed into the Christian faith at Trinity Lutheran Church, Town of Berlin. While growing up on his family farm (a seasoned hay-bailer and rock picker), he developed a great love of the outdoors and an unparalleled work ethic. He received his elementary education at Naugart (a one-room schoolhouse) and Monroe Grade Schools. He wrestled, was active in Future Farmers of America, and graduated from Wausau (East) High School in 1964. Upon graduation, he attended a UW-Madison Farm Short Course where he was introduced to beekeeping, and a lifelong passion was sparked.

Eugene married his high school sweetheart and the love of his life, Donna Mae Sturm, on Aug. 12, 1967, at Grace Lutheran Church (WELS), Village of Maine. They moved to the Madison area, where they began to build their life together. They were charter members of St. Andrew Lutheran Church (WELS), which began as a mission church in Middleton, Wis., over fifty years ago. Eugene actively served his Lord and Savior in various capacities, including as a church Elder. While working various jobs in support of his family, Eugene faithfully kept bees and along with Donna, this hobby eventually blossomed into Gentle Breeze Honey, Inc. The Dane County Farmer's Market was among the venues where Eugene mesmerized customers with the wonders of honeybees and sold honey for over 50 years. He was an amazing teacher and mentor of beekeeping to many, and inspired all with his passion and knowledge. A distinct pleasure for Eugene and Donna was to transition into retirement by selling Gentle Breeze Honey to their son, Tim, and daughter-in-law, Cathy.

Eugene and Donna's love of travel and adventure took them throughout the United States, Colombia, Australia, Europe, Brazil, Kenya and China. A family heritage tour led by their dear friend, DuWayne Zamzow, in 2014, was a particularly special trip. They visited people they loved in all of these places and made many new friends along the way.

Eugene is survived by his loving wife of 55 years, Donna, of Mount Horeb. Their marriage has been blessed by three children and nine grandchildren: Dr. Scott (Patricia) Woller of Salt Lake City, and their children, Isabela and Gunnar; Retired Air Force Lt. Col. Timothy (Cathy) Woller of Mount Horeb, and their children, Spencer (Kayla), Stuart (Reilly), Raymond, and Christopher; Dr. Tamara Woller-Li (Dr. Richard Li) of Naperville, Ill., and their children, Nyah, Jaden, and Makaelynn; brother, Denver Woller; sisters, Janet Hanke, Joyce Plaza and Margaret (Tom) Becker; brother-in-law, Rev. Harold (Donna) Sturm; sister-in-law, Jalaine Woller; and a host of nieces and nephews. Eugene was preceded in death by his parents, Leonard and Mildred Woller; in-laws, Harry and Hilda Sturm; brothers, Kenneth and Gordon; sister; Beatrice Marquardt; brothers-in-law, Lyle Marquardt, Vern Hanke, Norm Plaza and Earl Woller; and sisters-in-law, Elida and Patsy Woller.

Eugene's legacy is profound and inspiring. The enduring Christ-centered foundation that he laid for his family blessed every life that he touched – a spirit of generosity, full of kindness and respect for others, quick to listen, serve and give. He enjoyed making everyone feel important, and we will miss his elfin grin and the twinkle in his eye! He was forward-thinking, optimistic, uncomplaining, and a one-of-a-kind. You might have heard Eugene say, "Since getting into beekeeping, I haven't worked a day in my life," and his grandchildren will fondly recall being beat at cribbage or Euchre and bantering with "Hoya-Hoya Man!" In Eugene's honor, we reflect on 2 Timothy 4:7-8, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearance."

A Funeral Service of Christian Burial was celebrated at ST. ANDREW EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, 6815 Schneider Road, Middleton, Wis., at 5 p.m. on Friday, Jan. 6, 2023, with Pastor Randy Hunter officiating. A light dinner followed. Visitation was held at the church from 1 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. on Friday. Interment will be at Maple Grove Cemetery, Village of Maine, Merrill, Wis., with a private family ceremony. Pallbearers were Eugene's grandsons, Spencer, Stuart, Raymond, Gunnar, Christopher and Jaden. Granddaughters, Isabela, Nyah and Makaelynn, were honorary pallbearers.

In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made in Eugene's honor to St. Andrew Lutheran Church, the UW Carbone Cancer Center, or an organization close to your heart. Online condolences may be made at www.gundersonfh.com.

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OBITUARIES



Grace Ella Irene Prast, 100, of Merrill, passed away Thursday, December 29, 2022, at Woodland Court Elder Services, Merrill.

Grace was born October 4, 1922, in Merrill, daughter of the late Edwin and Ella (Neubauer) Schmidt. She married Alvin Prast on May 8, 1943, at St. Stephens United Church of Christ in Merrill. He preceded her in death on March 2, 1987. Grace was a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in the Town of Corning, where she was a member of the Ladies League and the Altar Guild and helped with the Easter breakfasts for many years. Grace worked hard all her life on the family farm but also had seasonal employment with Oconomowoc Canning Company and the Copper River Cranberry Marsh. Grace enjoyed writing in her journal, reading, bird and wildlife watching, playing sheephead, and the many Canadian fishing trips. She also was a great cook and enjoyed preparing meals for her family. But her greatest gift was her tremendous faith in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ which she demonstrated every day of her life to family and friends.

Grace is survived by her daughter, VerJean (Dennis) Schield of Tomahawk; son, Philip (Deanna) Prast of Merrill; grandchildren, Brent Schield of Tomahawk, and Heidi (Geoffrey) Hoock of Merrill; and great-grandchildren, Grace, Haley, Claire, and Joseph. Grace was preceded in death by her husband, Alvin Prast; parents, Edwin and Ella Schmidt; sister, Verna (Walt) Zuelsdorff; and brother, Lester (Helen) Schmidt.

The memorial service for Grace was held at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, January 2, 2023, at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Town of Corning. The Rev. Joel Danner officiated. Visitation began at 9:00 A.M. Monday at the church. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family.

The family would like to thank Woodland Court Elder Services for their compassion and the wonderful care they gave to Grace. The family would also like to especially thank nieces Joan Hartson and Nona Zortman for their frequent visits and phone calls to Grace.

The family suggests memorials in Grace's name may be made to Immanuel Lutheran Church, Town of Corning. Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



David R. Welk Sr., age 74, passed away peacefully at his home in Kaukauna on Friday, January 6, 2023. He was born to the late Roger and Darlene (Fischer) Welk on January 2, 1949 in Merrill, WI.

In spite of losing his right arm at the age of 17, he never let that hold him back. David was a graduate of Merrill High School in 1968 and then attended UW Stevens Point. On September 27, 1969, he married Caroline Ohlmann and they spent 36 years together. In 1986, David began his own pallet manufacturing business, C.D.D.&K. Enterprise. He went on to become a tool and hardware salesman for several years before his retirement. David had a passion for many things including: classic cars, collecting stamps, coins, and military memorabilia. He had a strong faith in God and will be remembered for his positivity and optimism about life. He was a proud dad and grandpa and loved spending time with his grandchildren and going word searches and puzzles.

David is survived by his three children, David (Heide Schmidt) Welk Jr.; Kristin (Neil) Surk; Katherine (Justin) Woller; grandchildren; Evan Welk; Jaycee Woller; and Jozy Woller; his sister, Vivian (Randy) Schlueter.

A prayer service for David will be held on Thursday, January 19, 2023 at 5:00 p.m. at Verkuilen-Van Deurzen Family Funeral Home, Kaukauna, location, 2401 Fieldcrest Dr. Visitation will begin at 3:00 p.m. and will continue until the time of service. For online condolences, please visit www.verkuilenfh.com

David's family would like to thank the Kaukauna Police Department for their assistance as well as their kind words during this time.



Ralph Erwin Schulz, age 79, of Eagle River, WI, formerly of Merrill, WI, passed away peacefully on Friday, December 30, 2022, at Milestone Senior Living in Eagle River, with his family by his side and under the care of Compassus Hospice. He was born on March 17, 1943, to the late Leslie and Deliah (Grunewald) Schulz in Merrill, WI. Ralph attended and graduated from Merrill High School. He

proudly served in the United States Army until he was honorably discharged. Ralph earned the Good Conduct Medal and was a sharpshooter. He did Radio Relay with the 7th Army NCO Academy. Ralph attended Northcentral Technical College in Wausau and had an associate degree in Drafting Correspondence.

Ralph worked in the manufacturing field for most of his adult life. When he wasn't working, you could find him on the water doing his favorite activity, fishing, especially in Harrison Hills. He also looked forward to going to his friend, Bill's, cabin in Gleason during the hunting seasons. Ralph enjoyed hunting as well, whether it was deer, pheasant, duck, or snowshoe rabbit hunting. He was a funny man that had a great sense of humor but could also be very serious at times and disciplined. Ralph was a giving and helpful person to his family and friends. Ralph will be sadly missed, but always in the hearts of his family and friends.

Ralph is survived by his children: Scott Schulz and Andrea Londerville, grandchildren: Joshua, Carmen and Crista, great granddaughter: Aria, sister: Lucille (Jerry) Kufahl and brother: Harold "Buck" Schulz. He was preceded in death by his parents, son-in-law: Mike Londerville, sisters: Gertrude Jaeger and Margaret Munroe, brother: Milton Schulz, sister-in-law: Pat Schulz and brother-in-law: Eugene Munroe.

A private family service and military honors will be held. The family would like to extend their deep appreciation for the care and support they received from the staff at Milestone Senior Living and Compassus Hospice during Ralph's time there.

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.



Joylyn 'Joy' K. Meyer, age 74, of Merrill, passed away peacefully on Friday, January 6, 2023, at Bell Tower Residence in Merrill, while under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. She was born on June 12, 1948, to the late Alfred E. and Elaine M. (Kohnke) Boettcher in Merrill, WI. Joy attended and graduated from Merrill High School with the class of 1966. She had worked at Church Mutual Insurance Company in Merrill, as well as Merrill Area

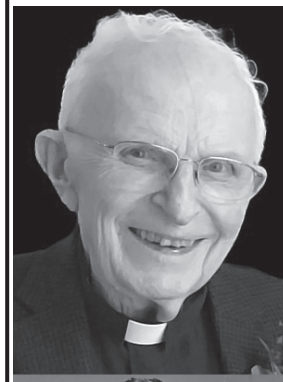
Public Schools as a secretary before her retirement. Joy was a lifelong member at St. Stephen's United Church of Christ in Merrill, serving on the church council as a past president and a member of the choir, as Joy was passionate about singing. She is remembered as a wonderful wife and mother and will be missed by many.

Joy is survived by her husband: David Meyer, sons: Jody of Merrill, Jeremie (Michelle) Meyer of Oconto Falls, granddaughter: Julia (Bryce) Meyer of De Pere, great granddaughter: Amelia, step-granddaughter: Ashley, step-grandson: Brandon, sister: Sandra Prueser and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents and infant son: Jonathan.

Interment of her cremated remains will take place at a later date at Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery.

The family would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to the staff at Bell Tower Residence and Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services for their support, care and love shown to Joy and her family.

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.



Rev. John "Jack" Freed, age 95 of West Bloomfield, MI and formerly of Merrill, passed away December 20, 2022. Rev. Freed was the pastor of Bethlehem Lutheran Church in Merrill, as well as congregations in Wausau and Irma. Jack met his first wife, Mary (nee. Anderson) in Merrill and they enjoyed 60 years of marriage prior to Mary's death in 2017.



Jack leaves behind his children David (Sunny) Freed, Beth (Ben) Carter, and Jeanne Freed; his second wife, Joan Thralow of Saint Joseph, Minnesota; his grandchildren, Jason (Irene) Carter, Janel (Seth) Culbertson, John Carter, Joseph Carter, Summer Freed, and Margie Freed and great-grandchild, Kya Culbertson; and his sister, Nancy Carlmark.

In lieu of flowers, if you wish to honor Jack with a donation the family requests donations be directed to Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, designated to the John Freed Memorial Fund. Please visit www.mccabefuneralhome.com for funeral arrangement information.

Linda M. Schoepke, age 71, of Merrill, peacefully went home to be with her Lord on Tuesday, December 27, 2022, at Pine Crest Nursing Home in Merrill, while under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. She was born on December 8, 1951, to the late Ervin and Genevieve (Lepak) Wolfe in Wausau, WI. Linda met husband Michael Schoepke, and the two lovingly exchanged marriage vows on Earth Day April 22, 1981, in Reno Nevada.

Linda was a homemaker and housewife and loved being home caring for her children. She was a loving and devoted mother and wife. She had also worked at Weinbrenner Shoe Factory in Merrill as an assembler. Linda was an avid reader; she loved reading and would often swap books with her friends. She was a woman of faith, her relationship with her Lord was near and dear to her heart and she faithfully read her Bible. Linda loved to travel and enjoyed being outdoors, whether it was working in her flower gardens or watching the birds at her feeders, she just enjoyed nature. She is remembered as a loving, giving woman that cherished her time spent with her family. Linda will be sadly missed, but never forgotten.

Linda is survived by her husband: Michael Schoepke, sons: Benjamin Schoepke, Alex (Iva) Jowett, daughter: Heather (Harry) Sweet, grandchildren: Emma Jowett and Harley Sweet, sisters: Louise Borchardt, Sandy Wolfe, and brothers: Don (Gail) Wolfe and Gary Wolfe.

Preceded in death by sons: Nicholas Jowett (Schoepke) and Jason Jowett (Schoepke), brother: Jack Wolfe and parents: Ervin & Genevieve Wolfe

A time of visitation took place on Monday, January 2, 2023, from 11am until 1pm at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill. Burial immediately followed at the Springbrook Cemetery in the town of Pine River.

The family wishes to thank all the doctors, nurses and staff that have helped Linda with care and support over the years, from all the facilities she has been to, it means the world to them and is appreciated beyond words.

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.



Richard L. Kleinschmidt, 86, of Merrill, passed away Thursday, December 29, 2022, at Marshfield Medical Center in Weston.

Richard was born July 25, 1936, in Merrill, son of the late Alfred and Orella (Thurs) Kleinschmidt. He married Connie Ashbrenner on August 31, 1963, at St. John Lutheran Church in Merrill. She survives. Richard worked as a machine operator at Merrill Manufacturing. He enjoyed camping, fishing, canoeing, traveling, and vegetable gardening. He loved his children and grandchildren and always supported them in their marching band events.

Richard is survived by his wife of 59 years, Connie Kleinschmidt of Merrill; daughter, Lori (Peter) Smith of Merrill; son, Gregory (Anne) Kleinschmidt of Antigo; grandchildren, McKenah (Ben) Martens, Tanner (Emma Lee) Smith, Adam Kleinschmidt, Keith Kleinschmidt, and Kari Kleinschmidt; great-grandchildren, Lakelyn, Watson, Rowen, and June; brother-in-law, Earl Volz; and nieces, Kay Kellbach Sims, and Stacy Maly. Richard was preceded in death by his parents, Alfred and Orella Kleinschmidt; sisters, Johanna Volz, and Oranell Kellbach; niece, Karen Kellbach; and nephew, Timothy Volz.

A memorial service for Richard was held at 11:00 A.M., Wednesday, January 4, 2023, at the Taylor-Stine Funeral Home, Merrill. Rev. Scott Gustafson officiated. Visitation began at 9:00 A.M. Wednesday at the funeral home. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Rhiannon Kohlmoos, age 42, died on Saturday, December 31, 2022. Rhiannon was born on February 26, 1980 in Laramie, Wyoming, the daughter of Peter and Judith (Boltd) Kohlmoos. Rhiannon was home schooled and received her Bachelor of Science Degree in Biology from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point in 2017.

Rhiannon spent many hours collecting, classifying, pressing and illustrating grasses and flowers that are a part of the beautiful prairie countryside of Central and Northern Wisconsin. Much of her work is housed with the UWSP herbarium. Rhiannon not only loved the flora, but was a friend of creatures great and small. Rhiannon also loved to write and tell stories.

Rhiannon is survived by her parents and four sisters; Arhia, Annwn, Mirra and Cirrus, and 7 nieces and nephews.

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

DECEMBER 27, 2022

Girl, Miyah Mae, born to Kyra DeWindt and Lucas Newton of Mosinee.

DECEMBER 28, 2022

Boy, Hudson Alan Lee, born to Kelly Wisniewski and Marcus Wisniewski of Merrill.

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MERRILL AREA PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT NOTICE OF EDUCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR CHILDREN WHO RESIDE IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Merrill Area Public School District offers students a variety of educational options to children who reside in the District. We are focused on student achievement, community partnership and future success for all students. Merrill Area Public Schools is focused on meeting the individual needs of students and preparing them for life after graduation.

The District's primary educational pathway and instructional program for students involves a progression from 4-year-old kindergarten through 12th grade, leading to a high school diploma.

The District's schools, and each school's most recent state-assigned performance category (if available), are listed below:

Elementary Schools (grades Headstart, 4K* - 4):	Middle Schools (grades 5 - 8):	High Schools (grades 9 - 12):
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pine River School for Young Learners* Kate Goodrich Elementary School Washington Elementary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prairie River Middle School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merrill High School
District-affiliated (instrumentality) charter schools:	District-affiliated (instrumentality) virtual charter schools:	District Alternative Schools:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges Virtual Academy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bridges Virtual Academy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Merrill Adult Diploma Academy GEDO2 Northern Achievement Center

* Note: The District offers its 4K program at one or more community-based locations other than the elementary school(s) that are listed above.

Some of the specific education programs offered to eligible students who are enrolled in and attending the District's schools include the following:

- Early childhood special education (for students who are at least 3 years old but not yet school-age), ie Headstart.
- Special education for students with disabilities (ages 3-21)
- English language learner/bilingual-bi-cultural education
- Gifted and talented education
- Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs
- Work Based Learning Options - Certified Co-ops, Employability Skills, and Youth Apprenticeship
- Individualized program and curriculum modifications
- Alternative education program(s)
- At-risk education (e.g., for students identified as being at-risk of not graduating from high school)
- Summer school programming

The full version of the District's most recent school and school district accountability report, as issued by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction under section 115.385 of the state statutes, can be accessed at: <https://apps2.dpi.wi.gov/reportcards/>.

Educational options for students who are enrolled in the Merrill Area Public School District that involve part-time attendance at an educational institution other than a school of the Merrill Area Public School District include the following:

1. The **Start College Now** and **Early College Credit Programs**, which:
 - a. provide opportunities to apply for approval to take courses at certain institutions of higher education; and,
 - b. is available only to students who are enrolled in the 11th or 12th grade.

Additional educational options for children who reside in the District that involve full-time enrollment/attendance at a school, program, or other educational institution that is not a school or instrumentality of the Merrill Area Public School District include the following:

1. High school students meeting certain age and other eligibility requirements may be permitted to attend a technical college or certain other programs for the purpose of completing a program leading to the student's high school graduation or to a high school equivalency diploma.
2. Full-time Open Enrollment involving physical attendance in a public school of a nonresident school district or attendance through a virtual charter school that is associated with a nonresident school district.
3. Beginning in the 2016-17 school year, a child with a disability who meets the program's specific eligibility requirements may apply to attend an eligible, participating private school under a scholarship awarded through the state's "Special Needs Scholarship Program," as established under section 115.7915 of the state statutes.
4. Enrollment in a non-instrumentality public charter school that was authorized by the School Board of the Merrill Area Public School District. The following charter schools are located within the District's boundaries and each school's most recent state-assigned performance category is provided, if available:
 - o No non-instrumentality public charter schools have been approved by the School Board of the Merrill Area Public School District as of the 2021-22 school year.
5. Enrollment in an independent public charter school (i.e., a school with no District authorization or affiliation) that is open to students who are District residents. The following independent charter schools are located within the District's boundaries and each school's most recent state-assigned performance category is provided, if available:
 - o No independent public charter schools are operating within the Merrill Area Public School District's boundaries as of the 2021-22 school year.
6. Enrollment in a private school participating in the Wisconsin parental choice program. The following participating private schools are located within the District's boundaries and each school's most recent state-assigned performance category is provided, if available:
 - o Saint John Lutheran School
 - o Trinity Lutheran School
7. Enrollment in a private school of the family's choosing (at the family's own cost, as applicable).
8. Enrollment in a home-based private educational program as provided under state law.

Educational options for children who reside in the Merrill Area Public School District but who are enrolled in and attending a private school or home-based private educational program include the following:

1. Such students have the opportunity to attend summer school classes/programs offered in the District.
2. Private school students in the high school grades have the opportunity to apply for approval to take up two courses per semester in a District school, pursuant to section 118.145(4) of the state statutes.
3. Students who are enrolled in a home-based private educational program have the opportunity to:
 - o Apply for approval to take up two courses per semester in public schools as provided under section 118.53.
 - o Participate in District interscholastic athletics and other District extracurricular activities as provided under section 118.133.

For more information about any of the educational options listed in this notice, please contact the District's main administrative office at 715-536-4581 or the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction.

Published January 12, 2023

WNAXLP

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LEGALS

Legals 7700

DATE SIGNED: January 3, 2023
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
Probate Registrar

**STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
JAMES L. IATTONI
Notice to Creditors
(Informal Administration)**
Case No. 2023 IN 01

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth April 15, 1935 and date of death August 16, 2022, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of N2554 Spruce Lane, Merrill, WI 54452.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is April 21, 2023.
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, 1110 East Main Street, Merrill, Wisconsin, Room Probate Office.

ATTORNEY MIRANDA M. LAMB
NOLAN & DEFFNER LEGACY LAW
1803 Stewart Ave., Wausau WI 54401
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Published January 12, 19 & 26, 2023
WNAXLP

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Dream-Triggers

Dear Reader,

A photograph, a letter, a lock of hair when held at night can become a dream trigger of sorts. You picked up a photo of yesteryear, or reread an old letter from someone once dear, or held a lock of hair once gracing the head of someone you loved. Iconic pieces can represent memories from different times of our lives.



And then you fall asleep. The dream trigger takes effect and you walk into a state of recall with a seemingly real you interacting and engaging with real someones from a long time ago. You're exploring a new adventure with them, because while the time has passed, everything has changed. You encounter a world of high drama laced with excitement and a curious mixture of danger and romance. Time is no longer relative and forever is a concept that lasts until it doesn't.

Poof! The morning sun and new yet familiar faces beckon. A dream trigger comes once in a blue moon. When it does, it's a savoring that adds to what you were and what you are becoming.

PATRICK J. WOOD
PUBLISHER

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

TOWN OF SCHLEY Notice of Town Caucus

NOTICE is hereby given that a Town Caucus for the Town of Schley will be held January 18, 2023 at 6 p.m. at the Schley Town Hall, W1696 County Rd C, Merrill, WI, Lincoln County, for the purpose of placing nominations for candidates for the following Town Offices, to be voted for at the Spring Election on April 4, 2023.

OFFICE	INCUMBENT
Chairperson	Rick Dorn (not seeking re-election)
2 Supervisors	Timothy Klimek Gerald Plamann
Clerk	Becky Dallman
Treasurer	Susan Podeweltz

Term of office is for two years, beginning April 18, 2023.

Remember to recycle www.townofschley.com
Becky Dallman, Town Clerk

Published January 11 and 12, 2023 WNAXLP



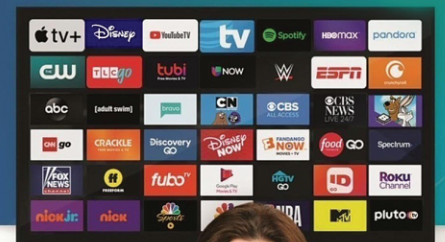
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T.B. SCOTT from page 1

The new book is called *VERY Special Deputy* and the main character and premise of the story might sound a little familiar: *After a 30-year career as an FBI Special Agent, Thomas T. Thomas and wife Sophie retired to a home on a bluff overlooking Lake Superior. When the local sheriff of Gitche Gume County was found dead of a gunshot wound, Tommy was drafted by the governor to fill out the remainder of his term. This term has ended and a new sheriff has taken office. One of his first acts was to swear in Thomas as a VERY special deputy to mentor and assist with investigations.*

Dare I say it may be a little biographical?

Burg points out that the book is definitely fictional, but many of the crime plots and characters are based upon real situations he encountered.

As an FBI agent, Burg worked in Mississippi, Chicago, and Waukegan, Ill., before becoming Senior Resident Agent at the Wausau office of the FBI covering a nine-county area of north central Wisconsin in 1977.

In that capacity, he worked some very interesting cases, and some of them a bit notorious. One such case was in Merrill in 1980. "The Anson & Gilkey case," as Burg referred to it, involved the owner paying "a group of Chicago outfit arsonists to come up and torch the huge plant on the East Side for the insurance."

"They were interrupted by Merrill PD, and we worked for months to unravel all the ramifications," Burg said.

There were many other interesting cases, as well, and now Burg is using some of them as fodder for his somewhat tongue-in-cheek crime novels. His first novel was titled *Accidental Sheriff*. Seeing a theme here? That's not by chance. "Write what you know," Burg said when asked what he would tell other aspiring writers.

Burg also writes what he is passionate about, including his long-time fascination with railroads and trains. His first book in 2003 was about the history of the railroad in Idaho, *White Pine Route*, which he began writing when he retired from the FBI. That led to a 10-part series of steam locomotive photo books for the Milwaukee Railroad Historical Association and then more railroad photo books he self-published through Merrill Publishing Associates (a partnership with Sharon Thatcher). Then came *Nobody Walks Now-A-Days* (a history of the Merrill Railway & Lighting Co. and Merrill's streetcars), and now he's enjoying writing fiction. "If you are a writer, your brain is always writing," Burg said.

He has also written for various trade and railroad publications.

"Scott-Free Words Worth Hearing" presentation

The T.B. Scott Free Library will present a "Scott-Free Words Worth Hearing" presentation in the Carnegie Wing of the library this Saturday, Jan. 14, 2023, at 11:00 a.m.

The event will begin with a chat with Burg and an opportunity to learn more about him, his passion for railroad history, his FBI career, his writing and publishing, his non-fiction railroad history and photo books, his new crime novels, and his tips for other writers or aspiring writers.

Some of his books will be available for purchase at the event, including *Route of the North Woods Hiawatha* (a photo history of the Milwaukee Railroad's Wisconsin Valley Line through Merrill), *Nobody Walks Now-a-Days*, and his two novels, *Accidental Sheriff* and *VERY Special Deputy*.

Burg's new novel is also available locally at Sweeter Times (409 W. Main St.) and the Merrill Historical Society in Merrill; the Janke Book Store in Wausau; online at www.mainudesigns.com/veryspecialdeputy; and on Amazon Kindle.

New writers group to begin in Merrill: The Real Writers Group

Some of Burg's other advice for aspiring writers? "Read a lot so you are familiar with good sentence structure, vocabulary, etc.," he said. And then ... "Just find somewhere to start. Do IT! Write and try to organize."

"Check out the writers' group T.B. Scott Library is forming to hear from other writers," Burg added. "Learn some of their knowledge on how things work."

And that is the perfect segue to the library's announcement.

Following the author chat, a new writers group will gather at the library, and anyone with a passion for writing who would like to meet and exchange ideas is welcome to attend and join. Local authors, Rachael Waldburger and Jim Finucan, will lead the meeting, develop a loose schedule for future meetings, and plan to make the meetings enjoyable, fun, and low-pressure. Dubbed the "Real Writers Group," the main objective of the new group is to share inspiration for the writing process and support those who enjoy the art of writing.

All writing interests/genres and all skill levels are welcome, group organizers said.

Five new Merrill Basketball Hall-of-Famers inducted during Second Annual Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame Night

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

At the Merrill Varsity Boys Basketball game on Dec. 16, the Merrill Basketball Program also held their Second Annual Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame (HOF) Night.

Five athletes were inducted into the Merrill Basketball HOF, one for his coaching, although he was an athlete for Merrill before he became a Hall-of-Fame-worthy Merrill coach, and the others for their exemplary performance on the court as Merrill Bluejay players.

Bruce English was inducted into the HOF after serving as a Merrill High School (MHS) Basketball Coach for 33 years, from 1986 to 2019. Initially, he coached Merrill 7th and 8th grade boys traveling teams for three years and then he coached Boys Basketball Freshmen and JV and served as an Assistant Varsity Coach. He then coached JV Girls Basketball and was named MHS Assistant Coach of the Year in 2019.

Himself a 1972 graduate of MHS where he played basketball for Coach Don Kerr, English taught elementary Physical Education in Merrill until he retired in 2009. He is also a member of the Merrill Baseball HOF.

Jan (Wickman) Krystkowiak was a Merrill Bluejay Girls Basketball Player from 1979 to 1983. She received a lot of recognition for her contributions as a Bluejay and a great deal of individual recognition as a Junior and Senior in high school, as well. As a Senior, she led Merrill in scoring average at 13.5 points per game. After graduating MHS, she played college basketball at National College of Education in Chicago where she averaged 11.3 points and 8.3 rebounds per game, then played at University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee from 1984-1987 and led in scoring during the 1985-86 season at 12.0 points per game, among many other honors.

Joelene (Hanig) Weix, currently a teacher at Prairie River Middle School (PRMS) in Merrill, has been playing and/or coaching in the Merrill Girls Basketball Program for more than 40 years. Weix was a Merrill Bluejay Player from 1983 to 1987, during which time she earned a lot of recognition, some highlights being

named a Channel 7 All Star, All State, and also a WBCA North All Star selection, all as a Senior. That year the Merrill Girls Varsity Basketball Team were the undefeated Champions of the Wisconsin Valley Conference (WVC) and Weix was named Most Valuable Player (MVP). She attended Western Illinois on a basketball scholarship where she played basketball for four years at Division 1 and was a four-year starter there and a two-time MVP. Her list of recognition there is also lengthy. Weix returned to Merrill and served as the Merrill Girls Assistant Basketball Coach in 1999 and then Head Coach from 2003-2007 and 2016-2020.

Erik Finanger played basketball for the Merrill Bluejays from 1974 to 1978. A three-year Varsity letter winner, he was named All Wisconsin Valley Conference both Junior and Senior year, a Channel 7 All Star Senior year, All State his Senior year, and also led the WVC in scoring Senior year. He averaged 17.0 points per game which gave him the second best average of any player in Merrill history, made him the number

See **HALL-OF-FAME** page 15



The Merrill Basketball Program held their second Annual Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame night in December and five new inductees were welcomed into the fold. Honored were, from L to R: Jan (Wickman) Krystkowiak, Joelene (Hanig) Weix, Erik Finanger, Jordan Stine, and Bruce English. **Photos courtesy of Merrill Basketball Program.**



New Merrill Hall Basketball Hall of Fame inductees with their families at the program in December.

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M3GAN
"PG13" (1HR 42MIN)
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8pm

Movie Reviews

BY CHRISTOPHER STAMM
GUEST MOVIE REVIEWER

M3GAN

(Now showing in theatres)

★★★★☆

This film is rated PG-13 – for language, violence, and adult themes

The quest for A.I. (artificial intelligence) has been ongoing for some time now, with Google, Facebook, and a host of others doing their very best to create a computer

system that will be self-aware, and it is clear to me that none of those people have ever seen a movie about the dangers of doing so.

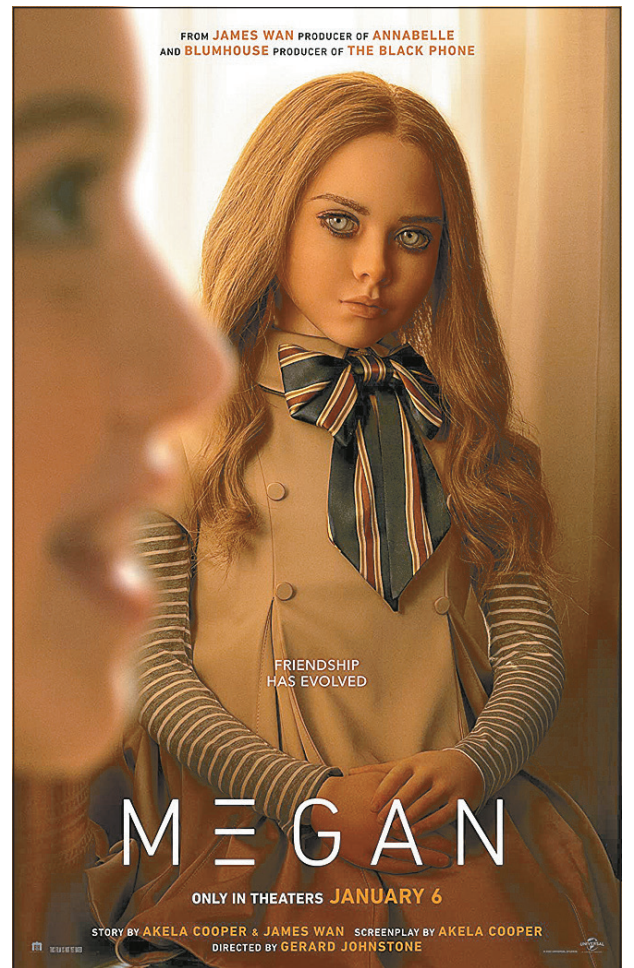
From *SKYNET* to *H.A.L.*, it always ends badly for humanity.

Now we have *M3GAN*, a self-aware doll/android meant to be a toy for little ones and, boy howdy, does that ever go wrong.

OK, basic points: Sister and brother-in-law of highly-driven computer designer die in car accident, said computer designer becomes her niece's caretaker, and niece is not dealing well with the loss of her parents and being in a new home.

Driven designer thinks, "Hey, I will use my niece as a test subject for my newest creation, a life size doll that is super advanced but not quite ready. Oh, well, let's roll with that."

Of course, things go



sideways and *M3GAN* decides that she knows best, so let the carnage begin.

The special effects are excellent, and *M3GAN* is super creepy, especially when she does her little dance before hacking a person up with a paper cutter blade. But overall, this one is effective, with a solid story and enough creepy scenes to make it

worthwhile. *M3GAN* is worth a trip to the cinema in these dark, gloomy January days.

Three out of five stars for this one. Worth the trip to the cinema but one note of warning: This one is PG-13 but probably should have been an R rating, so leave the little one with the sitter.

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Bolster your odds for startup business success; enter Governor's Business Plan through Jan. 31

MADISON, Wis. – More than 7 out of every 10 finalists in the Wisconsin Governor's Business Plan Contest since 2012 are still in business, a strong survival rate that speaks to the contest's role in helping startup companies succeed over time.

A survey conducted by the Wisconsin Technology Council found that 197 finalists from the 8 contests between 2012 and 2021 were still in business, compared with 58 who had ceased operations. That represents 78 percent of those finalists,

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who typically make up the top 25 entries selected by judges each year.

When the Tech Council conducted a similar "look-back" of the contest's first eight years (2004-2011), the survival rate at the time was also about 77 percent.

Free webinar

A free webinar on how to prepare for the contest will be held Jan. 18. A recent finalist, a

veteran contest judge, and contest organizers will provide tips on how to win the Wisconsin Governor's Business Plan Contest during a 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, Jan. 18 webinar hosted by the Wisconsin Technology Council. Panelists will provide resources and guidance to help contestants prepare a solid 250-word abstract for the contest.

To register, go to: <https://wisconsin technologycouncil.com/event/want-to-win-the-governors-business-plan-contest-learn-ins-and-outs-at-jan-18-tech-council-webinar/>.

Business plans increase business survival rates

"The survival rates of BPC finalists are higher than U.S. averages for startups, which is a credit to our mentors, judges, and staff, who help contestants throughout the contest, as well as the connections that contestants make with Wisconsin's larger infrastructure for young companies," said

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FIRST BABY of 2023



Congratulations!



Bennett Muenchow is the Merrill Foto News First Baby of 2023.

Bennett was born on Monday, January 2nd at 9:57 AM at ASPIRUS Hospital in Wausau.

He weighed 6 lbs., 9 oz. and was 19 1/2" long.

Bennett's proud mom and dad are **Makayla Bessert & Austin Muenchow.**

His big sister is **Kynlee Muenchow.**

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Items of Interest: Sinclair H-C Gasoline 2-sided 6 foot metal sign, Robin Hood flour tin, Leinenkugel beer sign, Bud light silver Clydesdale light, Micholob mirror, beer pitchers, Batman toys, Hot Wheels, Ertl toys, Tootsie cars & doll furniture, vtg tin windup toys, 13 Jetson yo-yo's, Clarabelle the clown bubble pipes, Louis Marx astronauts & Mickey figurines, vtg board games, vtg wood planes, Jorgensen & Craftsman wood clamps, Craftsman wrenches, work light, Australia boomerang, vtg Wheeling 2 gal pail, hardware bins w/hardware, very nice vtg pocket & folding knives, Prunes wood box, fishing poles, vtg empty bait boxes, vtg lures, reels, Marbles fish grabber find another, Signature shoe polish/shoe kit, vtg/antique books, Terry Redlin picture and others, vtg decoy, Mickey Mouse watches, Camel, Scripto & Colibri lighters, Stanley hatchet, Coleman lantern NIB, Mario art glass plate very nice, 100s of lapel pins, Kit Kat clock newer, 16 Royal Doulton Bunnykins figurines, Roseville vase, Kreiss Co. figural napkin holders, Windmill ice tub, Van Briggles, Cresolene vapo lamp, Ford V8 shift knob Bakelite, Bakelite beverage lollipop stir sticks, Reddy Kilowatt playing cards, 3 leather helmet badges, cast iron lion bank, Crane Co. 1905 cast iron elephant paper-weight hard find, cast iron boy riding alligator paperweight, Kaiser Frazier hubcap emblem, Brigitte Bardot autograph picture, other autographs, small locks w/barrel keys, vtg. Viking bobble head, Bozo clown soap bottles, wood blocks, spice rack, wood Schoenhut donkeys, 6 police badges, many, many great ephemera items, cigar labels, baseball items, autographed items, Hasbro Elvis, 40+ Beanie Baby bears in cases, Disney 3 pigs toothbrush holder, National cash register name plates, antique press & wall mount drill, lg antique metal wheel, wood trunk, Howard Miller anniversary clock, War Camp Community service poster, vtg Who's who baseball booklets, vtg jewelry some sterling, many crucifix's, religious medals & items. Plus, many, many more GREAT items.
TERMS: cash, check & credit cards (with 4% fee) valid driver's license required to register for bidder number. Announcement's day of sale take precedence over printed materials. Auctioneer and staff are not responsible for accidents or loss.
Everything is sold "as is" condition. No warranties, food available.
Col. George Pientka, RWA#2068-52, geoanddoe@charter.net, 715-341-8076 or 715-570-0806, www.pientkaauction.com

Antiques and Collectibles 7214

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Red Cross, Peyton Manning huddle up for a lifesaving play this January

Those who come to give blood or platelets during National Blood Donor Month will be entered to win a trip to Super Bowl LVII

This January, the American Red Cross and Pro Football Hall of Famer and blood donor Peyton Manning are asking people to score big for patients in need – while getting a chance to win a trip to Super Bowl LVII in Arizona – by giving blood or platelets.

Blood Donor Month – a time to celebrate those who generously roll up a sleeve to keep blood products stocked for hospitals providing critical care. As the busy holiday season winds down and the threat of severe winter weather and seasonal illness cases continue to rise, January can be a tough time for donors to make and keep

appointments. Step off the sidelines and resolve to donate blood or platelets. To book a time to give, visit RedCrossBlood.org, download the Red Cross Blood Donor App, or call 1-800-RED CROSS. In partnership with the National Football League (NFL), those who come to give blood, platelets, or plasma Jan. 1-31, 2023,

will be automatically entered to win a trip for two to Super Bowl LVII in Arizona*, including access to day-of, in-stadium, pre-game activities; tickets to the official Super Bowl Experience; round-trip airfare to Phoenix; three-night hotel accommodations (Feb. 10-13, 2023); plus a \$500 gift card for expenses. (*Terms apply.

Visit RedCrossBlood.org/SuperBowl for details.) To lead the offense against a potential winter blood shortage, Manning invites the public to join him in helping save lives. “If everyone does their part and we collectively commit to donating blood, we can stack up more wins for hospital patients who are counting on us. A sin-

gle individual is certainly impactful, but a whole team of people coming together to donate has an even greater effect.”

Upcoming blood donation opportunities in neighboring communities Jan. 3-Feb. 3, 2023

- 1/6/2023: 8:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m., Antigo High School, 1900 10th Ave., Antigo
- 1/16/2023: 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m., Saints Mary and Hyacinth Catholic Church, 819 3rd Ave., Antigo
- 1/17/2023: 11:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m., Grace Lutheran Church, 108 W Somo Ave., Tomahawk
- 1/27/2023: 10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m., Woodson YMCA, 707 Third St., Wausau
- 1/25/2023: 11:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Cabaret Cove, 1540 Pueblo Dr., Rhinelander

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The Merrill Wrestling Team took third place at the Bluejay Challenge. Photos courtesy of Merrill Wrestling Team.

Merrill Wrestling Team takes third at Bluejay Challenge, Depies and Ball both grapple into first place

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Saturday, Jan. 7, 2023, the Merrill Wrestling Team hosted the Bluejay Challenge Invitational Tournament. Out of 25 teams attending, the Merrill Varsity Wrestling Team finished 3rd.

“Ryder Depies and Brian Ball led the way by winning the individual championship,” Suchocki said. “Both continue to lead the team.”

“Ryder didn’t get out of the second period before dominating his competition. It’s fun to watch Ryder compete,” he said. “He will continue to work hard and get better.”

“Brian also put together a nice tournament,” Suchocki said. “Right now he is wrestling well. He has taken some nice shots, and all areas of his wrestling are continually improving. Brian is getting some big-match experience, which will be helpful down the last stretch of the season.”

“Callum Wheeler took third, showing some real determination in his final match,” he said. “He started out down four points but battled back and picked up a major decision. That’s the type of wrestling we want to see out of Callum. He is having a great season.”

“Austin Depies was our next highest place finisher coming in fourth,” Suchocki said. “Austin continues to battle, as he is in many back-and-forth matches.”

“Dusty Schmirler, Brett Suchocki, and Carson Brooks all finished sixth with solid performances,” he said.

“As a team, we competed well,” Suchocki said. “It was a long day and the wrestlers



Ryder Depies in his Championship match at the Bluejay Challenge.



Brian Ball grapples his way into a Championship spot at the Bluejay Challenge.

are becoming more seasoned with the competition. We are looking forward to competing in the month of January with some important matches.”

2023 Bluejay Challenge individual results for Merrill:

- | | |
|---|--|
| 106: Dustin Schmirler (7-4) placed 6th and scored 28.0 team points. | 132: Brady Norton (16-8) placed 8th and scored 22.0 team points. |
| 113: Joey Jensen (11-12) placed 7th and scored 26.0 team points. | 138: Callum Wheeler (20-3) placed 3rd and scored 37.0 |
| 126: Brett Suchocki (13-5) | |

See WRESTLING page 15

Merrill Boys Basketball Team: a loss and a big win

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The Merrill Boys Basketball Team played host to SPASH on Friday evening, Jan. 6, 2023, but the home-court advantage didn’t play out.

“We’ve been a little inconsistent all year on defense,” said Merrill Varsity Boys Basketball Head Coach Troy Pieper. “The games when we have energy on defense and we are in the right spots, we are a really dangerous team, and most games our offense also has better flow end movement. However, when we don’t execute on the defensive side, we tend to struggle on the offensive end, as well, and unfortunately, tonight we didn’t bring it like we needed to on the defensive side and our offense struggled, as well.”

“We gave up too many second-chance points, especially in the first half,” he said. “We were down 14 at the half, and they had 14 second-chance points to our 0, so it’s really the little things.”

“We are a good team,” Pieper said. “When we do the little things, we can compete with the teams we’ve lost to. However, when our focus isn’t in the right spots for all 36 minutes, we struggle. I’m confident we will get things right, we have a great group of guys, and we have a great coaching staff that will continue to tweak things to find a way to get things going in the right direction.”

As for the Merrill players and their strengths in this game, “It was nice seeing Bradyn get his shot going again,” he said. “He struggled a little recently, but he got us going early having 9 of our 16 first-half points.”

“I was really impressed with how Carson Woellner played,” Pieper added. “He’s one of those guys who keeps catching my eye. I really love his energy every day. I love his attitude, and he’s a great kid on top of it. He gives the JV team that same energy for one half and is waiting to give that energy for Varsity whenever called upon, and the minutes he got on Friday and how he delivered will get him more minutes for us. He’s just an instant spark.”

Box Score
SPASH 60 @ Merrill 42

On Saturday, Jan. 7, the Boys traveled to Ashland High School and the outcome was a lot different, with a successful game and a big win this time around.

“Sometimes after a frustrating night, it’s good to get right back at it as soon as possible, and luckily, we had a schedule that had us playing back-to-back, so there was no practice or waiting for the next game to get the loss out of our system,” Pieper said.

“The guys responded well. Again, like I’ve said multiple times this year, when we bring the energy and effort on defense, it shows how dangerous we can be.”

In this game, you could see it, he said, and anyone who watched both Friday’s game and Saturday’s game would have seen it.

“Our offense was way more fluid and we were more aggressive and confident on the offensive side, but it wasn’t anything we changed in walk-through or anything, it was simply our energy on defense,” Pieper said. “Defense creates offense, not the other way around, and once we do that consistently, we can play with anyone.”

“Carter Baade had the breakout game I’ve been waiting for. He’s one of our best all-around players, I’ve been waiting for him to just be more aggressive on offense, and today I ran our first two set plays to start the game for him to shoot. I wanted him to get going early, and he started fast, and it carried over the entire game. He was simply awesome in aspects of the game. His stat line (19 points, 6 rebounds, 5 steals, 5 assists) tonight was off the charts awesome, but not surprising to me. I’ve seen him do this at the JV level and was just waiting for him to see that yeah, I can do it at this level, too. His game today could be huge for us; it makes us a much better team when he’s playing confident like he was today.”

“Bradyn (Pieper) played well again,” Pieper said. “Carter and Bradyn are good friends off the court, and you could see them playing off of each other really well tonight. They found each other a lot, and it was fun to see them both shoot so well tonight. Combined they were 9-20 from the 3pt

See BASKETBALL page 16

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Merrill Girls Basketball Team wins Holiday Tournament

PATIENCE PYAN AND TINA L. SCOTT

The Merrill Girls Basketball Team traveled to Stevens Point for a conference match-up on Dec. 6, 2022. The girls trailed 1-11 early in the first half and struggled early on to score. About three quarters of the way through the first half they battled back and got it within 3, with a score of 13-16; however, that let go again and went down to 17-24 at halftime.

The score remained 17-24 for about the first quarter of the second half. Scores went back and forth, with Stevens Point maintaining the lead.

Towards the end of the game, the Merrill girls got it within 2, with a score of 36-34, but they couldn't quite get over that bump and pull ahead and went on to lose the game 39-49. The Bluejays had 23 turnovers, and the Panthers scored 24 points off those turnovers. On the bright side, the girls continue to be impressive from the free throw line, shooting 75%. Merrill Girls were led by Maddie Drew (15 pts, 2 reb, 1 stl), Mia Ott (12 pts, 3 reb, 3 stl), and Alayna Pozorski (9 pts, 1 stl, 1 reb).

**Box Score
Merrill 39 @ SPASH 49**

The Merrill Girls Basketball team traveled to Elmwood on Dec. 28-29, 2022, for their Holiday Tournament. The girls played one game each day.

On the 28th, Merrill played Augusta, and the girls started the game with a 9-0 run. A little less than halfway through the first half, the score was 23-10, and the Bluejays went on a 15-0 run and only allowed 4 more points the rest of that entire first half of the game. The Bluejays were winning 50-14 at halftime.

The start of the second half was a little rough, as there was no score change for either team for about six minutes, but eventually the Lady Jays found their groove again. The girls led in just about every category, scoring an impressive 39 points off the 30 turnovers forced. They went on to win big 76-32. Merrill was led by Maddie Drew (19 pts, 1 reb, 3 stl), Sophie Wendorf (14 pts, 2 reb, 2 ast), Alayna Pozorski (12 pts, 7 reb, 5 ast), and Freshman Kaela Clerveaux (9 pts, 6 reb, 2 stl) also got on the books scoring.

**Box Score
Merrill 76 @ Augusta 32**

The next day the Bluejays played Alma/Pepin in the Tournament Championship and it was pretty similar to the day before. The Bluejays came ready to play and immediately jumped on Alma/Pepin,



Sophie Wendorf (#12) takes the ball up the court looking to set up the offense.

Patience Pyan photos.



Seniors (and cousins) Prayla Pyan (#23) and Addy Schmeltzer (#33) speak pre game.

scoring 21 points before their opponents had even made a basket. The Bluejays led in pretty much every single category, including shooting %, rebounds, assists, and steals, and also scored 25 points off the 27 turnovers made by their opponents. Merrill held on to this lead for the entire game, not giving it up once. They went on to win the game 62-27, winning the Tournament. The Lady Jays were led by Alayna Pozorski (20 pts, 4 reb, 4 ast), Maddie Drew (8 pts, 3 reb, 4 stl), Mia Ott (7 pts, 7 reb, 4 ast), and Sophie Wendorf (7 pts, 7 reb, 2 ast).

**Box Score
Merrill 62 @ Alma/Pepin 27**

HALL-OF-FAME from page 7

10 leading scorer in WVC history, and made him the 9th all-time leading scorer in MHS history with 868 points. It was noted that Finanger was an excellent shooter, and if the 3-point shot had been in effect when he played, he would have had many more career points. Also named All-State in Football and Baseball, Finanger was offered a football scholarship to play for the University of Wisconsin Badgers, but declined that to attend Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, where he lettered three years in basketball and two years in baseball.

The youngest of those named to this year's Basketball HOF, Jordan Stine played on the Merrill Boys Varsity Basketball Team from 2001 to 2005. He lettered all four years and was WVC Honorable Mention, Second Team, and then two years First Team (by unanimous selection as a Senior). As a Senior he was also a Channel 7 All Star.

Stine is the all-time Merrill leading scorer in WVC history with 886 total

points. He progressively increased his average points each season from a 9.9 average as a Freshman to a 20.2 average as a Senior, for an average of 15.0 points per game in his high school career. Stine also broke a 41-year-old school record as a Senior to become MHS's all-time leading scorer, when he scored his 1,075th point (which broke 2021 HOF inductee Jim Langenkamp's record of 1,074) and went on to finish his high-school basketball career with 1,124 points. Stine remains the third highest scorer in MHS history. He also still holds the school record for field goal percentage in a season at 66% (69-105) set during his freshman year of 2001-02, among other notable stats.

"This is our second group of Merrill Basketball Hall of Fame inductees," said Troy Pieper, Merrill Varsity Boys Basketball Head Coach. "It's a great group of Merrill legends."

"It was a great night honoring them and showing them the appreciation we all have for what they gave to Merrill Basketball. It's an honor to have such a rich history of basketball here at Merrill," he said.

2023 Merrill High School Winter Sports Schedules

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, and JV2)			
Fri. Jan. 13	D. C. Everest (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Fri. Jan. 13	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Tues. Jan 17	Northland Pines (JV & JV2)	Away	5:45 pm
Tues. Jan 17	Northland Pines (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm
Girls Basketball (Varsity & JV)			
Fri. Jan. 13	D. C. Everest (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Fri. Jan. 13	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Tues. Jan 17	Antigo (JV & JV2)	Home	5:45 pm
Tues. Jan 17	Antigo (Varsity)	Home	7:15 pm
Boys Hockey (Varsity and JV)			
Thurs. Jan. 12	D. C. Everest (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 12	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Fri. Jan. 13	Rhineland (Varsity)	Home	6:00 pm
Fri. Jan. 13	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	8:00 pm
Sat. Jan. 14	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	11:00 am
Sat. Jan. 14	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	1:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 19	Stevens Point (JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 19	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Girls Hockey (Varsity and JV)			
Mon. Jan. 16	ECA Stars (JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Mon. Jan. 16	ECA Stars (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Boys Wrestling (Varsity and JV)			
Thurs. Jan. 12	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	6:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 19	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	6:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 19	D. C. Everest (JV)	Home	7:00 pm
Girls Wrestling (Varsity)			
Thurs. Jan. 12	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Thurs. Jan. 19	D. C. Everest (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm

The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



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WRESTLING

from page 14

team points.
145: Mason Johnson (3-3) placed 17th and scored 6.0 team points.
152: Hunter Opper (11-7) placed 7th and scored 28.0 team points.
160: Gage Lassa (11-2) placed 9th and scored 25.0 team points.
160: Jace Olson (6-9) placed 15th.
170: Brian Ball (20-3) placed 1st and scored 46.0 team points.
182: Carson Brooks (17-6) placed 6th.
182: Austin Depies (16-7) placed 4th and scored 32.0 team points.
195: Ryder Depies (22-1) placed 1st and scored 50.0 team points.
220: Noah Klug (10-8) placed 9th and scored 20.0 team points.
285: Mikel Plautz (4-13) placed 20th.
285: Joshua Gustum (1-3) placed 21st.
285: Ian Dreikosen (8-12) placed 19th and scored 0.0 team points.

2023 Bluejay Challenge team results

1. Wittenberg-Biramwood 413.02
2. Wausau West 411.03
3. Merrill 348.04
4. Crandon 339.05
5. Neillsville/Greenw./Loyal 264.06
6. Lakeland/Mercer 256.07
7. Saint Croix Central 240.08
8. Chetek-Wey./Pr. Farm 238.09
9. Boyceville 212.510
10. Stanley-Boyd 208.011
11. Chippewa Falls 199.012
12. Abbotsford/Colby 191.013
13. Tomahawk 185.514
14. Marathon 182.015
15. Waupun 163.516
16. Amherst 157.017
17. Edgar 155.018
18. Nekoosa/Assumption 150.019
19. Rhineland 111.020
20. Wabeno/Laona/Th. Lakes 108.021
21. Antigo 104.522
22. Athens 95.023
23. Barron 61.024
24. Tri-County 32.025
25. Menominee Indian 30.0

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Gage Lassa, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Gage began wrestling in kindergarten and wrestled through his Freshman year in high school, then took a couple of years off, and is now back as a member of the Merrill Varsity Wrestling Team. He recently went 7-0 at the Northern Exposure Meet/Tournament. He also played football until eighth grade but decided not to play in high school.

At school, Gage is involved in Junior Optimists and Youth Apprenticeship (YA). Through the YA program, he works part-time at Baumann Farms near Brokaw. His favorite classes this year are Bluejay Design for manufacturing and Advanced Woods for cabinetmaking.

In his free time, Gage enjoys working on his two project vehicles. He is restoring a '76 Ford F150 and a '69 Ford Mustang Fastback. He also likes to hang out with his friends working on their rides, have bonfires with friends, ride snowmobiles and four wheelers, fish, and hunt deer, goose, and duck.

The son of Levi Lassa and Erin Maluegge, both of Merrill, Gage has a 2.6 GPA and is considering going to a technical school and into an apprenticeship program to be a pipefitter, steamfitter, or tinfitter after graduation this year.



Gage Lassa

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SUCCESS
from page 8

Tech Council President Tom Still.

The contest is designed to encourage entrepreneurs in the startup stage of tech-based businesses in Wisconsin. It links up-and-coming entrepreneurs with a statewide network of community resources, expert advice and mentoring, management talent, and possible sources of capital.

The contest has led to valuable public and media exposure for the top business plans. In 2022, finalists shared in more than \$125,000 in cash and service prizes. Over time, contestants have also raised at least \$300 million in angel capital, venture capital, and venture debt. The contest's largest sponsor is the Wisconsin Economic Development Corp.

For their initial entries, contestants will submit a 250-word idea abstract on-

line at govsbizplancontest.com. That's where contestants will also find business plan templates and other information, such as the Entrepreneurs' Toolkit. The toolkit provides business startup information and assistance, networking contacts, and technical resources.

Contestants who advance to subsequent contest rounds will expand their plan in stages. More than 80 judges drawn from the finance, sales, marketing, research, and

technology sectors across Wisconsin will score the entries and provide feedback on submissions.

To get started, contestants must create a simple account at govsbizplancontest.com. All entries are submitted through the website. Contestants use their account to gain access to mentors throughout the process, as well as to review the judges' comments and feedback.

Since its inception in 2004, nearly 4,450 entries have been received and about \$2.5 million in cash and services (such as legal, accounting, office space, and marketing) have been awarded. Contest categories are Advanced Manufacturing, Business Services, Information Technology, and Life Sciences.

Wisconsin residents 18 years old and older are eligible, as are teams from Wisconsin-based businesses, schools, and more. Businesses or teams from outside the state are also eligible to compete if they demonstrate intent to base or expand their

business in Wisconsin. Entrepreneurs may also enter multiple ideas, though each idea must be separate and distinct.

Companies or individuals that have not received angel or venture capital in the current form are eligible to enter. The 2023 competition will take place in stages, including a pitch deck for phase 3.

In Phase 1, which is open until 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2023, the contest will accept idea abstracts on the website. Entries should be roughly 250 words and will be graded by the pool of BPC judges. The top 50 idea abstracts will advance to Phase 2.

In Phase 2, which runs from Feb. 20 to 5:00 p.m. March 13, 2023, the top 50 idea abstracts will submit an executive summary. The top 20 executive summaries will advance to Phase 3. A mentored "boot camp" for contestants will be held during this phase.

In Phase 3, which runs from April 3 to 5:00 p.m. April 24, 2023, the top 20 executive summaries will

prepare "pitch decks" with voiceover audio up to 15 minutes long. Judges will review the videos and pick three finalists from each of the four categories to advance to the final live presentation round. Mentored practice sessions will be offered to the top 12 in late May.

The top 12, or "Diligent Dozen," will square off with live presentations during the Wisconsin Entrepreneurs' Conference in June 2023.

The 2022 grand prize winner was Rapid Radicals, a Milwaukee-based company, a system to help stop untreated sewage from being dumped into waterways during floods. Category winners in 2022 were Stellar Tech Girls (Business Services), HeyGov (Information Technology), Cold Water Technologies (Life Sciences), and Rapid Radicals (Advanced Manufacturing).

To enter, become a judge, or learn about sponsorship opportunities, visit govsbizplancontest.com.

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HEALTHY
from page 2

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BASKETBALL
from page 14

line. They are two of our best shooters, and when they are shooting it like that, it makes everything easier for everyone else."

"We went back to our full-court defense more to try and spark some energy on defense," he said, "And EJ Weix really flourished in the full court. He's so athletic and aggressive; he caused so much chaos for Ashland. He was really impressive tonight, as well."

"Tyson was dominating on the boards. He had 20 rebounds, just a couple short of the school record. He was attacking the glass hard, and his effort was at a high level tonight," Pieper said.

The key to finishing out the rest of the season on a high note?

"We now need to take what we did Saturday and continue that moving forward," he said. "We just need to be more consistent with our 3 E's. When we Execute at a high level and bring the Energy and Effort, we are tough to beat. We are back in conference play Tuesday vs Rapids. We'll see if we can build off of a nice complete game."

Box Score
Merrill 85 @ Ashland 35

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