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Raasch death ruled accident



Raasch

MMC STAFF

PORTAGE COUNTY – The 1984 death of UW-Stevens Point student, Janet M. Raasch of Merrill, has been ruled an accident.

See RAASCH page 5



The first snowfall of the year this past weekend as it blanketed Mother Nature in a thin layer of white made for some beautiful photos, but it didn't last long.
Michael J. Caylor Jr. photo.

Merrill Police Department: A look at 22 months of change

Retirements, new hires, new roles reflect an evolving MPD

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

The Merrill Police Department (MPD) experienced significant staff changes in the last couple of years. Many of Merrill's finest officers in blue had been with the Department long-term, so it was bound to happen. Long-familiar officers began to retire, and new names and faces took their place. "It's a normal, anticipated cycle but still a little bitter-sweet," Merrill Police Chief Corey Bennett said back in early 2021.

The Dec. 31, 2020, retirement of Lieutenant Investigator Pat Wunsch, after 22 years with the MPD, set off a chain of retirements and a corresponding series of new officers joining the Department and advancements and realignment of duties within the Department.

■ On Jan. 29, 2021, the MPD hired

Bryan Allen to fill the opening for a Police Officer left by Wunsch. Having worked as a Police Officer in Madison, Wisconsin, for three+ years and in Columbus, Georgia, for more than five years prior to that, and with a bachelors in Psychology, Allen was a welcome addition to the Department. He and his family were happy to relocate to Merrill because his wife's family had ties to the community.



Don Seubert.

■ Lieutenant Don Seubert moved from Patrol to the Detective Division to fill the role Wunsch formerly occupied. Seubert's experience, having been with MPD since 1995 and serving in multiple roles during that timeframe, including Police Officer, Temporary Investigator, Temporary SRO, Field Training Officer (FTO), Patrol Lt., FTO Supervisor, Instructor, and others, made him the ideal candidate for the position, and his detail-oriented approach to case supervision in the active Detective Division made him an asset to the Department in this new role.



Tyler Tesch. Photos courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

■ Seubert's move then created a vacancy for a Patrol Lieutenant. Multiple Police Officers within the Department applied and were considered, and ultimately, Officer Tyler Tesch was promoted to the position of Patrol Lieutenant. At the time, he had just celebrated 14 years with the MPD, during which time he had served as a Patrol Officer, Field Training Officer, Instructor, Northcentral Technical College (NTC) Instructor, and one of the most recognized Drug Recognition Experts (DRE's) in Wisconsin. He was designated FTO Supervisor to oversee the field training of the Department's new employees to be hired in 2021.

See MPD page 6

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How to obtain a free ID to vote in the Nov. 8 election

The Wisconsin Department of Transportation Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds voters they can obtain a free identification card which is valid for voting in the Nov. 8 Wisconsin Fall Election through their department.

Voters can use their driver's license, military or student ID card, or an ID card from the DMV for identification purposes when voting at the polls. Proper identification for voting must include a photo. (Check <https://bringit.wi.gov/> to see if your ID meets requirements for voting.)

To obtain a free ID card from the DMV to show at the polls, go to wisconsinidguide.wi.gov/ for a list of documents you will need to gather. Then go to a Wisconsin DMV Customer Service Center in person, with these documents in hand, to obtain an ID.

If all required documents are not readily available, follow the DMV's "Voter ID Petition Process" to obtain the needed information to quickly obtain a receipt valid to take to the polls for voting while the remaining documents or verifications

are obtained.

Call DMV's Voter ID hotline at 844.588.1069 with questions.

To find a local DMV Customer Service Center, check hours, services and wait times, visit wisconsinidguide.wi.gov/centers.

For questions regarding voter eligibility, poll locations, voter registration information or other election information, go to the Wisconsin Elections Commission website at elections.wi.gov.

Lincoln County Board Chair Don Friske: Agreement in place to maintain 4-H program

No Extension funding in latest budget proposal; amendments to be considered in October

BY JALEN MAKI
MMC STAFF

Following several weeks of uncertainty, Lincoln County's 4-H program appears to be on the path to remaining in the County.

Facing a \$1.2 million budget deficit for 2023, among the steps proposed by the County's Finance and Insurance Committee to get back into the black was to eliminate the County's portion of funding for UW-Extension, which facilitates 4-H and other programs in Lincoln County.

For years, funding the County's Extension office

has been a joint effort, with Extension providing about 55% of the monies (roughly \$260,000.00 for 2023) and the County accounting for the remaining 45% (about \$208,000.00).

Extension employees have said that without Lincoln County's portion of funding, the County's Extension office would be forced to close.

A listening session, organized by Extension and Lincoln County Board Chair Don Friske, was held at the Lincoln County Service Center in Merrill on Sept. 14, 2022. The session provided the public with an opportunity to voice their concerns about the potential slashing of Extension dollars and how that would affect 4-H and other programs.

Prior to the public comment period during the Lincoln County Board of Supervisors meeting at the Lincoln County Service Center in Merrill on Tuesday, Sept. 20, Friske said he had spoken with UW-Extension, and an agreement had been reached that would maintain the County's 4-H program.

No information on what the agreement entails was provided during the meeting.

Art Lersch, Area 3 Director at the UW-

Extension office in Lincoln County, said on Friday, Sept. 23 that he had not spoken to Friske personally regarding an agreement and was not aware of an agreement having been made in writing.

Assistant Dean and Associate Professor Jason Hauser, who works with the Extension offices in Chippewa, Clark, Dunn, Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties, said on Friday, Sept. 23 that as of that date, there was no written agreement or contract in place, but Extension was aware of a "verbal agreement on behalf of" Friske to "allocate the funding in the Extension budget for 2023 to keep 4-H going."

During last week's meeting, the Board was presented with the first balanced 2023 County budget proposal. No funding was allocated to Extension in the proposal.

Friske noted that the Board will consider any amendments to the budget proposal in October. Yearly budgets are typically approved in November.

The Tomahawk Leader reached out to Friske regarding the aforementioned agreement, but had not received a response as of press time

on Monday, Sept. 26.

Public comment period

More than a dozen people spoke over the course of the meeting's roughly one-hour public comment period, all speaking in favor of funding Extension and/or maintaining the 4-H program.

Lersch said the partnership between Extension and the County has existed for more than 100 years, and that Extension "would like to see that partnership continue for the next 100 years."

"UW-Extension is committed to continuing our investment in Lincoln County, should Lincoln County choose to continue its investment with us," Lersch stated.

Lersch said Extension "understand(s) and empathize(s) with the budget challenges facing Lincoln County," noting that Extension's own fiscal constraints prevented it from covering the County's portion of the co-investment.

Allie Libby, a counselor at Merrill High School, spoke about other programs Extension provides and how they may be impacted by a lack of funding.

Libby explained that Extension co-chairs the County's Healthy Minds

See 4-H page 3

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Wisconsin one of six states to receive CDC grant for suicide prevention

The Wisconsin Department of Health Services (DHS) announced on Thursday, Sept. 15, 2022, that it had received a five-year grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to prevent suicide in the state.

The award is for \$868,730.00, with similar funding expected for each of the next four years.

Five other states were chosen for funding through the competitive grant process: Florida, Georgia, New York, North Dakota, and Oregon.

DHS said the money will be used to reduce deaths in areas of the state with the highest rates of suicide through several strategies, includ-

ing establishing partnerships with groups involved in mental health and suicide prevention, while also engaging people with lived experience of suicide loss, attempts, and/or ideation.

"This funding could not come at a more critical time. In the last 20 years, suicide in Wisconsin has increased 32%," said DHS Secretary-designee Karen Timberlake. "Suicide is the tenth-leading cause of death in the state, taking the lives of nearly 900 Wisconsin residents in 2020. We cannot continue to lose our family, friends, or members of our communities to suicide. This landmark funding from the CDC will help save lives and save many from

the unique and difficult pain of losing someone to suicide."

People experiencing suicidal thoughts, mental health issues, and/or substance use disorders can call the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. This line provides free and confidential help to callers of any age, 24 hours a day, and can be accessed by calling or texting 988, or using the chat feature available at www.988lifeline.org/.

To learn more about suicide prevention efforts in Wisconsin, as well as risk factors and warning signs for suicide, visit the DHS suicide prevention webpage at www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/prevent-suicide/index.htm.

4-H from page 2

Coalition, which is a partnership with the Lincoln County Health Department.

The coalition's "sole purpose" is to "support the physical and mental health of Lincoln County residents," Libby said.

"If this cut goes through, it will certainly decrease the effectiveness and the ability to support our residents through programs like youth and adult mental health first aid, creating Lincoln County resource guides that are used in the majority of organizations within our County, decreasing the stigma around accessing mental health services in our community, and an integral part of providing our school districts with mental health programming and services," Libby said.

Libby also highlighted Extension's Health and Well-Being, Positive Youth Development, and Community Development positions, saying the positions "support systems" and are "the backbone of

so many organizations and functionings throughout the County."

"Without this backbone to our community, Lincoln County might not feel an impact in terms of one obvious cut or program," Libby stated. "Rather, this cut will permeate for years to come. Systems will not collaborate. Residents will not have resources. Funds will not be brought into the community."

Libby added that if Extension funding were to be cut, rather than paying for "preventative services in our community that in turn bring more money into our County than the cost of their program," the County would "be paying for it in the long run with reactive services that cost the County and its residents far more in funds and tax dollars."

Several current and former 4-H members and leaders also spoke during the public comment period.

10-year-old Alex Neuman said he joined 4-H last year.

"I hope you find a way to keep 4-H running so kids like me have a group where we belong," Neuman stated.

Tomahawk High School Junior Maggie Lashua said 4-H has provided her with numerous opportunities to work towards her goal of becoming a large animal veterinarian, explaining that she attended a two-week camp at the University of Kentucky, where she was able to gain hands-on experience working with a variety of animals.

"None of that would have been possible without 4-H," Lashua stated.

Carolyn Van Asten, an alumna of the Lincoln County 4-H Club, a current leader with the Hi-Los Club, and a mother of two active members of the Hi-Los, said 4-H is "designed to raise young civic leaders."

"We are raising library board members, school board members, city council members, and future county supervisors in this organization," Van Asten said.

Next County Board meeting

The next Lincoln County Board of Supervisors meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, Oct. 18, 2022, at 6:00 p.m.

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Aspirus Merrill provides free meals and flu vaccines

Aspirus Merrill Hospital (AMR) staff provided free flu vaccines as well as a spaghetti meal during a drive-through clinic for the Merrill community on September 29, 2022.

"We are extremely proud to be able to provide this service to the Merrill community," says Jane Bentz, Aspirus Merrill Hospital Foundation Director. "Today was a great success for the foundation and the city of Merrill."

In total, AMR gave out 190 flu shots and distributed all 500 planned meals.

The remaining 50 flu shots will be donated to the H2N group for a pop-up flu clinic in Merrill.

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Merrill Area United Way



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October 2022 -- Foto News Article
Merrill Area United Way
Dee Olsen, Executive Director

75 years is a milestone, and it only comes around once. 75 years, is an incredibly long time to sustain an organization, but it is easier because the community has supported United Way, its cause, its value, and its mission to ensure the Merrill area has services to help others. With the conclusion of a wonderful event, our Fun Day at the AGRA Pavilion this past Saturday, we reflect on how significant United Way's contribution to the Merrill Area has been. The Mayoral Proclamation drew attention to the infusion of \$2,117,000 over the past 11 years. United Way strives to advance the common good by creating opportunities for a better life for all. Using our core focus areas of health, education and meeting basic needs. It is clear United Way cares about a quality education that will lead to stable employment, a solid, sustainable income to support a family, and having good affordable health care.

At the recent Chamber of Commerce Annual Awards Banquet, the Executive Director talked about "being the change." This catchphrase lends itself to everyone in our community doing everything they can to make a positive difference. We hope everyone will try to "be the change." Change to help people in our core areas. Be neighborly and help others out when there is a time of need. It is fall and leaf raking efforts are underway – get involved. Cold weather will soon attract more homeless people into the MAC Home or Our Sisters House. Food For Kids prepares about 250-300 weekend bags of food and snacks for children in need. It is also United Way's campaign time – give what you can to help people in our community. It is close to Christmas and help is needed with The Mitten Tree, the Christmas Spirit Appeal, church giving opportunities, and many, many other fund raisers for medical help, loss of life, fire disasters, and so much more. With thirty plus churches, and more than fifty organizations there is clearly great opportunity to find something a person can get passionate about.

I liked the catchphrase "Be the Change." Only you personally can strive to influence positive improvements. Figure it out, find ways to give of your time, your talents, your financial support. You can "Be the Change."

For more information on United Way visit our website is www.merrillareanitedway.org where Pay Pal donations can now be made. Send donation checks to Merrill Area United Way, at P. O. Box 813, Merrill 54452. For further information email us at delores.olsen@merrillareanitedway.org ; or call our part-time office at 715-536-2016.

207023

OBITUARIES



Betty A. Voelz, 97, of Merrill, passed away Thursday, October 13, 2022, at Aspirus Wausau Hospital.

Betty was born August 10, 1925, in the Town of Scott, Lincoln County, daughter of the late Albert and Martha (Hinz) Sense. On September 6, 1925, Betty was baptized at her home. Her father passed away when she was 6 years old and her mother passed away when she was 12 years old, she was then taken care of by her 10 older siblings. Betty married

Arthur 'Art' Voelz on May 31, 1947, at St. John Lutheran Church in Merrill. He preceded her in death on October 8, 2013.

Betty and Art owned and operated a dairy farm in the Town of Scott for 40 years and helped Art with custom farming work. Together, Betty and Art delivered meals on wheels, the Wausau Daily Herald, the Foto News, and the Buyer's Guide. Betty also delivered the Senior Center newsletter.

Betty worked at the Merrill Candy company and Weinbrenner Shoe Company. Betty also worked as a substitute food server at Merrill schools.

She was a member of St. John Lutheran Church in Merrill, that is where she was confirmed (April 2, 1939) and married (May 31, 1947). Betty was a member of the Ladies Aid.

Betty volunteered her time and talents for many groups at many places, including at school in the library, the kindergarten room, and the after-school program; at the senior center where she took part in the Senior Olympics; was a 4-H Club leader, she was a sewing leader for the Smiling Scotties 4-H Club, taught crafts for 4-H Discovery Day, helped at the Lincoln County Fair, and helped with the after school program. Betty was a member of the Scott Hustlers Homemakers Club for over 60 years, Sewing Club for 70 years, Card Club, and she was a Red Hatter. Betty loved playing cards, dancing, sewing, and crafts. She also enjoyed cooking, canning, and baking, especially for her family and her grandchildren. Betty loved to dance with her husband and attended many Polk Fests and Polka Services.

Betty is survived by her children, Tom Voelz of Milwaukee, Tim Voelz of Merrill, Tod Voelz of California, and Tia Hein of Shawano; grandchildren, Jasmin Voelz, Craig Voelz, Travis Janko, Hannah Hein, and Gunnar Hein; and over 200 nieces and nephews. Betty was preceded in death by her husband, Arthur 'Art' Voelz; parents, Albert and Martha Sense; sisters, Erna Schneider, Della Hinz, Rose Smith, Martha Kufahl, Ruth Kleinschmidt, Viola Neumann, and Esther Sense; and brothers, Edward Sense, Harry Sense, Albert Sense, and Walter Sense.

The funeral service for Betty will be held at 11:00 A.M. on Monday, October 17, 2022, at St. John Lutheran Church in Merrill. Lay Minister Robert Schneider will officiate. Visitation will begin at 10:00 A.M. on Monday at the church. Burial will follow at Faith Lutheran Church Cemetery-North in the Town of Scott, Lincoln County.

A very special thanks to Judy Wery and Nancy Swanson for all the help with Betty the last few years.

In lieu of flowers, memorials in Betty's name may be made to St. John Lutheran School's library.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Denise A. Maurisak, 66, of Merrill, passed away Monday, October 10, 2022, at Froedtert Hospital in Milwaukee.

Denise was born on July 16, 1956, in Wausau, daughter of the late Dennis and Ruth (Kaphaem) Wolf. She graduated from Wausau East High School. Denise married Mark Maurisak on July 17, 1976, at Wesley United Methodist Church in Wausau. He survives. She was currently a member of Christ United Methodist Church in Merrill.

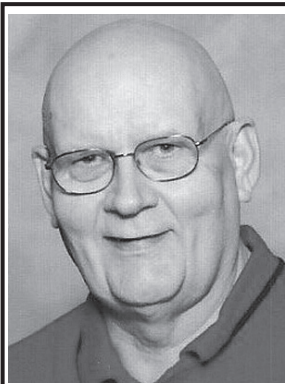
Denise worked at Northern Door, Bill's House of Guns, and Lincoln Wood. She enjoyed feeding the birds and deer and putting together puzzles. In her spare time, she volunteered at church and cleaned the aviary at Pine Crest Nursing Home. She was her grandsons' biggest supporter whether next to the track, field, or ice rink.

Denise is survived by her husband, Mark Maurisak of Merrill; sons, Joshua (Beth) Maurisak of Merrill and Brandon (Lindsey) Maurisak of Portland, Oregon; grandsons, Ethan Maurisak and Hunter Maurisak; brother, Jeff (Sandy) Wolf of Kronenwetter; sister-in-law, Julie Wolf; stepmother, Rose Wolf of Wausau; stepbrother, Kurt (Cindy) Schuster of Wausau; and ten nieces and nephews. Denise was preceded in death by her parents, Dennis and Ruth Wolf; brothers, Kimlin Wolf and Chuck Wolf; and friend, Diane Gulke.

A memorial service for Denise will be held at Christ United Methodist Church, Merrill, on Monday October 17, 2022, at 5:00 P.M. Pastor Mike Zahn will officiate. Visitation will begin at 3:00 P.M. Monday at the church. Burial will take place at a later date in Restlawn Memorial Park, Wausau. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family.

In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Denise's name to the Lincoln County Humane Society or Christ United Methodist Church.

Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com



Roger C. Merkle, 80, Gleason, passed away Sunday, October 2, 2022 due to Covid related respiratory problems. Roger was born February 25, 1942 in Sturgeon Bay, son of the late Jacob and Eunice (Krueger) Merkle and was a graduate of Sturgeon Bay High School, Class of 1960.

Roger's passion was baking & cake decorating. He loved making his filled cupcakes and cookies for others. He worked at numerous bakeries throughout Wisconsin and even in Phoenix, AZ for a short time. Roger also owned his own bakery, Merkle's Home Bakery in Weyauwega for a few years. He had a sense of humor and was quite the jokester. He loved listening to his polka's and watching the Mollie B Polka Party & the Big Joe Polka show.

Roger is survived by his daughter, Annette (Kurt) Nierode, Gleason, and his grand-doggies Dusty, Izzie, and Pixie who he adored. He is further survived by his siblings: Wayne Merkle, Grafton; Glen (Tracy) Merkle, Sturgeon Bay; nieces: Pam (Steve) Krauel, Patty (Richard) Birnschein, Brenda Bagnall, Bonnie Bagnall all of Sturgeon Bay, Roberta (Rob) Ladd, and his nephew, Wayne/Pee-wee (Debbie) Merkle all of Grafton.

He is preceded in death by his father and mother, Jacob and Eunice Merkle, his sister-in-law Diane Merkle, and his beloved companion Max.

Per Roger's wishes no funeral will be held. In lieu of flowers, consider donating to a local Humane Society in his honor. The family would like to extend a special thank you to the staff at Aspirus Hospital in Rhineland and Wausau. Also to the Cardiac ICU and Palliative Care unit in the Wausau hospital.

Mid Wisconsin Cremation Society is assisting family at this time. Online condolences may be expressed at MWCS.WS



Genevieve Maszk (Jenny Schnelle) went to the heavenly father on October 11, 2022 at 101. She was born September 22, 1921 in Roselville, WI daughter of the late Michael and Anna L. (Wolf) Dennee. She and 11 other siblings grew up in Stratford, WI where she went to grade school and graduated high school. Jenny married Donald Schoenfuss in 1941-1945. Then married Gilbert Schnelle from 1946-1979 and John Maszk 1982-1988.

Jenny helped operate the Merrill Surplus Store in Merrill, with her husband Gilbert, from 1960 until retiring in 1974. Then they enjoyed traveling all over the U.S. and wintered in FL for many years. She devoted her life to the Lord and was very active in volunteer work around Merrill and later years in the Wausau area. One of her favorite activities was singing in the Wausau Senior Chorus and also, singing in the choir of St. Therese Catholic Church in Schofield. Other activities she enjoyed were church doings, such as being a member of the Catholic Daughters and The Little Flower Counsel, knitting and loved playing all kinds of cards and games with family and friends.

Jenny is survived by her children Donald Schoenfuss Jr. Schnelle Wausau, Wayne (Diane) Schnelle Rothschild, Sharon (Tom) Hofmann Merrill, and daughter in law Maryellen Schnelle Pardeeville, WI; 11 grandchildren, 17 great grandchildren and 12 great, great grandchildren. She is preceded in death by her parents, husbands, Donald Schoenfuss, Gilbert Schnelle, and John Maszk; son James Schoenfuss Schnelle, 2 daughters Little Judith Schoenfuss age 2, Judy (Schoenfuss) (Richard) Hull, grandchildren Meredith and Daniel Hofmann, Cameron Schnelle, Wendy Malinowsky, and step grandson Matt Lepak; 4 brothers 7 sisters and their spouses.

Rosary and Funeral Mass will be held at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 1708 E. 10th Street, Merrill on Wednesday, October 19, 2022, Rosary at 10:30 a.m., Mass at 11:00 a.m.

Per Jenny's wishes, no flowers please. Memorials can be made for masses or a Catholic charity of your Choice.

Family would like to thank the staff at Pine Crest Nursing Home for their kindness and loving care.

John J. Buettgen Funeral Home is assisting family at this time.

Online condolences may be expressed at HonorOne.com

Man and woman found dead in Merrill apartment

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

Authorities responded to a multi-family apartment building on N. Memorial Dr. in Merrill on Wednesday, Oct. 5, 2022, for a 911 call indicating two individuals at the residence were not breathing.

Per the Merrill Fire Department, Medic 62 and 63 of the Merrill Fire Department, along with law enforcement, responded. EMS evaluated both patients and determined resuscitation efforts to be futile.

The Lincoln County Coroner's Office also responded, and a 35-year-old woman and a 43-year-old man were both pronounced dead at the scene by Lincoln County Coroner Paul Proulx and Deputy Coroner Valerie Caylor.

The bodies were taken to UW-Madison Hospital for autopsy. Caylor is awaiting toxicology reports before making a final determination on the cause of death.

The deceased woman was living at the N. Memorial Drive address in Merrill but had ties to the Lac du Flambeau area; the man had a Merrill address.

The Merrill Police Department is investigating.

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RAASCH from page 1

During an Oct. 11, 2022, press conference, Portage County Detective Dustin Kitzman, who had been working on the case for two years, released evidence that was used to determine the ruling in the nearly four-decade-old case.

Raasch, who was 20 at the time, was found lying on her side on Nov. 17, 1984, in a wooded area, southeast of the intersection of Highways 54 and J-South, on the first day of the hunting season about 300 feet from the nearest road.

Raasch was a business major in her third year at UWSP and worked at DeBot Center on campus. She went missing on Oct. 15, but was last seen on a Thursday morning, Oct. 11, 1984, on campus, where she lived at 312 Watson Hall.

After she was reported missing, an acquaintance detailed picking her up while she was hitchhiking on Oct. 11 and dropping her off at the intersection of Highways 54 and JJ in the town of Buena Vista, about two miles west of where her body was found.

University officials at the time said she had made arrangements for someone else to work for her at DeBot so she could go home to Merrill for the weekend. Her family notified the university after she didn't come home, officials said, and then police were notified.

An autopsy report at that time said Raasch probably died of strangulation, listing that as the most likely cause because "no categorical probable cause of death is shown but strangulation is the most likely cause." However, decomposition made it impossible to say for sure.

A pathologist was also unable to pinpoint the time of death, saying she could have died any time between the date of her disappearance and a week to 10 days before the body was found. Authorities also believed she was sexually assaulted, but again decomposition made it impossible to verify.

In June 2002, Raasch's body was exhumed to retrieve information that may help solve her murder. At that time, it was the only open "murder case" for the Portage County Sheriff's Department.

"Since 1984, new scientific techniques have been

discovered that have assisted law enforcement agencies across the nation in solving difficult cases," a 2002 Sheriff's release said. "For example, DNA testing did not exist in 1984 when Raasch's death was initially investigated."

On Oct. 11, 2022, Kitzman showed evidence that helped him determine the cause of death.

"It has then therefore been concluded with a number of different investigative experts that while sleeping in her sleeping bag, Janet awoke to being fully engulfed. As she attempted to distance herself from the fire, pieces of the bag were deposited near her belongings. And she continued south depositing much of the burning material of her jeans, shirt, and sleeping bag until she reached approximately 17 feet to the south, where additional pockets and coins and keys were deposited. Minimally clothed and severely burned, Janet attempted to go back to Highway 54 where she subsequently collapsed and succumbed to her injuries," he explained.

Kitzman described that Raasch had made a campsite in which her sleeping bag caught fire, burning about 60 percent of her body.

| OBITUARIES |



John Carl Yellstrom, 77, of Howards Grove, formerly of Merrill, Wisconsin, died at his home on October 8, 2022. John was born on January 15, 1945 to the late Carl and Adeline (Schroeder) Yellstrom. He was raised by the late Emil and Mildred Ricci of Merrill, Wisconsin.

He attended Schultzspur School through eighth grade and graduated from Merrill High School in June of 1963.

After graduation John, enlisted in the Army National Guard and served 2 years. John was an active Army National Guard member until 1971. On June 10, 1967 John was united in marriage to Sonya Gustavson.

John enjoyed fishing, hunting, and spending time with his three grandchildren whom he bragged about every chance he could get. He was a member of the National American Legion and was proud of his service to our country.

John worked for Northern Auto Supply as a regional sales manager for 25 years. He moved to Howards Grove in 2005 to be closer to his daughter and granddaughter after the death of his son-in-law, David. He also worked for Bell Tape Company for 2 years prior to his retirement.

Survivors include: one brother: Louis (Sally) Yellstrom of Merrill, WI; three children: Kathy (Ryan) Herzog of Plymouth, Mark Yellstrom of Howards Grove, and Erik Yellstrom; fiancée' Jodi Ledger of Milwaukee. John is also survived by his three grandchildren: Brandon and Madysen Yellstrom of Milwaukee; and Anna Depping-Herzog of Plymouth.

He was preceded in death by his step-parents: Emil and Mildred Ricci as well as his step-sister Leota Davis of Merrill, Wisconsin

Funeral services will be held on October 15, 2022 at 12:00 PM at Saron United Church of Christ in Johnsonville. Pastor RaeAnn Beebe, Pastor of the Church, will officiate. Cremation will take place following the service and inurnment will be in Saron UCC cemetery.

Friends may call at Saron United Church of Christ from 9:00 AM -12:00 PM, on October 15, 2022 until the time of services.

Military rites will be accorded by the Franklin American Legion Post #387 following the service.

The Suchon Funeral Home and Cremation Services of Plymouth is serving the family. For online condolences, please visit www.suchonfh.com

Legals 7700

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: 10/10/22
/S/ ROBERT R. RUSSELL
CIRCUIT JUDGE/COURT
COMMISSIONER
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
Notice and Order for
Name Change Hearing
 Case No. 22-CV-148

IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME CHANGE OF
 Nikole Marie Houghtaling
 By (Petitioner) Nikole Marie Houghtaling
NOTICE IS GIVEN:
 A petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
 From: Nikole Marie Houghtaling
 To: Nikole Marie Albert
 Birth Certificate: Nikole Marie Albert

IT IS ORDERED:
 This petition will be heard in the Circuit Court of Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin:

Honorable Robert R. Russell
 Lincoln County Courthouse
 1110 E. Main Street
 Merrill, WI 54452
 Date: November 15, 2022
 Time: 11:15 AM

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call (715) 536-0319 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide trans-

Legals 7700

portation.
IT IS FURTHER ORDERED:
 Notice of this hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 3 notice for three (3) weeks in a row prior to the date of the hearing in the Foto News a newspaper published in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin.
 Published: 10/20/22, 10/27/22 & 11/3/22
 WNAXLP

CITY OF MERRILL
 1004 EAST FIRST STREET
 MERRILL, WI 54452
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

All persons interested will be given an opportunity to be heard at a public hearing to be held by and before the City Plan Commission of the City of Merrill, Wisconsin, commencing at **6:00 p.m., on Tuesday, November 1, 2022**, in the City Hall Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street, Merrill, Wisconsin, on the following proposed matter, to wit:
 1.) SC Swiderski requesting a Planned Unit Development per M.M.C. Sec.113-66 to 113-69 in the City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin, for Lots 2 and 3 of CSM 2855 to facilitate a multifamily development. Legally described in pin# 251-3106-152-0276, 251-3106-152-0277.

Anyone having any questions regarding the hearing should contact Zoning Administrator, Darin Pagel at 536-4880.

Legals 7700

Dated: October 17, 2022
 CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN
 By: Lori Anderson-Malm
 City Clerk
 Published October 20 & 27, 2022
 WNAXLP

DATE SIGNED: October 10, 2022
 Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
 Probate Registrar

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
 IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
 DARLENE V. MARCHESE
 DOD: 09/16/2022

Notice to Creditors
(Informal Administration)
 Case No. 2022IN50

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:
 1. An application for informal administration was filed.
 2. The decedent, with date of birth 02/14/1966, and date of death 09/16/2022, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 801 Cottage Street, Merrill, WI 54452.
 3. All interested persons waived notice.
 4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is February 3,

Legals 7700

2023.
 5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office.
 Andrew W. Schmidt
 SCHMIDT & SCHMIDT, S.C.
 PO BOX 146
 Wausau, WI 54402-0146
 715-845-9621 /Bar #1030985
 Published 10/20/22, 10/27/22 & 11/3/22
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Notice is hereby given that the following application has been filed with the City Clerk, Merrill, Wisconsin:

Class B Combination
 Jason Humphrey, Agent
 Humphrey's Gin Mill, LLC
 500 West Main Street
 Merrill, WI 54452
 License Period: 11/10/2022 – 6/30/2023
 Lori Anderson-Malm
 City Clerk
 Published October 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

EARLY IN PERSON VOTING NOTICE

Early voting for **Town of Merrill** residents for the November 8th Fall Election will begin at the Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Ave. on Tuesday, October 25th.

Voting hours are:
 Tuesday, Oct. 25th 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 Thursday, Oct. 27th 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
 Tuesday, Nov. 1st 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.
 Thursday, Nov. 3rd 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Kay Tautges, Clerk/Treasurer
 Town of Merrill
 Published October 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

TOWN OF MERRILL

BID NOTICE

The Town of Merrill, Lincoln County Wisconsin will be accepting sealed bids for purchase of 2 piles of fill dirt consisting of broken black top, sand, rock & silt. Estimated cubic yards for combined piles is 2675. Both piles are east of the Merrill Town Hall at the end of W4594 Progress Avenue.

Sealed bids can be submitted to the:
 Town of Merrill, W4594 Progress Ave, Merrill, WI 54452
 Bids will be opened on October 27, 2022 at 5:30 p.m. town board budget meeting. The Town of Merrill reserves the right to reject any and all bids or to accept any bid deemed to be in the best interest of the town.

TOWN OF MERRILL BOARD
 Published October 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

Town of Birch Chat Cemetery

Notice for Fall Clean-up

Please have all decorations removed by **Friday, November 11, 2022** for Fall Clean-up. You may resume after November 17, 2022

Only **three** decorations per gravesite, absolutely **NO GLASS OR SHEPARD'S HOOKS** of any kind, they will be removed.

Thank you,
 Town of Birch, Sexton of Chat Cemetery
 Submitted by Megan Webb, Town Clerk

Published October 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

EARLY IN PERSON VOTING NOTICE

Early voting for City of Merrill Residents for the November 8, 2022 General Election will begin at City Hall (1004 East First Street) on Tuesday, October 25, 2022.

Voting hours are:
 10/25 – 10/28 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
 10/31 – 11/03 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.
 11/04 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M.

There is no early voting permitted on Monday, November 7th.

Lori L. Anderson-Malm
 City Clerk
 Published October 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

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NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING AND BUDGET HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the qualified voters of the **Merrill Area Common Public School District** comprised of the City of Merrill, Towns of Birch, Corning, Harding, Harrison, Merrill, Pine River, Rock Falls, Russell, Schley, Scott and such parts of Ackley and Vilas as are in such district, that the **Annual Meeting and Budget Hearing** of said district for the transaction of school business and the approval of the tax levy for the 2022-2023 school year will be held in the **Merrill High School Auditorium** (1201 N. Sales Street, Merrill, Wisconsin – please enter the building at Door #16) on **Monday, October 24, 2022 at 5:30 p.m.** Detailed copies of the budget are on our website, on file in the office of the Superintendent of Schools and at most Merrill financial institutions.
 Published October 13 & 20, 2022
 WNAXLP

MPD from page 1

■ On Friday, April 2, 2021, Mark Heckendorf officially retired from the MPD.

In 1987, Heckendorf became the 20th officer in an agency that was previously staffed with 19 sworn officers, Bennett said. Previously, Heckendorf had worked as a Park Ranger for the Marathon County Parks Dept. from 1984-1985 and as a Corrections Officer for Lincoln County Sheriff's Office from 1985-1987.



Mark Heckendorf.

Through the years, Heckendorf served as a Police Officer (PO, PO1, PO2), on the Drug Team (working narcotics cases in conjunction with primary role), Field Training Officer, DARE Officer, Temporary Investigator, ALICE Instructor, and more. Since 2006, he was MPD's School Resource Officer/ Investigator as a dedicated resource for MAPS and to handle any issues arising in the district. This expanded to instructing ALICE (active shooter response) in the schools and throughout the community. He was the primary coordinator for the Student Police Academy and served as the primary coordinator for the MPD scholarship award presented to a Merrill High School (MHS) student planning to enter the criminal justice field.

During the summer months, and sometimes during the school year, he dual-purposed as an Investigator for the MPD. He was a critical resource for many MPD staff, providing field training, responding to critical crime scenes when staffing was limited or expertise was needed, identifying people and kids in the community along with their interpersonal relationships and sometimes complete family tree information, and coordinating or assisting with ALICE presentations and training to school staff, government agencies, and local businesses in a proactive manner. He celebrated 34 years on the MPD and 37 years in public safety before retiring. And he is currently enjoying the role of first-time grandparent and enjoying his retirement!

■ With Heckendorf retired, the MPD needed a new School Resource Officer. For this role, MPD and Heckendorf had been proactive, preparing to fill the position early "much like a promotion process," Bennett said. Of the multiple qualified candidates who stepped forward to be considered, Police Officer Jamie Jaeger was selected and has been serving in that capacity since the day after Heckendorf left the schedule in early March.



Jamie Jaeger.

Jaeger began with the MPD in 1995 and quickly became the MPD DARE Officer, a role she has filled ever since. In 2020, she was recognized as the Wisconsin Dare Officer Association (WDOA) DARE Officer of the year. She also serves as the MPD Safety Patrol Coordinator across the District, and has served in that role "for as many years as I can remember," Bennett said. In addition, she was previously a Temporary Investigator.

All of these roles helped Jaeger develop real relationships with school staff, parents, and students. That was important. "I can't think of anyone more ideally equipped to serve as our next School Resource Officer in partnership with MAPS," Bennett said.

■ On April 5, 2021, following Heckendorf's retirement, the MPD hired Christina Doering as a Police Officer. A 2018 graduate of MHS and a 2020 graduate of NTC, Doering was also the recipient of the Merrill Police Association Scholarship Award as a Senior.

Doering was actually in the final pool of candidates being considered in late 2020, and Bennett knew there would be a need for multiple new hires in 2021, so the MPD took a chance and "put an offer of employment in her hand months ahead of time, in hopes she would commit to working in her home town," Bennett said. It worked. She accepted, despite several other career prospects in the works. "To understate it, we are pleased to witness such a level of commitment to this City so early in a career," Bennett said.

■ MPD's third retirement in less than six months came when Greg Hartwig officially retired on June 2, 2021, after 31 years of service. His dedication to his career and to Merrill was admirable. "He literally spent his last day at the Merrill Police Department helping us evaluate candidates to fill his vacancy as a Supervisor," Bennett said.

Hired as a Patrol Officer in March 1990, Hartwig moved through the ranks of Patrol responsibilities, serving years on Patrol in the various rank and grade roles of PO, PO1, PO2 before being promoted to Lt. by Chief Seubert and then in 2017 being promoted to Patrol Captain when the Department restructured to provide

for a Narcotics Detective. "In that role Greg took on extra administrative duties to share the load of administrative functions on top of his continued role as a Patrol Supervisor," Bennett said. "He provided direct supervision to his officers on day shift and indirect supervision to the nightshift on his schedule rotation. All of this while still having to balance his own case load of incidents on Patrol. It can be a thankless and overwhelming role sometimes."



Greg Hartwig.

Through the years, Hartwig participated in the informal drug team and was a Field Training Officer, DAAT instructor, ECD (Taser) instructor, MPPA representative, MPBA (Benevolent) representative, and stepped up in innumerable other ways.

Retirement hasn't slowed Hartwig down a whole lot. He ran for and was elected to the Lincoln County Board in April and is still very active with the River Bend Trail and other community projects and events.



Matt Waid (second from left), Chief Corey Bennett (center).

Photos courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

■ In June 2021, Detective Matt Waid was awarded the 2019 State of WI Eagles Aerie Law Enforcement Award (normally awarded in 2020), for the second time. COVID led to inevitable delays.



Brandon Brost.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

■ The next order of business was to fill the vacancy in the Department that resulted when Officer Hartwig retired.

On June 3, 2021, Officer Brandon Brost began his career with the MPD. A graduate of DC Everest High School, Brost attended NTC for coursework and Police Recruit Academy; attended Crown College for coursework related to pastoral leadership; and served six years in the US Marine Corp Reserves.

■ As with previous retirements, Hartwig's retirement also resulted in internal advancements. Multiple internal candidates expressed interest in taking on new responsibility and, after review of all candidates, Officer Pete Borchardt was promoted to Lieutenant, effective July 23, 2021. "Pete consistently performed the highest across the measured categories of the promotion process. His experience and work ethic certainly paved this path for him," Bennett said.



Pete Borchardt.

"Aside from being a lifelong member of this community, Lt. Borchardt stays involved with community organizations and currently serves on the HAVEN Board of Directors. That is a little bit of a peak into one of his strengths in this Dept.," Bennett said. "For anyone that has had Lt. Borchardt respond to their call, it is well known that he aggressively investigates crimes and is primarily focused on working for victims of crimes. On countless occasions he has worked to make victims whole (recovering property or damages) on the front side of the investigation rather than through court proceedings. This is essential in reducing the impact

St. Vincent de Paul Thrift Store
Store Hours: Tuesday thru Saturday 10 AM to 4 PM
Come Check out our Weekly Colored Tag Sales!!

Color of the Week

Donation Hours: Due to the generosity of our community we will not be able to accept donations (except furniture) until Thursday, Nov. 17th. Please call the store at 715-539-1131 for any furniture donation you may have or with any questions. Thank you for your support!

1004 E. Main St., Merrill, WI

Attention Merrill Community:

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

4 PM - 8 PM • Saturday October 22, 2022
Les & Jim's Lincoln Lanes
 1208 N Center Ave in Merrill

BENEFIT FOR JOSHUA HAMMES

Merrill resident, Joshua Hammes is 42 and was recently diagnosed with Narcolepsy. The symptoms and wait for a diagnosis put him out of work from May 18 - end of August. He is in desperate need of financial Help to defray medical and living Expenses.

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MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is **Natalie Barnett**
 Daughter of **Nate Barnett and Jennifer Mohr**
 Natalie is in 4th Grade at Washington Elementary School. She was nominated by Ms. Larson.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?
 My favorite subject in school would be math, because it's really easy. I am really smart at math.

What is your favorite part of school? Why?
 My favorite part of school is lunchtime because I get to eat food!! I also get to talk with my friends.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why?
 Someday I would probably like to be a math teacher, because math is fun and very easy. I like to use numbers and figure out the answer.

Natalie has become a leader in the classroom by helping other students. She is also kind and has shown growth as a student. She is kind, responsible, and hardworking. She is a wonderful leader in our classroom and our building.
 - Ms. Larson

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

of crime in our community by providing immediate recovery for victims and encouraging the voluntary accountability of suspects. At times this requires a skill and a work ethic that not everyone possesses. We are fortunate to have it here.”

■ On January 3, 2022, the MPD learned of the untimely and off-duty death of active duty Merrill Police Officer Riley Kurtz due to medical complications. Officer Kurtz was just 24 years old, and had served approximately 2 years with the MPD and over a year with the Kronenwetter Police Department, as well as 6 months as a Reserve Deputy with the Marathon County Sheriff's Office. His death left a hole in the MPD and an even bigger hole in the hearts of the officers, friends, family, and community who knew him.



John Stubbe (center).

■ On Monday, Jan. 24, 2022, John Stubbe was sworn in as a Police Officer with the MPD. “We have been working on hiring John since late last year,” Bennett said at the time. A 2005 graduate of MHS, Stubbe was a full-time Police Officer with the Owen and then Colby-Abbotsford Police Departments since 2012 and also worked part-time as an Officer for Spencer Police Department.



David Clark (left) and John Sass (right).

■ On Monday Jan. 31, 2022, two more new Police Officers joined the Merrill PD. David Clark and John Sass, both graduates of Antigo High School and NTC, both applied to the MPD in the Fall of 2021 while they

were still attending NTC Recruit Academy and then graduated in Dec. 2021.

■ On Feb. 28, 2022, the Merrill community said good-bye to Retired Captain Richard Dabbert who passed away on Feb. 22 at the age of 69. Dabbert began working with the MPD as a Police Officer on May 13, 1974, at age 21; was promoted to Sergeant on Jan. 1, 1982; was promoted to Lieutenant on Jan. 1, 1986; was appointed Safety Director on Apr. 1, 1990; and was promoted to Captain on Apr. 17, 1998. He had retired on Dec. 31, 2006 after 32 years of service and remained actively involved volunteering in the community and his church in many capacities.



Rich Dabbert.

■ Most recently, the MPD hired three new officers in Aug. further strengthening the existing force and helping to build up the Department of and for the future.

■ On Aug. 1, 2022, Police Officer Ben Hintze was sworn in. Hintze has three years of experience working at the Neilsville Police Department and Ashland Police Department.



Ben Hintze. Shown are three generations of Hintze's, including retired MPD Captain Hintze.

■ On Aug. 8, 2022, Trevor Asmundsen and Brandon Lor joined the MPD. Asmundsen is a MHS graduate, graduate of Fox Valley Technical College (Associates Degree), and an active duty member of the Wis. National Guard. Lor is a graduate of Wausau West, NTC (Associates Degree), and UW-Eau Claire (Bachelors Degree).



Trevor Asmundsen (left) and Brandon Lor (right).

Both completed the law enforcement academy at NTC in May 2022 while also applying for, testing, and competing for positions with the MPD. “Obviously, both performed very well and captured our attention,” Bennett said.

■ Finally, staff changes effected the K9 component of the MPD. The end of Sept. 2022, marked the retirement of Eros, the MPD's first K9 Officer. Eros had served for more than eight years.

“We are grateful our first K9 experience was with Eros who most certainly seeded the value of this program for the City,” Police Chief Corey Bennett said. “We are also extremely grateful to the Bierman Family Foundation for their generosity in standing up this program with Eros and into the future.”



Officer Josh McCaskill and K9 Officer Dasty.

■ Merrill will soon have a new K9 Officer on duty, beginning in early November. Dasty (pronounced Dah-see), comes to the MPD through Steinig Tal Kennel where he is currently training with Officer McCaskill. “Dasty hails from the same bloodlines as Eros and is proving to be an excellent young canine officer,” Bennett said. “Dasty is about a year younger than most working dogs at this stage but excels at drug indication and tracking. In fact, we have received informal offers to purchase him when other handlers have witnessed his abilities.”

This is the MPD's second K9 Officer. “The police canine and necessary equipment were once again provided via a grant by the Bierman Family Foundation who has supported all law enforcement canine programs in Lincoln County,” Bennett said. “We thank them for the continued generosity and commitment!”

Still Hiring

The Merrill Police Department is still looking for more qualified Police Officers who want to work in the Merrill community. Ideally, they are looking for candidates who can become the embodiment of the Department's guiding principles, lead by those values, and make a deep commitment to serving the City of Merrill and the citizens of Merrill. Those guiding principles are: INTEGRITY, COMMITMENT, PROFESSIONALISM, RESPONSIVENESS, and TEAMWORK.

Candidates who are up for the challenge are invited to apply.

“Applications are now being accepted to fill an upcoming vacancy and to establish an eligibility list,” the Department posted on their Facebook page on Oct. 14, 2022. “In the next 10 years a significant number of the Department's sworn officers will be within the retirement window. This is a great opportunity to be part of vast internal growth and organizational building.”

In addition to “new” officers, the Department is looking for experienced officers to help round out their staff and has created incentives designed to entice Police Officers from other areas to come to Merrill. In addition to the charming appeal of a small town with a low crime rate, “the Merrill Police Department is now providing lateral transfer opportunities for experienced officers seeking to relocate to the Merrill community. Credit for up to seven (7) years of similar full time experience may be granted for purposes of pay and vacation benefits.”

Applicants must be U.S. citizens, age 18 or older (preferably 21 or older), with a high school diploma, 60 college credits, drivers license with a good driving record, in good physical condition, who are eligible for Wisconsin Law Enforcement Standards Board certification. They must also have the ability to possess a firearm, no felony convictions, no domestic abuse convictions, good verbal and written communication skills, the ability to work unconventional hours, weekends, and holidays, and the ability to perform essential functions of the position and use all standard law enforcement equipment.

Salary is based on current contractual agreement, according to the post, with benefits to include paid vacation, health and life insurance, sick leave, annual clothing allowance, educational incentive, shift differential, Wisconsin Retirement System, holiday pay, and deferred compensation.

To apply, candidates must complete the current DJ-LE-330 application form (rev 6/22) available online at <https://wilenet.wisconsin.gov/> or at the Merrill Police Department/City of Merrill website.

Applicants must answer all three questions in section 6, and incomplete or incorrect applications will be rejected.

Completed applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on Friday, November 11, 2022. Completed applications and any questions should be directed to Police Chief Corey Bennett at the MPD, 1004 E 1st St., Merrill, WI 54452. Email: corey.bennett@ci.merrill.wi.us.

www.merrillfotonews.com

Pet of the Week

This sweet, toy-loving gal is Cali! She came to us as a surrender and would love to find an energetic home to call her own. She is great with people. We were told she does well with other dogs and kids. Cali likes to play fetch, but doesn't really want to give it back once she has it. She likes to chase it, squeak it and throw it around like a goof! Cali is currently in a foster home. If you are interested, please call the shelter for more info.

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Visit all the adoptable animals at Lincoln County Humane Society, 310 N Memorial Dr., Merrill. Hours: Mon-Sat 12-4 PM & Sun 12-2 PM. Call the shelter at 715-536-3459, or visit us at www.furypets.com.

CELEBRATION OF LIFE
Randy Lee Maschke
Born February 24, 1959
Passed September 20, 2022

Come celebrate Randy's life.
On October 22, 2022 from 12pm to 4pm at the Eagles Club 1205 Lake Street Merrill WI.

Randy fought for over 4 years to be with us but he fought a long and hard fight. He kept beating the odds and showing the doctors that he was going to stay around a bit longer. We would like to extend an invitation to friend and family to join us at Eagles Club for a celebration of Randy's life. We'll be sharing our favorite stories and pictures of Randy.

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

A Hand Up For Local Business – And Local Media

DEAR READER,

During the last Wisconsin legislative session, our state lawmakers considered passing Amendment 1 to Assembly Bill 762 which would have created an income and franchise credit for businesses that purchase advertising in local media outlets. Had this bill become law, it would have boosted small businesses by helping them pay for advertising to market their products.



This bill would have also boosted local media such as this publication's weekly print edition newspaper and daily online reporting via website, which are heavily invested in bringing the hyperlocal news to you every week and have been doing so for many decades.

The bill is going to be re-introduced next year. We will keep you updated on its progress, with an eye to all working together to contact legislators and push it across the finish line.

Thanks in advance for your support... because you and a vibrant community matter.

PATRICK J. WOOD
PUBLISHER

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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

TO THE EDITOR:

To all past supporters of Merrill Winterfest Sled Dog Race:

Since 1999, the Wisconsin Trailblazers Sled Dog Club has conducted sled dog races at the Pine River School site. The races enjoyed the support of local businesses, Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce, Pine River School building site, Pine River Town Garage, and most importantly, the many landowners that allowed the race trail across their property.

After 23 years of racing in Merrill, a vote was taken to discontinue the Merrill race site. This tough decision was based on the constant severe weather conditions—mostly wind—the change to modern age farming practices, and the lack of sufficient volunteer trail help. A new site north of Gleason that is musher friendly has been inspected and approved. This new sled dog race site will still enjoy the great Merrill motel accommodations and restaurants.

Thank you, Merrill.

– WTBSD Club, Trail Coordinators Crew of Ron Behm, Duane Dittmar, and Dave Buck
Lincoln County, Wis.

TO THE EDITOR:

BE A RESPONSIBLE VOTER!

With so much misinformation in the political ads, you really need to be a pro-active voter. This means doing your research. FACT CHECK when you read or hear comments slandering the candidate's opponent. There are some outrageous false claims being made. Just because you like a certain candidate does not mean what he or she claims is true. Do not be sucked in by this rhetoric of possible lies. BE INFORMED.

In the 2020 election, 27% of Wisconsin's eligible voters could not be bothered to vote. Lame excuses such as: "My one vote won't make any difference" or "I don't like either candidate." That vote IS YOUR VOICE—every vote matters! You can always vote for the "lesser of two evils."

Please take this American privilege and responsibility seriously. VOTE with your head and heart on NOVEMBER 8.

– Dian Ritter
Merrill, Wis.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY:

- * Letters must be 250 words or less. (There will be no exceptions to this. Any letter longer than 250 words will not be printed.)
- * The writer must include their full name, complete address, and a phone number where he/she can be easily reached for verification. Phone numbers and street addresses will not be published, but will be used for verification purposes, if necessary. Letters must be signed and the name, city, and state will be printed.
- * Letters may be edited for style, grammar, and length. Form letters or those we determine to be libelous or slanderous will not be accepted. Any letter deemed derogatory, inflammatory, or involving vulgar language will not be published. We reserve all rights to reject material submitted to this publication.
- * Letters will be published on a "first come, first served" basis. Any letters which we are unable to publish in the printed newspaper may be run online at www.merrillfotonews.com and/or may be printed in the paper at a later date.
- * In fairness to all, and due to space constraints, there is a limit of two letters per year from an individual writer. Additional letters may be submitted to our Paid Letters to the Editor column and will require payment in full prior to publication at the same rate as Political Letters to the Editor (see policy below).

POLITICAL LETTERS TO THE EDITOR POLICY:

All letters submitted as an endorsement for a political candidate, referendum, or political agenda will carry the same guidelines as above; however, they will be charged \$40.00 per letter of up to 250 words in length. Longer political letters will be accepted but will be charged \$10.00 per additional 50 words. All political letters must be prepaid prior to printing. Letters to the Editor will not be accepted from candidates running for election or representatives of an organization endorsing their own referendum, as these are clearly advertisements and not opinion letters; those submissions will be referred to our Advertising Department to be run as paid ads.

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FACEBOOK: www.facebook.com/merrill.fotonews

TRAVEL TO THE FRENCH RIVIERA IN 2023 WITH FELLOW READERS OF THIS PUBLICATION

*"I'd like to invite you to join me on a trip of a lifetime; I look forward to meeting you."
Patrick Wood, Publisher, MMC*

*"I'm looking forward to seeing the beauty of the French Riviera and getting to know our readers up close and personal."
Kris Leonhardt, GM / Sr. Editor MMC*

DISCOVER & EXPLORE

THE FRENCH RIVIERA WITH MULTI MEDIA CHANNELS

DAY BY DAY

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| <p>DAY 1 • Board your transatlantic flight</p> <p>DAY 2 • Arrive in Cannes and transfer to your hotel • Remainder of day at your leisure</p> | <p>DAY 3 • Breakfast at your hotel • Cannes, Antibes, and Sophia • Antipolis • Full day of touring</p> <p>DAY 4 • Breakfast at your hotel • Grasse excursion • Optional excursion to St. Paul de Vence</p> | <p>DAY 5 • Breakfast at your hotel • Day at leisure</p> <p>DAY 6 • Breakfast at your hotel • Day at leisure • Optional excursion to Monte Carlo, Villefrance and Eze</p> | <p>DAY 7 • Breakfast at your hotel • City tour of Nice • Remainder of the day at leisure</p> <p>DAY 8 • Breakfast at your hotel • Transfer to airport for flight home</p> |
|--|--|--|---|

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Scout Troop 513 and Pack 503 visited the Mayor's office and met with Mayor Steve Haas and stayed around to see the City Council Committee of the Whole meeting on Tuesday evening, Oct. 11, 2022, to learn more about how local government works. Submitted photo.

Deer Hides benefit disabled at Lions Camp

Once again area Lions Clubs are collecting deer hides to benefit children and adults with disabilities. All proceeds from the deer hides will be used to support Wisconsin Lions Camp.

The Wisconsin Lions Camp began in 1956 and has been dedicated to providing a quality camping experience for people with disabilities ever since. There is no cost for participants to attend a summer camp program, so contributions are vital to the operation of Lions Camp.

In Merrill, the Merrill Lions Club asks deer hunters to donate their deer hides by depositing them into the Deer Hide Collection box at 1401 E. Main Street (the old Caylor building), Merrill. Questions? Call Lions Club member Dennis Knott at 715.218.1525 or Jeff Kraft at 715.536.6656.

In Hamburg, the Berlin-Hamburg Lions have set up a donation point at 244187 Schoolhouse Ln., Athens, just one-half mile south of Maple Grove School in Hamburg, at the home of Lions Club member, Gary Kreft. Questions? Call Gary at 715.680.0790.

Deer antlers, hearts, and tails also welcome

The Merrill Lions are also collecting



Piles of deer hides outside the old Caylor building were donated in 2021 to help support Wisconsin Lions Camp.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Lions Club.

deer antlers to be used by Leader Dog puppy raisers for puppies to chew on, deer hearts to be donated to the Wildlife Refuge in Antigo, and deer tails. Please contact a Merrill Lion directly to facilitate the donation of deer hearts.

The Merrill Lions Club wishes to thank Mike Giese and RESI for the space to collect deer hides and River Country Co-op for donating a portion of the salt used to preserve the hides. "Please thank them for their support," they ask.

ATTENTION HUNTERS

DO YOU HAVE A PARTICULAR HUNTING MEMORY OR EXPERIENCE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

How about a particular photo of that trophy Whitetail Buck or other game? If so, we want to hear from you!

Please send your submissions to Merrill Foto News Editor Tina Scott at tscott@mmclocal.com by Wednesday, Nov. 2.

Your submission(s) may be featured in the Merrill Foto News' Annual Hunting Guide in mid-November!

**Any hunting-related submission is welcome, regardless of how new or old. While e-mailed submissions are preferred, in-person submissions may be dropped off at the Merrill Foto News Office (921. E. Main Street) between regular business hours of 8 a.m.-5 p.m., Monday-Friday.*

In Store Trick or Treating Saturday, Oct. 29th 10AM to 2PM
Check out each department for their goodies.

Dave's PUMPKINFEST SALE

Loin End Pork Roast
\$1.49 lb.

Cod Fillets
\$4.99 lb.

80% Lean Big Pack Ground Beef
\$2.99 lb.

Dave's Angus New York Strip Steak
\$8.99 lb.

1855 Angus Beef Rump Roast
\$4.59 lb.

96% lean Family Pack Ground Beef
\$4.99 lb.

PRODUCE

All Carving Pumpkins **\$2.99** ea.

Snow White Cauliflower **\$1.49** lb.

Red Seedless Grapes..... **\$1.99** lb.

Green Seedless Grapes..... **\$1.99** lb.

LIQUOR

1.75 Liter Jack Daniels Whiskey **\$40.99**

1.75 Liter Skyy Vodka ... **\$19.99**

1.75 Liter Windsor Canadian Whiskey **\$14.99**

GROCERY

Essential Everyday, Original Only Mac & Cheese.... **75¢**

Crisco, 40 oz. Vegetable or Canola Oil..... **2/\$10.00**

Honey Bunches of Oats, Assorted Varieties, 11-12 oz., Cereal **2/\$3.00**

Campbells, 10.8 oz. Chicken Noodle Soup **79¢**

DAIRY

Oak Grove, Gallon Skim, 1%, 2% Milk **\$2.99**

Kemps, 16 oz. Cottage Cheese **2/\$4.00**

Top the Tater, 12 oz. Chive Dip **2/\$4.00**

64 oz. Sunny D Tangy **\$1.25**

Crystal Farms, 16 oz. Shreds..... **\$4.99**

FROZEN

Kemps- Apple Crisp, Cinnamon, or Pumpkin Pie, 1.5 qt., Limited Edition Ice Cream **\$5.99**

DELI

12 ct., Assorted Flavors, Babybel Cheese **\$7.99**

BAKERY

Pumpkin Crème Cakes **\$5.49** ea.

All Sales Good Through Tuesday, October 25th, 2022! Limits are in place on some items. Items based on availability. Sorry, no rainchecks.

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Movie Reviews

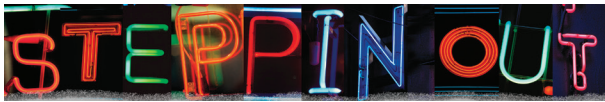
BY CHRISTOPHER STAMM
GUEST MOVIE REVIEWER

Halloween Ends

(Now showing in theatres)

★★★★☆

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



The Eagles Club
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DINNER SPECIALS OCT./NOV.
TUESDAY NIGHTS
OCT. 25TH - BOURBON CHICKEN
NOV. 1ST - LIVER-N-ONIONS
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OCT. 21ST - CATFISH
OCT. 28TH - BLUEGILLS
Dinner served: Friday 4:00-8:00 PM
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9:00 AM TO 2:00 PM
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N1647 Deer Run Avenue
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Turn Right on Deer Run to N1647
Questions: Call 715-966-3545

BOOS AND BOOZE

HALLOWEEN Costume Party

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 28TH
COSTUME JUDGING AT MIDNIGHT!
\$200 CASH PRIZE-1ST PLACE
2ND & 3RD PLACE PRIZES
(MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN)

Bubba's Pub
405 Grand Ave., Merrill • 715-722-0513
FUN & DRINKS & PRIZES
Don't forget to wear your costumes!

Well, it's Halloween time again, everyone, so naturally a new Halloween film has arrived for your viewing pleasure. *Halloween Ends* is the last of the new trilogy, wrapping up the Michael Myers story, and I have to say, it's not all that bad.

As always, I will refrain from spoilers, but it's safe to say he goes on another killing spree. However, there is a bit of a twist this time, as he is not alone.

Back again is Jamie Lee Curtis as Laurie Strobe, doing her best to have some semblance of a normal life, even though she is known in her hometown as the survivor of multiple killing sprees.

I remember being 11 years old and sneaking into the cinema to see the first *Halloween* and boy, howdy, that film messed me up! So seeing her back once again is always a treat.

Is *Halloween Ends* good? Sure, why not? No new ground is broken. Well, that's not true, there is a new twist which actually works, but when you drop your ticket fee down, you pretty much know what you are getting. Bad guy kills, bad guy nearly indestructible, pretty people die. It's not rocket science.

That being said, it's worth a viewing but will never win an Academy Award.

Halloween Ends gets three out of five stars for wrapping up the *Halloween* movies in a satisfactory way and giving us one twist that works, making this one just different enough to see.



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OCT. BOOZE OF THE MONTH
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\$5.50 - 16 oz. Pint

HALLOWEEN BINGO
SATURDAY, OCT. 29TH 1pm
BAR OPEN 11am
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MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 7:00PM

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

HALLOWEEN ENDS
"R" (1HR 51MIN)
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SATURDAY: 1:00, 3:15, 7:00 & 9:15PM
SUNDAY: 1:00, 3:15 & 7:00PM
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Free will donations accepted.

Monday, October 24th Menu:
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Sponsored by: Habitat for Humanity

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10AM - 10PM
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Live Well Lincoln seeking input on Community Health Survey

Live Well Lincoln is eager to learn more about the health issues that affect Lincoln County residents. Live Well Lincoln is a local partnership with the common goal of having Lincoln County be a healthy place to live, learn, work and play. Live Well Lincoln includes partners from various sectors as well as community members. Lincoln County Health Department, Aspirus Health, UW-Madison Division of Extension Lincoln County, Aging & Disability Resource Center of Central Wisconsin and Lincoln County Department of Social Services provide oversight to the committee.

Starting this month, a community health opinion survey will be distributed throughout Lincoln County to gather information on major health concerns for community/county residents. This information will be used to help identify health priorities and help guide countywide prevention efforts for the next five years.

This survey is part of Live Well Lincoln's Community Health Assessment (CHA) process which occurs every five years. The Community Health Assessment includes local data, community survey results and information gathered from community members through focus groups and interviews.

This information is used to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan by addressing health priorities that we can collectively work on as a county. "Community feedback has always been an important piece of this process," says Shelley Hersil, Health Officer/Director for the Lincoln County Health Department. "In order to develop a Community Health Improvement Plan that is specific to our residents, we need to hear from you about the health challenges facing our county."

Surveys are available at Lincoln County Health Department, local organizations, area businesses and a variety of other locations throughout the county. You can also complete the survey online at www.lincolncountyhealthdepartment.com or on the Lincoln County Health Department's Facebook page.

It should take about 5-10 minutes to complete. The survey is also available in Spanish. Those who fill out the survey will have a chance to win a \$25 Chamber Gift Certificate which can be used at local businesses. The survey is confidential and your answers will not be shared.

If you have questions or would like to have the survey available at your business or organization, please contact Danielle Deltgen, Community Health Planner for Lincoln County Health Department, at 715.539.1363 or Danielle.Deltgen@co.lincoln.wi.us. Lincoln County Health Department is always striving for a safer and healthier Lincoln County.

2ND ANNUAL HALLOWEEN LUMINARY FEST
October 21, 2022 6-8:30 pm
October 22, 2022 4-9 pm

Calvary Lutheran Church
N365 Cain Creek Road Merrill, WI

Come out and have a blast with fall halloween fun!!!
Featuring: Carl Jackson and the Barn Dance Band
4-8 pm (Sat)

Family Friendly walk filled with jack-o-lanterns, mason jars, and luminary bags. Free will donation at entrance.
Friday walk, food, raffle and campfire.

Friday - Metz Concessions Fish Fry
Saturday games, food, music, raffle baskets campfire, luminary walk, baked goods, hot cider/cocoa and more!!

Fall Fest for families to enjoy. Portion of proceeds goes back to the community and will support Pink Ribbon Mastectomy Boutique to help those in pre and post-op surgery needs that can't afford items.

Check us out online!
merrillfotonews.com

Thank You

TO ALL WHO SERVE & PROTECT OUR COMMUNITY!

Merrill Police Department

1004 E First St.
Merrill, WI 54452
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency:
715.536.8311

“Between retirements, transfers, and officers leaving the profession, we have had a lot of personnel transition in the last two years,” Merrill Police Chief Corey Bennett said. “It’s been a challenge to fill those positions, but it has been a rewarding challenge. We have a lot of new officers that are developing very well. We were fortunate to hire a blend of experienced and new-to-the-career employees, and that brings new energy into the Department. It’s exciting to see, and more exciting to think about, how that will translate to future capabilities.”

“We are in the process of returning to our former Department structure (pre-2017) with the addition of the Drug Investigator position, an investment made by the City Council for this year’s budget. This was after a long test drive of the Drug Investigator position while running short on Admin/Command strength. It was time to make a final decision, and I believe the citizens fully support this role being permanently integrated into the Department.”

“We are also in the process of integrating body worn cameras into the Department,” Bennett said. “Our current video cameras are fixed mounted in a squad car and provide no dynamic capture ability. They are also old

and starting to fail.”

“Body worn cameras will capture evidence better and be more flexible for a wide variety of evidentiary needs. As part of this purchase, we are also equipping our officers with weapon mounted cameras and lights. These will provide an unobstructed view of critical incidents, God forbid they happen,” he said. “The purchase of these cameras was initially planned to be a capital expense for the City. Thankfully, we were fortunate to capture some federal and state funds which may cover the entire expense, or very close to it.”

“We are also in the process of training and deploying a new K9 and handler,” Bennett said. “Officer Josh McCaskill



Merrill Police Department K9 Eros officially retired and was honored with a Mayoral proclamation, dog bone biscuits from all of the City Aldermen, and a basket of treats from Mayor Steve Hass. Eros posed with the Mayor, City Clerk, Aldermen, and his handler after the Oct. 11, 2022, Common Council meeting.

Tina L. Scott photo.

is currently at handler training with our newest K9, Dasty (Dahsty). Once completed with training, they will be deployed to the field.”

“Meanwhile, Eros, who has served the City for 8+ years, is retiring. He has certainly earned his rest,” he said. “Dasty comes from the same bloodlines as Eros.”

“This past year we were fortunate to receive some granted equipment from various sources, too. Without these generous donors, it is safe to say our capabilities would be far less.”

“The local Freemasons donated four Fire Suppression Tools (FST’s) to the Department for primary squad deployment. All of our patrol personnel are trained in deployment,” Bennett said.

“The WPS Foundation awarded us a Rewarding Responders grant, which allowed us to purchase



The Merrill Police Department, along with the Merrill Fire Department, participated in the annual Shop with a Hero Event before Christmas, shopping with local youth from the community. Donations were provided by Merrill’s Walmart Giving Foundation and Pepsi.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

quality binoculars for every squad car and some infrared technology,” he said. “And, of course, the Bierman Family Foundation once again made continuing a K9

program possible. There is so much more to say here, but space is limited. We simply can’t do what we do without the partnership of so many in the community.”

DEPARTMENT PERSONNEL:

23 sworn personnel, 3 non-sworn, plus 4 adult crossing guards and 1 K9 officer

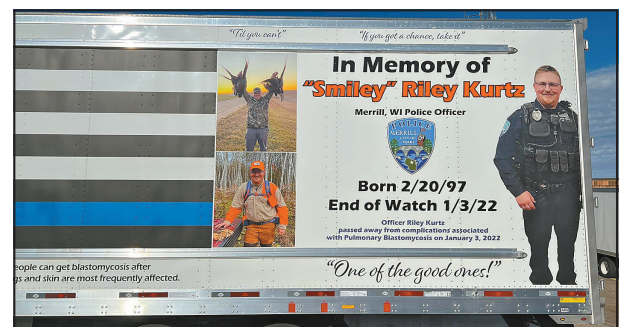
ADMINISTRATION
Corey Bennett, Chief of Police, Instructor
Jenny Thorson, Administrative Assistant, Property/Evidence Manager
Christine Brahos, Administrative Assistant, Property/Evidence Manager
Marci Rankin, Administrative Assistant/Desk and CVR primary contact

INVESTIGATIONS
Don Seubert, Lieutenant/Instructor
Jamie Jaeger, School Resource Officer/DARE Officer
Nicole Cimino, Detective
Matt Waid, Detective

PATROL
Dale Bacher, Patrol Captain
Pete Borchardt, Lieutenant
Tyler Tesch, Lieutenant/Instructor/Drug Recognition Expert

ADULT CROSSING GUARDS
Deb Hartwig
Jeff Zettler
Gerald Burnett
Larry Sampo

Matt Drabek, Lieutenant/K9 Handler
Robert Caylor, Lieutenant, Instructor
Brad Becker, Police Officer
Kurt Perra, Police Officer, Instructor
Dane Mathwich, Police Officer, DARE Officer, Instructor
Josh McCaskill, Police Officer
Wyatt Pufall, Police Officer
Bryan Allen, Police Officer
Christina Doering, Police Officer
Brandon Brost, Police Officer
John Stubbe, Police Officer
Jonathon Sass, Police Officer
Ben Hintze, Police Officer
Trevor Asmundsen, Police Officer
Brandon Lor, Police Officer
K9 Eros



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Merrill Fire Department

110 Pier St., Merrill, WI 54452
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 715.536.2233

The Merrill Fire Department proudly provides fire protection and rescue service to an area spanning approximately 142 square miles, including the City of Merrill and Town of Merrill, Town of Scott, and most of the Town of Rock Falls. The Department provides ambulance service to an area spanning approximately 520 square miles, including the City of Merrill, Town of Merrill, and the Towns of Corning, Harding, Scott, Pine River, Schley, Birch, Rock Falls, Russell, and part of the Town of Harrison.

The Merrill Fire Department is the only full-time career Department in Lincoln County, Merrill Fire Chief Josh Klug said.

Each member of the Department is cross-trained for EMS (EMT Basic, EMT Intermediate, and Paramedics) and fire-fighting. Also members are state certified inspectors, state certified driver/operator pumper and aerial. Many are also state certified Fire Officer 1 and Instructor 1. In addition, members of the Merrill Fire Department frequently undergo specialized training, including ice rescue, swift



From L to R: Jana Johnson, Administrative Assistant; Battalion Chief Tadd Wegener, Battalion Chief Phil Skoug, Paul Peterson, Dave Graveen, Nick Phelps, John Kraegenbrink, Fire Inspector Joe Bozinski, Ross Witucki, Josh Grovogel, Tom Teetzen, Tyler Mueller, Eric Trempe, Battalion Chief Jon Leiskau, Fire Chief Josh Klug, Chaplain David Szeto. Missing: Rick Sparks, Corey Nowak, Scott Gomoll, Bryson Cruise, Daylan Enkers, Jacob Aumann, Jason Hendricks, and Kyle Banaszak. **Stacy Literski photo.**

water rescue, trench rescue, collapse rescue, confined space rescue, hazardous materials operations level training, vehicle extrication, Mass Casualty incident, Rescue Task Force (active shooter), wild-land fire training, and EMS Paramedic level service.

Department apparatus consists of Engine-61 & 62, 63-Truck, Tender-65, Brush-66, Car-60 & 67, Utility & UTV-68, Boat-69, and Meds-61, 62, & 63.



Fire Pup is waving from the bucket of Merrill Fire Department Truck 63 beside Merrill Fire Chief Josh Klug in the 2022 Labor Day Parade in Merrill. **Tina L. Scott photo.**



The Merrill Fire Department participated in the 2022 Labor Day Parade. Here, participants and family members pose with the Fire Pup. **Photo courtesy of Merrill Fire Department.**

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

- | | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Fire Chief: Josh Klug | Fire Inspector: Joe Bozinski | Dylan Schielke |
| Chaplain: David Szeto | Firefighters: Corey Nowak | Dave Graveen |
| Battalion Chief: Phil Skoug | Nick Phelps | Jacob Aumann |
| Battalion Chief: Jon Leiskau | Paul Peterson | Kyle Banaszak |
| Battalion Chief: Tadd Wegener | Eric Trempe | Bryson Cruise |
| Battalion Chief: Scott Krause | John Kraegenbrink | Daylan Enkers |
| Administrative Assistant: Jana Johnson | Ross Witucki | Scott Gomoll |
| | Josh Grovogel | Jason Hendricks |
| | Tyler Mueller | Rick Sparks |
| | | Tom Teetzen |

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Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce

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Town of Corning Volunteer Fire Department and First Responders

N1369 State Rd. 64 & 107
Merrill, WI 54452
Emergency: 911
Non-Emergency: 715.536.9697

The Corning Fire Volunteer Department is a single station 100% volunteer Fire Department providing fire protection to the Towns of Corning and Harding which total 218.6 square miles. As of January 2015, the Department has a membership consisting of 25 Firefighters and 9 First Responders. These dedicated volunteers give many hours of their time to attend meetings, drills, weekly maintenance nights, and of course calls.

Department apparatus consists of 1 Engine, 2 Tenders (Tankers), 1 Utility Truck, 1 Brush Truck, 1 6-wheeled Brush Unit, and 1 Rescue Truck.

First Responders

The Corning First Responders proudly provide the residents and visitors of the Town of Corning with pre-hospital emergency medical care. Each First Responder must complete



L to R: Chief Dave Hoff, Collin Zoellner, Matt Radtke, Bob Giese, Andy Grawien, Andy Monnot, Joel Oelke, John Kudick, Brian Literski, Cody Stevenson, Kyle Kudick, Jared Semling, Mark Woller.

rigorous training and have a valid license to practice in the State of Wisconsin. Each First Responder carries with them a Basic Life Support kit to assist in their duties. Items in this kit include an Automated External Defibrillator (AED), Digital Pulse Oximeters, multiple bandages

and dressings, oxygen therapy equipment, and basic airway adjuncts.

First Responders play a vital role in the EMS community by assessing, stabilizing, and beginning treatment of patients before an ambulance arrives.

Submitted photo.

Thank You

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

| | |
|---|---|
| Chief: Dave Hoff | Tim Berndt |
| Assistant Chief: Jared Semling | Joel Oelke |
| Safety Officer, EMS: Jason Bondioli | John Kudick |
| Captain, Equipment: Kyle Kudick | Brian Literski |
| Lieutenant, Fire Inspector: Josh Kohnhorst | Joe Pilecky |
| Lieutenant: Bob Giese | Andy Monnot |
| Secretary & Fire Inspector: Mark Woller | Stan Wendt |
| Firefighter, Equipment Officer: Cody Stevenson | Paul Goetsch |
| Firefighters: Brian Klebenow | Matt Prebeg |
| | Firefighter, Maintenance Officer: Matt Radke |
| | EMS: Sue Dickerson, Jessi Ryan-Geiger |
| | EMS Director: Jody Geiger |

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Lincoln County Sheriff's Office

1104 E. 1st St., Merrill, WI 54452

Emergency: 911

Non-Emergency: Merrill area 715.536.6272

Tomahawk area 715.453.5747

Municipalities covered: Patrol Deputies are responsible for patrolling all portions of Lincoln County. Dispatch provides services to: Lincoln County Sheriff's Office, Merrill Police Department, Tomahawk Police Department (on overnights and weekends), and handles all 911 calls Countywide. Additional agencies dispatched include: Fire Departments: Corning, Merrill, Pine River, Russell, and Tomahawk. EMS: Merrill EMS, Tomahawk EMS, Corning First Responders, Pine River First Responders, Russell First Responders. In 2021, the Dispatch Center handled 27,084 calls for service.

Equipment utilized: In order to reach the entire County through ever-changing weather conditions, the Sheriff's Office uses sedans as well as four-wheel-drive SUV's for patrol work. Each patrol unit is equipped with a

mobile data computer that provides call information and digital mapping of the entire County. The Rec. Deputy is equipped with a four-wheel-drive pickup truck, an ATV, a boat and diving equipment, along with a snowmobile, to provide services on the County snowmobile trails. The Search and Rescue Team (SRT) utilizes a mobile command trailer, a four-wheel-drive pickup truck to tow it, and a Bearcat.

Specialized training: We endeavor to recruit new employees who have the best training and experience. Members of the Sheriff's Office who, through their job performance or interest in a field may go on for additional training or assignments, include DARE Officers, SRT members, Investigators, Drug Unit, Emergency Vehicle Operator Course (EVOC) Instructor, traffic safety specialist, field training officers, firearms instructors, honor guard, or other unit-specific training.

What agency is most proud of: The Lincoln County Sheriff's Office employees strive to serve the community



through effective and professional law enforcement. We recognize that we must always have the public's trust in order to truly be effective. Over the last few years, we have been able to use our proactive approach to reduce fatalities on the roadways and make arrests for operating a motor vehicle while impaired. Our drug unit continues to diligently and aggressively address the manufacture and sale of illegal drugs in Lincoln County. The dive team has been expanded to three personnel, making us more effective in prompt responses to water-related emergencies. With strong leadership and a determined group of employees, this agency continues to provide effective response and handling of incidents throughout the County as we work with fellow emergency service agencies and the public to provide a safe and secure environment.

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

SWORN STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

- Sheriff: Ken Schneider - 32 years
- Patrol Lieutenant Grant Peterson - 29 years
- Chief Deputy Tyler Iverson - 16 years
- Lieutenant Andy VanderWyst - 18 years
- Patrol Lieutenant Michael Remington - 7 years
- Sergeant Investigator Kevin A Orzech - 22 years
- Sergeant Investigator Randy Ruleau - 15 years
- Sergeant Investigator Roger Sir - 13 years
- Deputy Reed Lazarz - 20 years
- Deputy Michael Sundquist - 18 years
- Deputy Travis Watruba - 16 years
- Deputy Sam Steckbauer - 12 years
- Deputy James Gerhris - 10 years
- Deputy Holly Steckbauer - 9 years
- Deputy Blade Mikula - 8 years
- Deputy Joel Prael - 7 years

- Deputy Corey Brehmer - 6 years
- Deputy Logan Lange - 5 years
- Deputy Conner Monk - 3 years
- Deputy Brian Burkhardt - 3 years
- Deputy Mariah Vogel - 1 year
- Deputy Thomas Tollefson - 1 year
- Deputy Ethyn Van Camp - 1 year
- Deputy Ashtin Zunker - 1 year
- Deputy Zachary Irish - 1 year
- Deputy Samantha Barch - New Hire
- Deputy Colin Schlagel - New Hire
- Deputy Jake Spoehr - New Hire
- Deputy Bradley Weeks - New Hire
- Deputy Trever Zunker - New Hire
- K9 Poncho - 5 years
- K9 Nina - 5 years

CORRECTIONS STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

- Jail Administrator: David Manninen - 25 years
- Jail Sergeant Jodie L. Fitzke - 20 years
- Jail Sergeant Ivy Janak - 13 years

- Jail Sergeant Nicholas Hoeft - 10 years
- CO Pamela Steffenhagen - 31 years
- CO Jason Meister - 18 years
- CO Timothy Kurtz - 13 years
- CO Austin Brown - 1 year
- CO Michael A Tuley - 5 years
- CO Jessica Steenweg - 4 years
- CO Julie Woller - 4 years
- CO Jamie Malone - 3 years
- CO Shane Fendos - 3 years
- CO Thomas Laiter - 3 years
- CO Tara Howard - 3 years
- CO Kaylin Chitko - 1 year
- CO David Tinker - 1 year
- CO Lexie VanStrydonk - New Hire
- CO Rebecca Krohn - New Hire
- CO Devon Waldburger - New Hire

TELECOMMUNICATIONS STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE

- Dispatcher Anne Christine Turner-Meilahn - 20 years

- Dispatcher Rhonda Bacher - 15 years
- Dispatcher Kyla Brunett - 1 year
- Dispatcher Jerrica Dengel - 1 year
- Dispatcher Jennifer Lau - New Hire
- Dispatcher Jessica Haenel - New Hire
- Dispatcher Justine Engman - New Hire
- Dispatcher Jeremy Ratliff - New Hire

CLERICAL STAFF

- Office Assistant Julie Strassman - 6 years
- Office Assistant Jessica Allen - New Hire
- Office Assistant Christine Baumann - New Hire

TRIP TEAM

- TR4 Randy Osness - 12 years
- TR7 Dale Knapp - 9 years
- TR1 Mike Hamann - 3 years

TACTICAL INSTRUCTOR

- Michael Ratkovich - 11 years

*New Hire indicates less than 1 year of service



The Merrill community and Lincoln County have three K9s that served in 2022. Eros (now officially retired) served with the Merrill Police Department, and Nina and Poncho serve with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office. The newest K9, Datsy, is in training and will serve with the Merrill Police Department, replacing Eros.

Photo courtesy of Merrill Police Department.

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Town of Pine River Volunteer Fire Department & First Responders

N1622 Range Line Rd., Merrill, WI 54452
 Emergency: 911
 Non-Emergency: 715.539.3255

Municipalities covered: Town of Pine River, automatic mutual aid to the Marathon County Town of Hewitt for vehicle crashes.

Equipment Utilized: A 2020 Pierce Enforcer pumper, a FWD Seagrave Pumper, two tankers, a brush truck and six wheeled off-road-rescue vehicle, heavy duty rescue truck, and utility truck for manpower transport and fill-site operations.

Training: Each member of the Department is certified Firefighter 1, many have gone on to become Firefighter II certified. We utilize our own in-house training program and have three certified instructors on our roster. We also use the NTC Merrill Campus to keep our members up to date on the latest training advances in the fire service and work with the Towns of Texas and Hewitt quarterly.

What your department is most proud of: We enjoy a strong commitment from both our members and our town residents to keep the Department well-staffed and adequately equipped. This past October 1 we had our annual open house and once again saw record crowds. We sincerely appreciate the community support and the support of all of our sponsors. This December we are looking forward to holding our third annual Santa in the Firehouse which is becoming a very popular holiday event and gives us a chance to give back to the community and hopefully garner interest in the Fire Department among the youngsters. They are our future, after all.

| DEPARTMENT STAFF WITH YEARS OF SERVICE: | |
|---|---|
| CHIEF | Dustin Meunier - 17 years |
| John Uttech - 17 years | September Murphy - 3 years |
| ASSISTANT CHIEF | Dave O'Brien - 17 years |
| Tony Hartwig - 17 years | Maxine Schuetze - 10 years |
| CAPTAINS | John Spohn - 11 years |
| Mike Caylor - 17 years | John Rainville - 17 years |
| Jeff Zettler - 17 years | Dave Renken - 17 years |
| LIEUTENANTS | Todd Roman - 17 years |
| Doug Sann - 16 years | Carl Uttech - 17 years |
| Brad Hartwig - 14 years | Lori Wendt - 11 years |
| SAFETY OFFICER | Gene Williams - 17 years |
| Ryan Lofink - 4 years | Marilyn Zastrow - 17 years |
| MAINTENANCE OFFICER | T. J. Brunett - 3 years |
| Gene Emmer - 17 years | FIRST RESPONDERS |
| TRAINING OFFICER | Sharon Uttech - EMS Director - 15 years |
| Lindsey Johnson - 8 years | Mike Caylor - 15 years |
| FIREFIIGHTERS | Andy Grawien - 1 year |
| John Deering - 17 years | Mark Handlin - 15 years |
| Kevin Georgeson - 3 years | John Uttech - 15 years |
| Andrew Grawien - 2 years | Marilyn Zastrow - 15 years |
| Marvin Hartwig - 17 years | Valerie Caylor - 6 years |
| Nick Krzanowski - 17 years | Jennifer Hartwig - 3 years |
| | Hannah Zastrow - 3 years |

nual Santa in the Firehouse which is becoming a very popular holiday event and gives us a chance to give back to the community and hopefully garner interest in the Fire Department among the youngsters. They are our future, after all.



Left: The Pine River Fire Department Heavy Rescue stands ready, in response to a winter accident. Lincoln County Sheriff's Department also responded to the scene. **Right:** Pine River Fire Department Engine #2.



Left: The Life Link III helicopter comes in for a landing at the recent Oct. 1, 2022, Pine River Fire Department Annual Pig Roast and Open House. **Right:** Valerie Caylor talks to a child and shows how the fire hose from the Fire Engine works, during Fire Prevention Day at Pine River School for Young Learners.



Photos courtesy of Pine River Fire Department.



The Town of Russell Fire Department poses with their newest addition, Engine 4-23. **Town of Russell Fire Department photo.**

Town of Russell Volunteer Fire Department

N5369 State Hwy. 17
 Gleason, WI 54435
 Emergency: 911

Non-Emergency: 715.873.4033

The Town of Russell Fire Department is a volunteer Fire Department that proudly protects the Townships of Russell, Schley, Birch, and the southern portion of Harrison, as well as Lincoln Hills School and Copper Lake School in Lincoln County. The Department also serves the Townships of Summit, and Parrish in Langlade County.

Equipment utilized: Eng. 23, 1500GPM Pump; Eng. 6 1500

GPM pump with compressed air foam; Tender 8 holds 3000 gal with 500GPM pump; Tender 5 holds 3000 gal with 500GPM pump; Truck 3 4-door Utility 4X4 pickup, Truck 3 1-Ton 4X4 Brush Truck; Rescue 1 Polaris UTV with Tracks.

The Town of Russell Volunteer Fire Department took delivery of their new Engine 23 in April, 2021, and the engine had its first rollout with the Chief behind the wheel on June 5, 2021. It was dedicated to the memory of Gary Preuser, last call 8-13-93, and entered into service on May 28, 2022.

DEPARTMENT STAFF:

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Fire Chief: Robert P. Kressel | Treasurer: Jamie Rusch | John Mooneyham |
| Assistant Chief: Mike Hoffman | Firefighters: Cody Bergman | Bonnie Preuser |
| Captain: Marcel Rusch | Travis Gerdes | Tim Ronis |
| 1st Lieutenant: Cody Bergman | Dave Heller | Jamie Rusch |
| 2nd Lieutenant: Jason Yanke | Mike Hoffman | Marcel Rusch |
| Secretary: Bonnie Preuser | Timothy Klimek | Tina Schenk |
| | Robert P. Kressel | Elise Schuler |
| | Greg Lange | Samual Schuler |
| | Christian Lee | Keith Stoney |
| | Keith Maas | Jason Yanke |
| | Jeff Miller | |

Town of Russell First Responders

N5369 State Highway 17
 Gleason, WI 54435

Emergency: 911

Non-Emergency: 715.218.2585

The Town of Russell First Responders is a volunteer Emergency Medical Responder organization. They proudly support Antigo Ambulance, Merrill Ambulance, Oneida County Ambulance, and Tomahawk Ambulance within their ser-


vice area. They currently serve the Towns of Birch, Harrison, Russell, and Schley in Lincoln County, and Parrish, Summit, and Vilas in Langlade County. "We are truly blessed to serve our surrounding communities."

FIRST RESPONDER STAFF:

Tricia Maas
 Tim Steinfest
 Andrew Headings
 Michelle Last

Heavenly Father,
 Bless those who are our First Responders, protect them from harm and danger. Thank you for calling them to the position they hold, and may they find joy in performing this service you have given to them. When they are afraid, give them courage, and strength when they are weak. We are blessed to have them serve and protect us. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen

St. John Lutheran Church and School
 1104 E. Third St., Merrill



THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO

IN THESE EXTRAORDINARY TIMES, WE ARE SO THANKFUL FOR ALL OUR LOCAL HEROES. MAY GOD KEEP YOU SAFE ALWAYS AND BLESS YOU ABUNDANTLY.

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REPORTS

MERRILL POLICE DEPARTMENT REPORTS

10-10-2022

At 1:54 a.m. a caller reported a vehicle drove past his residence and a passenger was hanging out of the window and tried opening his vehicle doors on his parked vehicle. When he exited the residence, the vehicle left at a high rate of speed. A short time later, a second caller reported the same activity at another location in the city. Both provided a matching vehicle description of the suspect vehicle. An officer located the vehicle in the area of the second report and stopped the vehicle. The occupants denied the allegations; however, two of the passengers were found to have been consuming intoxicants, although they were not 21. They were cited for underage drinking.

At 9:24 a.m. a caller reported someone entered his unlocked vehicle sometime overnight and stole a box of ammunition.

At 12:01 p.m. it was reported that someone stole some tools from the back of a truck parked in a parking lot. Investigation is ongoing.

At 2:40 p.m. a store reported a male and female coming into the store for three days in a row, stealing a can of alcohol on each of those visits. Surveillance video was obtained, and the female was identified. Investigation and enforcement action will be forthcoming.

10-11-2022

At 6:30 p.m. an officer came upon a crash on E. Main St. at Pine Ridge Ave. One vehicle had been making a left turn and was struck by an oncoming vehicle. A crash report was completed.

At 11:50 p.m. officers were dispatched to a domestic disturbance. Two adult females and their mother had an altercation, in which the intoxicated mother physically battered her daughters. The mother was arrested for domestic disorderly conduct and battery.

10-12-2022

At 6:54 a.m. a vehicle was stopped and the driver was issued a citation after they were observed failing to yield to an oncoming vehicle.

At 12:46 p.m. an individual reported that her bike and some other items had been stolen from her residence. The bike was later located after it was abandoned, and it was returned to the owner. The other items have yet to be located.

At 4:12 p.m. a vehicle was stopped after it was observed to not have any license plates displayed. The driver was also not able to provide proof of insurance during the traffic stop. The driver was issued a citation for the license plates and for not having proof of insurance.

10-13-2022

At 12:12 p.m. an individual reported that gas had been siphoned out of his truck while it was parked in his driveway throughout the night. Investigation is ongoing.

At 3:23 p.m. a vehicle was stopped after it was observed traveling above the posted speed limit in a school zone while children were present. The driver was issued a citation for speeding.

At 3:48 p.m. another vehicle was stopped after it was observed traveling above the posted speed limit in a school zone while children were present. The driver was issued a citation for speeding.

At 9:59 p.m. two packages were reported as stolen from a porch sometime that day. Investigation is ongoing.

10-14-2022

At 12:32 p.m. a single vehicle crash was reported in a business parking lot. The vehicle was able to be driven away, and a crash report was later completed.

At 2:43 p.m. officers responded to a two-vehicle crash. During the investigation, it was found that the first vehicle had been stopped in the roadway and a vehicle coming up from behind did not stop in time, causing it to strike the back of the stopped vehicle. The second vehicle had to be removed by a tow truck, while the other vehicle was driven away. The driver of the second vehicle was issued two citations as a result of the crash.

10-15-2022

At 12:29 a.m. officers responded to a report of a vehicle hitting a house. The driver was found to be under the influence of intoxicants and taken into custody for the violation. The vehicle had to then be removed by a tow truck, and a crash report was later completed for the incident.

At 6:54 a.m. an individual reported that her vehicle had been struck by another vehicle during the night while parked on the road. The damage to the parked vehicle and parts left behind by the striking vehicle were able to be matched up to a vehicle that was involved in another crash the night before. The owner of the striking vehicle was located and will be issued a citation for striking the vehicle and not reporting it.

At 11:23 p.m. a package was reported as stolen from a residence. Investigation is ongoing.

10-16-2022

At 12:54 p.m. a vehicle was stopped after the plates were found to be expired as of August. The driver was issued a warning to get the vehicle currently registered.

At 5:02 p.m. a bike was reported stolen from a residence. The bike was later located and returned to the owner.

MERRILL FIRE DEPARTMENT CALLS

FOR PERIOD ENDING OCT. 16, 2022

| | |
|--|-------|
| Building fire (Mutual Aid Given) | 1 |
| Dispatched and cancelled en route(EMS) | 1 |
| EMS call, excluding vehicle accident with injury | 24 |
| Motor vehicle accident with injuries | 1 |
| Passenger vehicle fire | 1 |
| Rescue or EMS standby | 1 |
| Total Incidents This Week: | 29 |
| Total Incidents/ Calls for 2022: | 1,716 |



Mary Felzkowski shown accepting Champion of Home Health Care award from Michael E. Welsh, WiAHC Advocacy Director. Submitted photo.

Sen. Mary Felzkowski receives WiAHC's Champion of Home Health Care legislative award

The Wisconsin Association for Home Health Care (WiAHC) recently presented Sen. Mary Felzkowski of Irma with the organization's 2022 Champion of Home Health Care legislative award for her leadership on policies to advance home health care in Wisconsin and improve the delivery of patient care provided by home health professionals.

"Senator Felzkowski was a fierce advocate for home health care during the 2021-22 legislative session, and her work was critical in efforts to strengthen the home health care workforce and increase patient access to skilled nursing provided in the comfort of their own

See **FELZKOWSKI** page 24

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202516

SOCIAL MEDIA SPECIALIST

The City of Merrill is looking for a part-time Social Media Specialist to develop social media content that engages audiences, and identifies creative online marketing strategies to attract residents, workers and visitors to the City. For the complete job description and instructions on how to apply, visit <http://www.ci.merrill.wi.us/employment>. Applications must be received by Nov. 4, 2022.

202538

Diesel Mechanic Needed

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SIERRA PACIFIC WINDOWS

2022 Monthly Rates

Bridges Virtual Academy of MAPS named Niche's 2023 #1 Best Online High School in Wisconsin

On Oct. 10, 2022, Bridges Virtual Academy (BVA), a K4-12 online school chartered by the Merrill Area Public School (MAPS) district, announced they were recognized by Niche as the 2023 #1 Best Online High School in Wisconsin. Niche is the "market leader in connecting colleges and schools with students and families," providing in-depth profiles on every school and college in America with over 140 million reviews and ratings.

BVA currently serves more than 730 students statewide in Wisconsin.

In addition to being ranked the #1 Online High School, BVA's overall Niche report card rating rose from a B to an A-.

Teachers were graded as "A", which was the highest ranked BVA category on the Niche report card. Now in its 11th year of existence, BVA has maintained stability in teaching and support staff with over 75% of staff members on the team for more than five years.

"Relationships are the foundation for the entire school program," said BVA Executive Director John Hagemester. "This award demonstrates BVA's com-

mitment to student success, as our lack of staff turnover has provided stability for both students and their families. Our relationship focus has allowed for an innovative educational environment that supports a wide range of instructional delivery options which have led to solid academic growth and achievement for students."

BVA established itself as one of the strongest online programs in the state of Wisconsin long before the "COVID years." Because of this, BVA was able to provide continuous academic learning opportunities for Wisconsin students throughout the pandemic. BVA has also consistently ranked as the top virtual charter school in Wisconsin on the annual Department of Public Instruction (DPI) School Report card with the most recent ranking of "Exceeding Expectations."

"We are eagerly looking forward to the release of this year's [DPI] School Report Card in November," Hagemester said.

To see the BVA profile and complete 2023 rankings, methodologies, and data sources, go to Niche.com.

MAPS accepts September donations

The following donations were approved and/or accepted at the Sept. 28, 2022, Merrill Area Public Schools (MAPS) Board of Directors meeting:

Funds from the Community Foundation valued at \$2,500 for Merrill Marching Band Tournament of the Roses travel expenses; funds from Ruth & Tom Wrynski valued at \$40.00 for the Judi BeVier-North Memorial Fund; donations from the Optimist Club of Merrill for Prairie River Middle School to include funds for The Nest valued at \$100.00 and clothing and hygiene supply needs valued at \$200.00; granola bars and fruit snacks from Kimberly Nowak valued at \$30.00 for students in need at Prairie River Middle School (PRMS); water bottles from Jeremy & Mariah Klade valued at \$85.00 for providing PRMS students with water; a backpack, notebook, crayons, and other school supplies from Jean Henrichs valued at \$40.00 for student needs at PRMS; funds from Brickner's Park City valued at \$50.00 for PBIS needs at Kate Goodrich Elementary School; a check from Fidelity Charitable valued at \$500.00 for needs in the Band Program; a check from Linda L. English valued at \$1,305.00 for repainting of the bluejay logo at Jay Stadium; a check from the Class of 1962 valued at \$500.00 for Merrill Marching Band Tournament of the Roses travel expenses; fresh corn from Nicklaus Farms valued at \$50.00 for anyone to take; two checks from Gary & Mary Schwartz of Pine Ridge Mobil valued at \$1,000.00 as a yearly matching donation to the Merrill High School Fab Lab; and four 2-topping pizzas from Hugo's Pizza valued at \$64.00 for helping families at Pine River School for Young Learners.

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On Oct. 11, the Merrill Bluejay Girls mixed it up with the two ladies on the Lakeland Thunderbirds team to create two new teams for their non-conference competition. The new Blue Birds wore the blue caps, and the new Thunder Jays wore the silver caps. All the girls had a lot of fun competing!
Photo courtesy of Merrill Girls Varsity Swim Team.

Merrill Bluejays beat the Hodags but lose to Mosinee, now heading into the WIAA playoffs



The Merrill Bluejays are ready to rumble, sporting their pink jerseys for Breast Cancer Awareness last Friday night.
Angelina Frederick photo.

TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

On Oct. 14, 2022, the Merrill Bluejay Varsity Football Team played host to Mosinee and the Bluejays wore pink jerseys for Breast Cancer Awareness.

The Bluejays were off to a great start, scoring the first and lone touchdown of the first quarter in Friday night's game with a two-yard run, though they failed to make the two-point conversion.

But in the second quarter, Mosinee kicked it into high gear, literally, with three touchdowns, three kicks, and racking up 21 points. At halftime, the score was Merrill 6-Mosinee 21.

Despite attempts to get the ball back into play for Merrill, the Bluejays remained scoreless in the third quarter, and Mosinee made another touchdown and a good kick, upping their score to

28. Mosinee piled on another touchdown (kick no good) in the fourth quarter, bringing their score to a daunting 34. In the fourth quarter, the Bluejays rallied to make a touchdown on a 17-yard pass (failed two-point conversion), bringing Merrill's score to 12, but it wasn't enough. Mosinee took control of the ball again after that to land a touchdown on a six-yard pass (kick no good), putting them up to 40.

#10 Brian Ball (1 TD) racked up 66 passing yards, #25 Nate Brzoznowski (1 TD) had 118 rushing yards, and #3 Brayden Pieper totaled 67 receiving yards in the game.

"Following a terrific first quarter, the Merrill Bluejays sputtered on Friday night in the end, falling to Mosinee 40-12," said Merrill High School Varsity

See **FOOTBALL** page 24

Merrill Girls Varsity Swim Team: A win, a loss, and a lot of fun

TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

The Merrill High School Girls Varsity Swim Team traveled to Wisconsin Rapids on Oct. 6, 2022. "We had some great times with too many best swims to count," said Kristie Winter, Head Coach for the Merrill Girls Varsity Swim Team. "Rapids has a fast pool. We took advantage and swam some of our best events to see how we were progressing. The girls accepted the challenge, and we really swam great."

In fact, the Merrill Girls took first place in all of the events:

Event 2. 200 Yard Medley Relay. Addison Jirovec, Amber Winter, Bailee Sommer, and Claire Jirovec came in with a time of 2:05.47.

Event 4. 200 Yard Freestyle. Olivia Pajtash came in at 2:12.18

Event 6. 200 Yard IM. Amber Winter came in at 2:22.01.

Event 8. 50 Yard Freestyle. Bailee Sommer came in at 26.97.

Event 10. 100 Yard Butterfly. Addison Jirovec came in at 1:08.88.

Event 12. 100 Yard Freestyle. Bailee Sommer came in at 1:00.58.

Event 14. 500 Yard Freestyle. Olivia Pajtash came in at 5:46.83.

Event 16. 200 Yard Freestyle Relay. Megan Miles, Caitlynn Pehlke, Claire Jirovec, and Olivia Pajtash came in at 1:57.93.

Event 18. 100 Yard Backstroke. Megan Miles came in at 1:10.22

Event 20. 100 Yard Breaststroke. Amber Winter came in at 1:13.65.

Event 22. 400 Yard Freestyle Relay. Bailee Sommer, Addison Jirovec, Olivia Pajtash, and Amber Winter came in at 4:11.57.

Box Score: Merrill 112 @ Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln 58

The Girls went to Lakeland on Oct. 11. "The Lakeland team only has two swimmers, so we mixed it up for this non-conference meet," Winter said. The teams decided to have a little fun. "Merrill is normally the Bluejays. Lakeland is normally the Thunderbirds. We merged the teams and then divided into two new teams: The Thunder Jays vs the Blue Birds, so we made two new teams with a mix of both teams."

"The Blue Birds were victorious 86-73,

but the girls again really stepped up to the basically inter-squad challenge and produced some great times," she said.

On Oct. 13, DC Everest Girls came to compete in Merrill. "DCE is a very strong competitor in the Conference, only losing so far to Stevens Point," Winter said. "We knew going in that a team win was not likely due to our small size, but again we had some significant time drops for many of our swimmers."

True to their reputation, the DC Everest Girls took the win in the majority of the events, but Merrill didn't make it easy, and they didn't let them take all the events.

Merrill Girls took both first and second place in Event 6, the 200 Yard IM. Merrill's Amber Winter came in first with a time of 2:20.13, and Merrill's Megan Miles came in second with a time of 2:31.33.

Merrill's Bailee Sommer came in second in Event 8, the 50 Yard Freestyle, with a time of 26.92, and Olivia Pajtash also took second for Merrill in Event 14, the 500 Yard Freestyle, with a time of 5:49.75.

Megan Miles came in first for Merrill in Event 18, the 100 Yard Backstroke, with a time of 1:07.63, and Merrill had another first-place finish in Event 20, the 100 Yard Breaststroke. Amber Winter was first in with a time of 1:11.22.

And the Lady Jays made their team-work count when they came in first in Event 22, the 400 Yard Freestyle Relay. Bailee Sommer, Megan Miles, Olivia Pajtash, and Amber Winter swam their way to a first-place finish with a time of 4:09.26.

Box Score: DC Everest 106 @ Merrill 64

"For all of these meets we were really looking at individual performance and execution of the Focus points of our races," said Winter. "Team score was a secondary thought."

"We have shown continuous improvement all season for our young team," she said. "It's so exciting to watch them improve. Our post season where we will drop down to Division 2 is looking very promising."

Merrill hosts Marshfield for their last regular season meet on Thursday, Oct. 20, which will also be Parent and Senior Night.

2022 Merrill High School Fall Sports Schedules

Football (Varsity, JV, and JV2)

Fri. Oct. 21 Rice Lake (Varsity) Away 7:00 pm

Volleyball (Varsity, JV, and JV2)

Please check out wiaawi.org for exact playoff schedules.

Boys Soccer (Varsity, JV, and JV2)

Please check out wiaawi.org for exact playoff schedules.

Swimming (Varsity and JV)

Thurs. Oct. 20 Marshfield (Varsity & JV) Home 5:30 pm

Thurs. Oct. 27 WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity) Away 5:30 pm

Cross Country Boys (Varsity and JV)

Sat. Oct. 22 Black River Falls (Varsity) Away 10:00 am

Cross Country Girls (Varsity and JV)

Sat. Oct. 22 Black River Falls (Varsity) Away 10:00 am

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Winningham receives Certified Funeral Service Professional designation

Anna Lynn Winningham of Merrill, a Licensed Funeral Director and Manager at Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service in Merrill, recently received the designation of Certified Funeral Service Professional (CFSP) from the Academy of Professional Funeral Service Practice (APFSP).



Anna Lynn Winningham. Stacy Literski photo.

The APFSP, founded in 1976, recognizes practitioners who have voluntarily entered into a program of personal and professional growth; raises and improves the standards of funeral service; and encourages practitioners to make continuing education a life-long process in their own self-interest, the interest of the families they serve, and the community in which they serve.

"I love what I do," Winningham said. "It is truly something that I am passionate about and committed to, and I think that that shows in our service to families."

FELZKOWSKI from page 16

homes," said Jayne Thill, Chair of the WiAHC Board of Directors. "She understands the value of home health care for Wisconsin patients, and we are excited to thank her for her work on behalf of our members and the patients we serve every day."

The Champion of Home Health Care award is presented at the end of each two-year legislative session to state lawmakers who exemplify WiAHC's mission of promoting, protecting, and advancing the highest quality health care at home for Wisconsin patients. In 2022, WiAHC is presenting the award to only four legislators, including Felzkowski. These lawmakers exhibited an exceptional commitment to supporting home health care based on several factors, including voting record, sponsorship of legislation, and responsiveness to critical home health issues during the 2021-22 session.

Felzkowski earned the Champion of Home Health Care designation for her leadership on a successful legislative effort to increase the Medicaid reimbursement rate for skilled nursing provided in a home health setting, as well as her work on a bill to improve regulation of the home health care industry. She was first elected to the Wisconsin Senate in 2019, after serving four terms in the Assembly, and represents the 12th Senate District, which covers the northeast portion of the state. She serves on the Legislature's Joint Finance Committee.

The WiAHC is a statewide membership-based organization that represents the interests of home health care agencies and their employees. Through education, best

practices, and advocacy, WiAHC advances the common interests of its members and their patients, and promotes home health care as a high-quality, cost-effective health care option.

FOOTBALL from page 23

Head Coach Jason Wadzinski. "We had too many miscues against a good team."

"Mosinee won the conference outright with their win at Merrill," he said. "Merrill is looking to rebound this Friday, Oct. 21, as the 6 seeded Bluejays head up to the #3 seed Rice Lake for Round 1 of the WIAA playoffs."

Box Score
Mosinee 40 @ Merrill 12

On Friday, Oct. 7, the Bluejays headed up to Rhinelander to tackle the Hodags. And that they did and did well.

Merrill scored two points on a safety right out of the gate in the first quarter and then scored a touchdown on a 42-yard run and made the two-point conversion. In the second quarter, Merrill made a 33-yard pass to score another touchdown and made the two-point conversion again. At halftime, Merrill was at 18 and Rhinelander had yet to score.

In the second half, the Bluejays got out ahead of things again and scored another touchdown on a 12-yard run, with a two-point conversion. In the fourth quarter, the Hodags finally got on the board with an 82-yard run that resulted in a touchdown and a two point conversion, scoring 8 for Rhinelander. It was an impressive play, but not enough to make much of a difference.

The Bluejays wrapped things up with another touchdown on a four-yard run (failed two-point conversion) to win the game.

"It feels great to punch our ticket to the postseason with a win Friday night in Rhinelander," Coach Wadzinski said. "The last time the Bluejays qualified for playoffs was 2017."

"Nate Brzoznowski had a monster night on the ground rushing for 239 yards and 2 touchdowns. This ground attack helped control the game and put up points," he said.

"Ryder Depies had a sack in the endzone resulting in a safety to kickstart our night on Friday. A big play by the defense always helps get the ball rolling," Wadzinski added. "I'm incredibly proud of how this team has responded with three wins in a row following the disappointing loss to Lakeland. We have one more game in the regular season against Mosinee. Following that the fates will decide where we're heading during Round 1."

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Madisin Wrena Jacobs, a Junior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. Madisin plays singles on the MHS Varsity Tennis Team. She started playing tennis as a Freshman and played two years on JV but last year stepped up to Varsity if someone on the Varsity team was unavailable for a match, and this year is entirely Varsity. At school, Madisin is actively involved in the Theatre Jays and the high school musical production. She is also involved in the Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA) which was organized last year at MHS. Next semester, she hopes to be a part of the Youth Apprenticeship program to become a monitor on the bus for Wendorf Bus Service. In the past, she has also helped with the younger kids at Journey Church. Whenever there is a day off from school, Madisin works part-time at 45 Meat Market in Antigo as a butcher and also helps process deer with a family member, as needed. Madisin was born in Washington State and moved to Merrill in the fifth grade. The daughter of Heather Hayes and the late Saun Hayes, she has a 1.7 GPA, and loves working with animals. Madisin aspires to be a vet of some kind after high school, whether that be for small, large, or exotic animals, she said. Currently, she is considering either joining the Army and becoming a dog handler or vet for some of the animals they train, or moving to Montello after graduation, going to tech for gen eds, then attending University of Kentucky online and moving there to gain residency for year one, and then attending in person for the next three years.



Madisin Wrena Jacobs

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