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Before all the snow came freezing rain and ice, and the glimmer of all that ice on the branches of a tree, backlit by street lights, made for a beautiful sight. See more photos on page 8.
Stephanie Heyden photo.

Church Mutual® names new President

Church Mutual Insurance Company has promoted Alan S. Ogilvie to President of the company, effective Jan. 1, 2023. Rich Poirier, current President and CEO, will retain his CEO responsibilities. Ogilvie will also join Church Mutual's Board of Directors. The two executive leaders will work side by side throughout 2023, in preparation for Ogilvie assuming the additional role of CEO effective Jan. 1, 2024, when Poirier transitions to Senior Advisor.

"We have named an exceptional incumbent President," said John "Jay" Williams, Chairman of Church Mutual's Board. "Alan is well-qualified, well-prepared, and the right person to lead Church Mutual, first as President and later as President and CEO. We have the utmost confidence in his vision for Church Mutual and his ability to execute on that vision."

"After vetting an incredible, diverse array of talented, highly qualified insurance industry leaders from around the country, the clear choice was Alan," Poirier said. "He will protect the legacy of this company, while also moving Church Mutual boldly forward."

A respected industry veteran, Ogilvie held positions at Wausau



Current President Rich Poirier congratulates new Church Mutual President Alan Ogilvie on his promotion. The two will work together for 2023, as it will be a transitional year to prepare Ogilvie to step into the CEO role effective Jan. 1, 2024.

Photo courtesy of Church Mutual Insurance Company.

Insurance Companies, Caliber One Indemnity, Godfrey & Kahn S.C., and Capitol Insurance Companies before joining Church Mutual in 2015. He was named President of CM Vantage Specialty Insurance Company, a national excess and surplus lines insurer, in 2016. He was promoted to President - sub-

subsidiaries in February 2020 and promoted to Executive Vice President and President - subsidiaries in May 2021.

Since then, Ogilvie has provided strategic direction and leadership for CM Vantage and all other

See **PRESIDENT** page 7

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Merrill's first major winter storm closes schools for two days

TINA L. SCOTT
 EDITOR

The first real winter storm of the season blew into Merrill on Wednesday, Dec. 14, 2022, with freezing rain for the day, rendering roads icy and slick, and closing down area schools for the day. Based on weather forecasts, school was also called off that evening for the following day, Thursday, Dec. 15, with high school students having a virtual school day and younger grades getting the day off. Area children were delighted to wake up to about six inches of heavy, wet, perfect-for-building-a-snowman snow on the ground, and along with a no-school snow day, that had energetic kids outdoors shoveling, building snowmen and snow forts, and making snow angels and other creations on Thursday. [See photos that showcase how a little down time for kids fosters creativity.]

The combination of freezing rain, wind, and then wet, heavy snow accumulations downed some tree branches and powerlines, causing power outages in surrounding areas on Thursday and into Friday.

And more light snow falling on Friday made for more travel challenges on Friday and into the weekend.

However, the snow-covered landscape set the scene perfectly as area residents made preparations in the final countdown to Christmas, even if it did make it more challenging to get out to the stores to do their shopping.

The slick sidewalks and roads also resulted in the City of Merrill rescheduling their City of Lights Bus Tour

See **STORM** page 6



L to R: JannaKay Bushar, age 9; Xena Bushar, age 5; Madi Schneider, age 6; and Issac Bushar, age 10, pose with the festive snowman/elf they made on their no-school snow day on Dec. 8. Parents are Andrew and Mikalea Schneider and Eric and Jaimie Bushar of Merrill.
Renee Koebe photo.

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Former LCSO Lieutenant Collinsworth retires after allegations, investigation into complaints against him

Retirement and Release Agreement authorizes \$25,000 payment to Collinsworth

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

Chad Collinsworth of Gleason, former Lieutenant with the Lincoln County Sheriff's Office (LCSO), entered into a Retirement and Release Agreement dated Oct. 1, 2022, whereby he retired from the LCSO effective Oct. 1, 2022. The Agreement authorized a \$25,000 payment to Collinsworth and stipulated he could not seek re-employment with Lincoln County in any capacity.

Allegations, investigation begin in early 2022

This comes six and one-half months after Collinsworth was placed on paid administrative leave from his position with the LCSO, and five and one-half months after then Lincoln County Administrative Coordinator/Human Resources Director Cate Wylie completed an investigation and submitted her report and findings of that investigation dated April 11, 2022, to Lincoln County Sheriff Ken Schneider and Chief Deputy Nate Walrath.

The investigation began as the result of complaints from both male and female deputies with the LCSO, officially lodged in early 2022 documenting allegations of harassment, sexual harassment, bullying, and threats of retaliation dating back several years, and indicating complainants feared retaliation from Collinsworth which is why it took them so long to come forward. Some witnesses interviewed in the investigation corroborated the complaints, and others added complaints of their own to the tally of offenses al-

leged against Collinsworth during the investigation. Collinsworth was placed on paid administrative leave on March 18, 2022.

It is unclear what transpired between the submission of Wylie's report to Sheriff Schneider and Chief Deputy Walrath in mid-April and the effective date of the Retirement and Release Agreement on Oct. 1, and why Collinsworth remained on paid administrative leave all that time. Likewise, it is also unclear why Lincoln County's zero tolerance policy for the alleged behaviors, which states "offenders will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge," did not result in any such disciplinary action.

An open records request initially filed on Oct. 13, 2022, which was met with a number of delays, ultimately led to the release of nearly 400 pages of documentation in this matter. However, none of those records gave any indication of disciplinary action actually brought against Collinsworth as a result of these allegations, even after Wylie submitted her report.

Originally hired by the LCSO on Dec. 11, 2007, as a Patrol officer, Collinsworth's official personnel file showed he was promoted to Sergeant Investigator on Sept. 1, 2009, and then to Lieutenant heading up the Detective Division on Feb. 14, 2017, and was also a Handgun and Rifle Instructor for the LCSO. Collinsworth's formal employee evaluations were all either Satisfactory or Very Good, including the most recent dated Jan. 7, 2021, except that his annual review for 2017 dated Feb. 2, 2018, rated him as Very Good/Outstanding. His working employee file at the LCSO reflected years of training, particularly as it relates to investigating drug crimes, and numerous commendations from various sources for his investigative work, particularly relating to drug investigations.

Nonetheless, the complainants allege years of incidents that, while too lengthy to publish in our print edition, are available in a more in-depth, online article on this matter available on our website at: <https://merrillfotonews.com/2022/12/20/lcso-deputy-collinsworth-retires-after-allegations-investigation-into-complaints-against-him/>.

Details of the Retirement and Release Agreement

Additional terms of the Retirement and Release Agreement state Collinsworth's personnel file would reflect that he "retired" and that he would be classified as "retired" in the Acadis Portal of the Wisconsin Department of Justice; and that Lincoln County agreed to treat Collinsworth's separation from employment with the LCSO as a "retirement in good standing;" award him his duty handgun; allow him to keep his badge, provided it is mounted or encased to prevent future use; provide him with a retired deputy ID card; and provide, at Collinsworth's expense, certification training to enable him to get and keep his retiree concealed carry permit. It also stated Lincoln County agreed not to seek to recover any paid administrative leave or other benefits paid to Collinsworth during the six and one-half months he was placed on paid administrative leave.

Further, the Agreement included a "Non-Admission" paragraph "made in full, final, and complete compromise and settlement of any disputed claims" between Lincoln County and Collinsworth "inclusive of those matters discussed in the investigative interviews conducted," and not to "in any way be construed as an acknowledgment or admission by any of the parties of any liability or wrongdoing whatsoever under federal, state, or local law." It stated that "Any requests for references

See **COLLINSWORTH** page 3

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Optimists sponsor free winter movie for youth

The Merrill Noon Optimists are sponsoring a free winter movie for area youth. This year's movie is *Puss in Boots, The Last Wish*. Movie showtimes at The Cosmo, 813 E. Main St. in Merrill, are Dec. 28, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Kids get in FREE, and accompanying adults are \$2.00 per person for admission.



COLLINSWORTH from page 2

from potential employers" would only say that "Chad Collinsworth was hired by Lincoln County on Dec. 11, 2007, and at the time of his retirement, was a Lieutenant earning \$38.71 per hour," except that "if the County receives a request from a prospective law enforcement employer, County shall respond truthfully and may disclose the nature of the events leading up to Employee's separation/retirement. The County will further comply with all of the requirements and mandates effective under 2021 Wis. Act 82."

What isn't clear

What isn't clear as a result of Wylie's investigation and report is whether Collinsworth was deemed guilty of the allegations leveled against him in the complaints filed by LCSO and County employees. Wylie doesn't question the credibility of the complainants or witnesses, or witnesses turned complainants, in her report and findings. But she does cite Lincoln County's zero tolerance policy for the behaviors Collinsworth is alleged to have exhibited, the words he is alleged to have said, and the actions he is alleged to have taken. "Lincoln County has

clear policy on these accusations that include zero tolerance which includes immediate termination if any employee is found guilty of these behaviors," her report reads.

Yet Collinsworth remained on the payroll, an employee of Lincoln County, on paid administrative leave, for five and a half months following the writing of Wylie's report. At \$38.71 per hour, for an average of 40 hours per week, times 4.33 averages weeks in a month, times 5.5 months, that's \$36,875.15 Lincoln County paid Collinsworth while he was on leave during that timeframe, all of which Lincoln County agreed not to try to recover as part of the Retirement and Release Agreement the parties signed.

So what transpired during that five and one-half months' time?

If Collinsworth chose to retire, why did Lincoln

County pay him \$25,000 to do so?

If Collinsworth was deemed guilty of the allegations, why wasn't he disciplined or terminated in accordance with Lincoln County policy? And why did Lincoln County agree not to try to recover the more than \$36,000 he was paid while on paid administrative leave?

And if he was found not guilty of the allegations, why didn't he return to work at the LCSO?

The one thing that appears certain ... the signed Release and Retirement Agreement pretty much ensures the public will never get answers to those questions.

To read a more in-depth report on this story, go to our website: <https://merrillfotonews.com/2022/12/20/lcso-deputy-collinsworth-retires-after-allegations-investigation-into-complaints-against-him/>

Experts warn pet owners to stop treating them as "little humans" this Christmas

Animal experts at Oodle Life, a website that provides dog and puppy information, have warned that the "Disneyfication" or anthropomorphism of pets this Christmas can cause significant harm to them.

Many pet owners will admit that they attribute human characteristics to their pets, treating them as miniature people. After all, pets become part of the family. "They're always on your side, they keep you company when you're feeling sad or lonely, and they bring endless joy with their loyalty and adorable behavior," said Chris Allen, Founder & CEO of Oodle Life. "However, as much as we love them, it's important to remember that they're not actually human, and they shouldn't be treated as such."

The statistics bear this out: according to a survey of 3,000 pet owners by Oodle Life, 77% of pet owning households in Wisconsin admit to giving their pet special treatment (such as giving them leftover food, and dressing them up) over Christmas. This equates to over 824k households in The Badger State. Moreover, according to the 2021-2022 American Pet Products Association National Pet Owners Survey, 43% of pet dogs in the United States and 49% of pet cats sleep on their owner's bed. In addition, more than one in five, or 22% of U.S. adults, report they have held or attended a birthday celebration for a pet (getting a cake and candles for a birthday celebration is more common for dog owners than cat owners).

Putting pets in strollers, spraying them with pet cologne, putting diapers on them, or giving them breath-freshening products were also among the increasingly popular practices dis-



couraged in a joint report by researchers at the University of Pisa and the Metropolitan Autonomous University in Mexico City.

Treating pets as little humans can be damaging to them for a number of reasons, Allen said.

- For example, dressing your dog in a Christmas sweater may impede its ability to regulate its own temperature, so is best avoided. However, when outdoors, even dogs with thick coats can get hypothermia or frostbite in freezing weather, according to the American Kennel Club (AKC). If the temperature drops to the mid-40s Fahrenheit, it's definitely time to dress that pet – just not in a human Christmas sweater.

- Holding or carrying them like a baby for prolonged periods can cause obesity, inflammation of the joints, and hinder their ability to cope with their

See PETS page 7

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OBITUARIES



Fern J. Clausen, age 93, of Schofield, WI, went to her eternal home on Saturday, December 17, 2022, at Cedar Ridge Elder Services while under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. She was born on May 5, 1929, in Merrill, and was the daughter to the late Ralph B. and Elsa L. (Hassel) Duranceau. Fern was baptized into the Christian faith in January of 1930 and confirmed into that faith in June of 1945. She grew up on the family dairy farm, where she helped with the farm chores and duties. Fern attended school at Jefferson School in the town of Texas and went on to also attend Normal School. She met the love of her life, Carl Clausen, and the two exchanged marriage vows on September 18, 1948, at St. John Lutheran Church in Merrill. Sadly, he preceded her in death.

In her younger years, Fern worked as a CNA at a variety of healthcare facilities, but her true passion was cooking, and she was very proud to be kitchen manager at Wausau East High School for 20 years, and during many summers at Camp Deerhorn in Rhinelander, until her retirement. Even after retirement, Fern would look forward to cooking for the family gatherings, holidays, and reunions. Fern would also do some traveling, including trips to Canada, San Francisco, and Arizona. She enjoyed tending to her gardens and canning vegetables. Fern was a member of the Merry Makers Birthday Club and Trinity Lutheran Church in Wausau. She was able to go on mission trips to Central America, where the group worked on building homes and repairing an orphanage. Fern is remembered as a woman of unwavering faith, amazingly strong, independent, and very hardworking. She will be sadly missed by all those that loved her.

Fern is survived by her children: Eunice (Stephen) Mann of Merrill, Paul (Doris) Clausen of Aniwa, Robin (Mark) Bentley of Athens and Craig (Sandra) Clausen of Stevens Point, grandchildren: Tamara (Delmar) Winter of Wausau, Terry (Sarah) Mann of Tomahawk, Heather (Tim) Klimek of Merrill, Colleen (Chris) Sprague of Merrill, John (Teslynne) Clausen of Aniwa, Jordan (Hailey Brewer) Bentley of Aniwa, Tyler Clausen of Madison and Ethan Clausen of Wausau, great grandchildren: Andrew Winter, Macey and Norah Mann, Zachary, Katelyn, Trenton, Kayla and Kimberly Klimek, David, Isabella and Colin Sprague, Paul and Anna Clausen and 2 more soon to arrive, sisters: Marilyn "Mert" Kufahl, Eloise Schultz and Goldie Broeren, brother: Loren (Aracely) Duranceau, sisters-in-law: Carol Duranceau and Virginia Herrera, along with numerous nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband: Carl Clausen, infant son: Keith Clausen and siblings: Vivian Duranceau, Alfred (Gladys) Duranceau, Daryl (Kathleen) Duranceau, Ellen (Edward) Schultz, Arleen (Albert) Kunke, Iris (Clinton) Claussen, Lloyd Duranceau and Jean Duranceau, brothers-in-law: Lawrence Schultz, Jack Broeren and Kenneth Kufahl.

Funeral Services for Fern will be held on Thursday, December 22, 2022, at 11am at Trinity Lutheran Church, 501 Stewart Avenue, Wausau, with a visitation from 10am until the time of the service, also at the church. Pastor Jim Mayland will officiate. Visitation will be held on Wednesday, December 21, 2022, from 4pm-8pm at Waid Funeral Home in Merrill. Interment at Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Fern's name may be directed to the American Cancer Association, The Alzheimer's Association, or the Trinity Lutheran Church in Wausau.

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

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Ron Machel (80) passed away peacefully on Friday, December 16 at his home in Burnsville, MN, surrounded by his loving family and his lab Brandi. Ron will be dearly missed and will forever remain in our hearts.

Ron was born on May 6, 1942 in Wausau, WI to Harold Machel and Mildred (Kiepe) Machel Koenig. He is survived by his son and daughters, Rob (Jen) Machel, Sara (Jeff) Beach, Heidi (Kevin) Houck, Holly Machel; grandchildren, Elena and Isabel Machel, Alden and Emma Beach, Adela, Lilian, and Bernadette Houck; sister, Nancy (Paul) Storm Spano; step-brother, Lyle Koenig; and beloved dog Brandi. He was preceded in death by his parents, Harold and Mildred; step-father, Norman Koenig; brother-in-law, Valroy Storm; niece and goddaughter, Lisa Storm; step-brother, Lee Koenig.

Visitation will be held Thursday, December 22, 2022, from 10-11 AM, followed by Funeral Service at 11:00 AM, at Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, 12650 Johnny Cake Ridge Rd., Apple Valley, MN with a reception to follow. Ron loved telling stories and sharing memories. There will be an opportunity during the service for anyone who wants to share a memory or story about him. Livestream will be provided by McNearney-Schmidt Funeral Home.

A Celebration of Life and Interment will be held May 6, 2023 in Wausau, WI.

Arrangements with McNearney-Schmidt Funeral and Cremation, Shakopee, MN, 952-445-2755. Condolences may be shared at www.mcnearneyfuneralhome.com



Glenn A. Remington, of Gleason, died Monday, December 12, 2022, at the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King. He was 89 years old. He was born on January 26, 1933, in Antigo, a son of Wallie and Lillian (Radtke) Remington. He married Carol Robinson on December 26, 1953, in Leesville, LA.

A career veteran, Glenn served in the United States Army for 20 years, retiring in 1973. He was a Sergeant Major having served in both Vietnam and Korea.

Following his retirement he worked for Curtis Breeding Service, hauled cattle for Antigo Livestock, and raised pigs and beef cattle.

He was a member of Wildwood Chapel in Gleason and the Leland Tollefson Veterans of Foreign War Post 2653, Antigo. He had a lifelong love for horses, having multiple teams of horses for wagon and sleigh rides.

Glenn was a devoted husband and father, he will be missed by his wife of almost 70 years, Carol; three children, Julie Puhl of Gleason, Billy (Kristyn) Remington of Schofield, and Betsy Remington of Gleason; two daughters-in-law, Nancy Remington of DePere and Deidre Remington of Brenham, Texas; eight grandchildren, Lily Puhl, Jacob Remington, Laura Moore, Andrea (Riju) Jacob, Justin Remington, Loux Remington, David Remington, and Amber (Jacob Schildt) Remington; five great-grandchildren, Ira, Viola, Jaxon, Aniya and Vinni; and a brother, LeRoy "Shorty" (Sharon) Remington of Gleason.

In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by four children, Cindy, Glenn Jr., Danny, and Laura; three sisters, Alice Robinson, Emily Wagner, and Ethel Remington.

A memorial service was held on Saturday, December 17, 2022, at 11 a.m. at the Bradley Funeral Home with Pastor Mike Zahn officiating. Visitation was Saturday at the funeral home from 9 a.m. until the time of service. Military Honors took place following the service at the funeral home.

Burial will take place in Forestview Cemetery in the spring. Online condolences at www.bradleyfh.com.

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Mary Lou "Mernie" Milner, age 96, passed away on Wednesday, December 14, 2022, while residing at Bell Tower Residence, surrounded by her loving family and under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. Mary Lou was the oldest of 4 children born to the late Ray A. and Helene C. (Wyss) Galipeau on December 1, 1926, in Merrill. She married her first husband, Donald Lambrecht on September 5, 1946, and divorced before he passed away on September 5, 1975. She then met Albert Milner and exchanged marriage vows on June 28, 1980. They enjoyed being snowbirds together, and went to La Feria, TX for 12 winters. Sadly, he passed away on July 28, 2012.

Mary Lou worked as a telephone operator in her earlier years, before becoming a lead bookkeeper at Merrill Federal Savings and Loan for 20 years, until her retirement in 1984. She was always a very organized and neat lady.

Mary Lou was an avid bowler to say the least! Her family was made up of bowlers and she was able to teach her children the skill. She was on a variety of leagues and participated in the Channel 7 Pin Busters Tournaments. Mary Lou looked forward to her time spent at the cottage on Long Lake in Weyerhaeuser, WI, a place close to her heart. She was very devoted to her family and was a woman of strong Catholic faith, consistently saying her Rosary. She was talented with needlework, as well as painting ceramics. Mary Lou was an incredible cook and baker and would enjoy hosting family events where she was able to make her delicious meals. She always had a smile on her face when her family was around, they were the light of her life. Mary Lou will always be in the hearts and minds of her family and friends.

Mary Lou leaves behind her children: James (Diane) Lambrecht of Jenison, MI, Mary (Gary Dengel) Cota of Wausau, WI and Karen Mootz of Wausau, WI, grandchildren, whom she adored: Jennifer Wehr of Turner, OR, with her daughters: Delaney and Cassandra, Tony (Leah) Mootz of Duluth, MN, with their son: Davin, Gregory (Jenna Krueger) Cota of Whitefish Bay, WI and Miranda Mootz of Minnetonka, MN, step-daughter: Patricia (Jack) Jackson of Wausau, WI, step-son: Donald Milner of Eau Claire, WI, step-grandchildren: Christie & Rob Peterson, Alissa & Brian Burnside, Coty Sedgwick, Kale & Morgan Greig and Keisha Jackson, sister-in-law: Pennie Beyea, brother-in-law: W. Dan Zimmerman, as well as many nieces, nephews and friends. She was preceded in death by her parents, husbands: Donald Lambrecht and Albert Milner, siblings: Betty (Norman) Skare, Loretta Zimmerman, and Ray (Lois) Galipeau Jr., son-in-law: Daniel Mootz and granddaughter: Melissa Cota.

The funeral liturgy for Mary Lou was held on Saturday, December 17, 2022, at 11am at the Bell Tower Residence chapel, with a time of visitation from 10am until the time of the liturgy. Deacon John Bourke officiated. An additional visitation was held on Friday, December 16, 2022, from 4pm-7pm, also in the Bell Tower Residence chapel. A cremation for Mary Lou will take place at a later date.

In lieu of flowers, family requests that donations be directed towards the Bell Tower Residence Activity Fund.

Family wishes to extend their sincere appreciation to the incredible Bell Tower Memory Care staff for their kindness and care shown to Mary Lou and her family during her stay there.

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



Edith M. Townsend
January 3, 1940 – December 9, 2022

Edith Townsend passed away Dec. 9th in Las Vegas, Nevada. She is survived by her husband Don Townsend, her sister Marion Lemke, her children Susan (Harmon) Thompson, Jerry Harmon Jr. (Tammy), Peter Harmon (Christine), Keith Harmon (Marni), Stacy Harmon, and Dino Townsend. Many grandchildren and great grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her mother Mary Wendt. Sisters, Marge Hornak, Pauline Manka, Dorothy Taylor, and brother, Walter McLaughlin. Sons, Scott Harmon and Jody Harmon.

Edith always loved spending time with family. Family picnics were always a summer highlight for everyone. Edith was a huge Greenbay Packer fan. Even spending her summers in AZ, her loyalty never ceased.

"When you look into your mother's eyes, you know that is the purest form of love you can find on this earth." A celebration of life will be held at a later date.

Serving the Community Since 1934



Taylor & Stine
Funeral Home and Cremation Services

Leah D. Reist, Director
McKenna K. Meunier, Director
Tammy Klade, Pre-Need Ins. Agent

903 E. 3rd Street • Merrill • 715-536-6244
www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com

OBITUARIES



Sandra Mae Rothmeyer, age 84, passed away Wednesday, December 14, 2022, at Pine Crest Nursing Home, Merrill. Sandra was born May 30, 1938, in Merrill, daughter of the late Marvin and Mildred (Speas) Ingersoll. She married Stanley Ruben Rothmeyer on August 31, 1957. He survives. Sandra and Stanley had five children: Robin Rothmeyer (Tammie), Tammy Pick (Daniel Pick, Jr.), Shelly Rode (Paul Rode), Amy Rothmeyer, and Benji Rothmeyer (Christina).

Sandra worked for a short time at the telephone company as an operator. She also worked at the glove factory and the bean factory where she caught Stanley's eye! Sandra also helped cook at St. John Lutheran School in Merrill. During the Christmas season, she made pine roping. Sandra loved to sew, knit and crochet and made a lot of her girls' clothes. Sandra was also a great cook and baker.

Sandra survived a severe stroke when she was 46 years old. She learned to talk and read again and do everything with one arm. She was stubborn and determined and wanted no help from anyone else. Sandra was a wonderful mother who was kind, loving, and generous. She was loved by everyone who knew her.

Sandra is survived by her husband of 65 years, Stanley Rothmeyer; children, Tammy Pick, Shelly Rode, and Benji Rothmeyer; daughter-in-law, Tammie Sladek; sisters, Sally (Jerry) Leistikow and Cynthia (Mark) Luebner; grandchildren, Kyle and Jared Rothmeyer, Morgan and Sawyer Rode, and Ava Rothmeyer; four great-grandchildren; and nieces and nephew, Vicky Leistikow (John Kilgust), Randy (Ann) Leistikow, and Shari (Brian) Samuelson. She was preceded in death by her parents, Marvin and Mildred Ingersoll; brother, James Ingersoll; son, Robin Rothmeyer; daughter, Amy Rothmeyer; and granddaughter, Anna Marie Schwartz.

The funeral service will be held at 12:00 P.M., Noon, Tuesday, December 20, 2022, at St. John Lutheran Church, Merrill. Rev. David Szeto will officiate. Visitation will begin at 10:00 A.M. Tuesday at the church. Taylor-Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services, Merrill, is assisting the family. Online condolences may be made at www.taylorstinefuneralhome.com

LEGAL NOTICES

Legals 7700

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: 11/29/2022
/S/HON. GALEN BAYNE-ALLISON
CIRCUIT COURT JUDGE, BR I
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
Notice and Order for
Name Change Hearing
Case No. 22CV166
IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME
CHANGE OF
THEO JOHN KAHALEWAIKE
By (Petitioner) ELLEN MAUREEN
BUHRMANN

NOTICE IS GIVEN:
A petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
From: THEO JOHN KAHALEWAIKE
To: THEO JOHN BUHRMANN
Birth Certificate: THEO JOHN
BUHRMANN

IT IS ORDERED:
This petition will be heard in the Circuit Court of Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin:
Judge's Name: Galen Bayne-Allison
Place: Lincoln County Branch 1 Courtroom
1110 E. Main St., Merrill, WI 54452
Date: January 18, 2023
Time: 8:45 AM

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

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: December 8, 15 & 22, 2022
WNAXLP

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: December 5, 2022
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer
Probate Registrar
STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF
George Hanson
deceased
Notice to Creditors
(Informal Administration)
Case No. 2022IN60

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:
1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth 04/12/1952, and date of death 09/30/2022, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of N4380 Kellys Lane, Merrill, WI 54452.
3. All interested persons waived notice.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is 03/17/2023.
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Probate Office.
Ryan Hanson
N2603 Snow Rd
Merrill, WI 54452
920-948-3763
Published December 8, 15 & 22, 2022
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

Legals 7700

p.m., on Tuesday, January 3, 2023, in the City Hall Council Chambers, 1004 East First Street, Merrill, Wisconsin, on the following proposed matter, to wit:
1.) Marie Zoa, requesting a Conditional Use per M.M.C. Sec. 113-97 through 113-106 for the development of interior and exterior storage facility at 300 E 2nd Street, (former Park City Credit Union), within the City of Merrill, Lincoln County, Wisconsin. Pin# 251-3106-114-0310.
Anyone having any questions regarding the hearing should contact Zoning Administrator, Darin Pagel at 536-4880.
Dated: December 15, 2023
CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN
By: Lori Anderson-Malm, City Clerk
Published December 22 & 29, 2022
WNAXLP

**CITY OF MERRILL
COMMON COUNCIL
Tuesday, December 13, 2022
MINUTES Regular Meeting
City Hall Council Chambers 7:00 p.m.**
I. Call to Order: Mayor Hass called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m. The following elected officials, department heads and residents were in attendance:
Elected Officials and Department Heads present: Mayor Hass, City Attorney Hayden, City Clerk Anderson-Malm, Finance Director Unertl, Fire Department Leiskau, Fire Chief Klug, Police Chief Bennett, Operations Manager Steinagel, Street Superintendent Bonack, Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey, Enrichment Center Director Mrachek (remote) and Library Director Ollhoff.
Building Inspector/Zoning Administrator Pagel and Park & Recreation Director Wendorf were excused.
Others in attendance: Sister Celine and Sister Kathy from Holy Cross Sisters, Al Wix, Paul Kienitz, Brandon Wilde and Merrill Productions.

II. Invocation by Sister Celine from the Holy Cross Sisters
III. Pledge of Allegiance was recited.
IV. Roll Call was taken and the following alderperson's were in attendance: Paul Russell – First District Present Michael "Gus" Caylor – Second District Present Rick Blake – Third District Present LaDonna Fermanich – Fourth District Present Dick Lupton – Fifth District Excused Mike Rick - Sixth District Remote Mark Weix – Seventh District Present Steve Sabatke – Eighth District Present
V. Public Comment—There was no public comment.
VI. Minutes of previous Common Council meeting—November 9, 2022 Alderperson Blake made a motion to place the minutes from the November 9th, 2022 Common Council meeting on file. Alderperson Weix seconded and the motion carried.
VII. Revenue & Expense Reports: Alderperson Russell motioned to place the November 2022 Revenue & Expense reports on file. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.
VIII. General Agenda Items:
1. Employee Years of Service Recognition:
City Clerk Anderson-Malm read the employee years of service recognition for:
John Kraegenbrink II, 20 years (Fire Department)
Steven Landwehr, 25 years (Merrill Utility)
Mayor Hass thanked John and Steven for their service to the city.

Legals 7700

2. Consider an alcohol beverage retail license for Riverside Athletic Club, Inc.
Police Chief Bennett mentioned there are no issues in issuing this beverage license. Brandon Wilde from Riverside Athletic Club stated this would run with limited hours and would primarily be used in conjunction with the golf simulator. Patrons would be able to have a beverage after using the simulator.
Alderperson Caylor made a motion to approve the alcohol beverage retail license for Riverside Athletic Club, Inc. Alderperson Blake seconded and the motion carried.

IX. Board of Public Works:
1. Consider selling a piece of city property between W 5th Street and W 6th Street.
Alderperson Rick motioned to approve selling a piece of city property between W 5th Street and W 6th Street. Alderperson Weix seconded the motion. Public Works Director/City Engineer Akey explained the process and steps needed to provide a clean survey and provide a transfer to interested property owners.

Alderperson Sabatke questioned the process and stated a homeowner had issues with this property. City Engineer Akey stated the adjacent property owners were contacted approximately 3 months ago regarding this property. Formal letters will be sent after the survey is conducted.
After further discussion the motion carried on a 6/1 voice vote.

2. Consider adjustment of 2023 Utility Service Fees.
Alderperson Rick motioned to approve the adjustment of 2023 Utility Service Fees. Alderperson Blake seconded and the motion carried.

X. Place Committee Reports on File:
Alderperson Russell motioned to place committee reports on file. Alderperson Weix seconded and the motion carried.

XI. Ordinances:
1. An Ordinance amending Chapter 38 Division 2, Section 38-152 Septic/holding tank and leachate rate
City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a first reading by title only, followed by a synopsis.
Alderperson Caylor motioned to suspend the rules and give the ordinance a second and third reading by title only. Alderperson Russell seconded and the motion carried.
City Attorney Hayden gave the ordinance a second and third reading by title only.
Alderperson Caylor motioned to adopt the ordinance. Alderperson Blake seconded. The motion carried on a 7-0 roll call vote.

XII. Resolutions:
1. A Resolution authorizing a revised development agreement by and between the City of Merrill, Wisconsin and S.C. Swiderski, LLC (Webster St.) (Resolution #2743)

WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Merrill created Tax Increment District (TID) 8 on September 27, 2011 and the development site is within TID No. 8; and,
WHEREAS, the Common Council of the City of Merrill adopted Resolution No. 2706 on September 14, 2021 for construction of duplexes and single-family homes; and
WHEREAS, S.C. Swiderski, LLC has proposed revised Webster Street rental housing development plans for 64 units and the City Plan Commission and Common Council approved a Conditional Use Permit (CUP); and
WHEREAS, the City of Merrill finds that the fulfillment of the items and conditions of the attached Development Agreement are in the vital and best interest of the City of Merrill, the Merrill Redevelopment Authority and City residents and serves a public purpose in accordance with State law; and,
WHEREAS, expanded property tax will be generated and additional new residential units created from this revised development project; and,
WHEREAS, S.C. Swiderski, LLC has negotiated the development agreement to provide for transfer of property ownership of about 12.154 acres (between Alexander St., Heldt St., and Eugene St.) to facilitate the revised development project;
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 13th day of December, 2022, that the Mayor and City Clerk are authorized to

Legals 7700

sign the development agreement by and between the City of Merrill and S.C. Swiderski, LLC and to facilitate the implementation thereof.

A motion was made by Alderperson Russell to approve the resolution. Alderperson Weix seconded and the motion carried.

2. A Resolution ratifying the January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023 contract between the City of Merrill and the International Association of Firefighters Local 847 (Resolution #2744)

WHEREAS, negotiations between the City of Merrill and the International Association of Firefighters Local 847 have culminated a tentative contract agreement.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 13th day of December, 2022, that the City of Merrill accept the terms and conditions for the January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023 employment years according to the terms of the contract between the City of Merrill and the International Association of Firefighters Local 847 on file in the City Clerk's office. Said changes and amendments in the terms and conditions to the January 1, 2022 to December 31, 2023 contract shall be effective January 1, 2022. The existing agreement shall be modified accordingly.
Alderperson Caylor motioned to approve the resolution. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

3. A Resolution honoring Dave Johnson for his long-time service to the City of Merrill (Resolution #2745)

WHEREAS, Dave Johnson has served the City of Merrill for over 10 years, from April 24, 2012 to October 4, 2022; and,
WHEREAS, these years of service have been marked by dedication to the best interests of our community, and the safety and well-being of our employees and citizens; and
WHEREAS, Dave Johnson has earned the admiration and respect of his fellow employees by the way in which he has carried out his duties; and

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 13th day of December, 2022, that the Common Council, and the people of Merrill officially acknowledge with deep appreciation the dedicated and faithful service Dave Johnson has given the City of Merrill and commends him for those 10 years of service; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we hereby commend the meritorious and dedicated service of Dave Johnson, congratulate him upon the occasion of his retirement from the City of Merrill, and extend our warmest wishes for his enjoyment of continued prosperity in the years that lie ahead.
Alderperson Russell motioned to approve the resolution. Alderperson Blake seconded and the motion carried.

4. A Resolution honoring Scott Krause for his extended service and great contribution to the City of Merrill (Resolution #2746)

WHEREAS, Scott Krause has served the City of Merrill as a Firefighter, Lieutenant, Interim Fire Chief, and Battalion Chief from October, 1990 to November, 2022; and,
WHEREAS, Scott Krause's dedication to Fire service and the City of Merrill and his hard work in virtually every area in which he was involved will be greatly missed by the Fire Department and Merrill's citizens; and
WHEREAS, Scott Krause has earned the admiration and respect of his fellow employees by the way in which he has carried out his duties; and,
WHEREAS, Scott Krause's skills and experience, will be missed at the City of Merrill Fire Department;
NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMON COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MERRILL, WISCONSIN this 13th day of December, 2022, that the Common Council, and the people of Merrill officially acknowledge with deep appreciation the faithful service Scott Krause has given the City of Merrill Fire Department and commends him for those 32 years of service; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we hereby commend the meritorious and dedicated service of Scott Krause, congratulate him upon the occasion of his retirement from the City of Merrill Fire Department, and extend our warmest wishes for his enjoyment of continued prosperity in the years that lie ahead.

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Alderperson Blake motioned to approve the resolution. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried.

XIII. Mayor's Appointments:
Alderperson Blake made a motion to approve the Mayor's Appointments of Paul Russell to Chairman of Personnel & Finance Committee effective January 23, 2023 and Alderperson Michael Caylor from Chairman of Personnel & Finance to committee member effective January 23, 2023. Alderperson Fermanich seconded and the motion carried.

XIV. Mayor's Communications:
Mayor Hass spoke about the following events:
Enrichment Center will offer walking Monday through Friday from 11-4 for no fee.

Enrichment Center will have a Christmas Joy Meal on December 22; the Washington School Choir will provide entertainment.
Park & Recreation will offer open skate during the Christmas break.

TB Scott Library has the following events: Holiday Music will be provided on December 22, there will be an Author Chat with Greta Kurth, December 28th there will be a Critic's Choice movie, December 14th has Family Story Time, Thursday at 10:30 Wiggle, Giggle & Shake for ages 0-5. The library will be closed December 23, 24, 25 and 26 for Christmas.
Mayor Hass also wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

XV. Adjournment
Alderperson Rick motioned to adjourn. Alderperson Caylor seconded and the motion carried. The meeting was adjourned at 7:29 PM.
Minutes respectfully submitted by Lori L. Anderson-Malm – City Clerk
The complete Ordinance is available on the City of Merrill website: <https://www.ci.merrill.wi.us/>
Published December 22, 2022
WNAXLP

PUBLIC NOTICE: The First Riverside Presbyterian Church in Merrill, WI is declared closed and the corporation dissolved effective August 28, 2022, by the action of its parent body: the Winnebago Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), at its Stated Meeting on September 22, 2022. Any and all parties that have outstanding business related to the First Riverside Presbyterian Church or any unsatisfied claims for resolution are to notify the Winnebago Presbytery before December 21, 2022, at its corporate office located at: 181 E. North Water St., Neenah, WI 54956, Attn: Stated Clerk. (920)886-3598
Published Dec. 1, 8, 15 & 22, 2022
WNAXLP

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY
Case No. 20CV24
Code No. 30404
Foreclosure of Mortgage
Dollar Amount Greater Than \$10,000.00
WISCONSIN HOUSING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY,
Plaintiff,
vs.
ROUDY R. ARNDT and UNKNOWN
SPOUSE of Roudy R. Arndt; and
TARA LYN STAHNKE and UNKNOWN
SPOUSE of Tara Lyn Stahnke; and
WISCONSIN HOUSING AND
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
AUTHORITY,
Defendants.

NOTICE OF FORECLOSURE SALE
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that by virtue of a judgment of foreclosure entered on March 25, 2020, in the amount of \$183,350.34, the Sheriff will sell the described premises at public auction as follows:
TIME: January 5, 2023 at 10:00 o'clock a.m.
TERMS: 1. 10% down in cash or certified funds at the time of sale; balance due within 10 days of confirmation of sale; failure to pay balance due will result in forfeit of deposit to plaintiff.
2. Sold "as is" and subject to all legal liens and encumbrances.
3. Buyer to pay applicable Wisconsin Real Estate Transfer Tax, costs of recording and all costs of sale within 10 days of confirmation of sheriff's sale.
PLACE: Main entrance of the Lincoln County Courthouse, located at 1110 East Main Street, Merrill, WI

Legals 7700

DESCRIPTION:
Parcel 1:
The North One-half (N1/2) of the Northeast Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NE1/4 NE 1/4), Section One (1), Township Thirty-one (31) North, Range Four (4) East, Town of Corning, Lincoln County, Wisconsin; AND
Parcel 2:
The North One-half (N1/2) of the Northwest Quarter of the Northeast Quarter (NW 1/4 NE 1/4), Section One (1), Township Thirty-one (31) North, Range Four (4) East, Town of Corning, Lincoln County, Wisconsin.

PROPERTY ADDRESS: N2481 Wegner Road, Town of Corning
TAX KEY NO.: 006-3104-011-9995 and 006-3104-011-9993
Ken Schneider
Sheriff of Lincoln County, WI
O'DESS AND ASSOCIATES, S.C.
Attorneys for Plaintiff
1414 Underwood Avenue, Suite 403
Wauwatosa, WI 53213
(414) 727-1591

O'Dess and Associates, S.C., is attempting to collect a debt and any information obtained will be used for that purpose.
If you have previously received a Chapter 7 Discharge in Bankruptcy, this correspondence should not be construed as an attempt to collect a debt. Published December 8, 15 & 22, 2022
WNAXLP

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

NOTICE
City of Merrill Residents
Garbage and Recycling Collection
for the Christmas and New Year Holidays.

During the weeks of
December 26th through December 30th
and January 2nd through January 6th,
garbage and recycling collection
will be delayed by one day.

Please have your carts out to the curbside by 6:00 a.m.
Please contact the City Garage with any questions at
(715) 536-4222.
Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Visit the City of Merrill's web site at
www.ci.merrill.wi.us to view garbage and recycle
rules and to view the Collection Calendar

Dustin Bonack
Street Superintendent

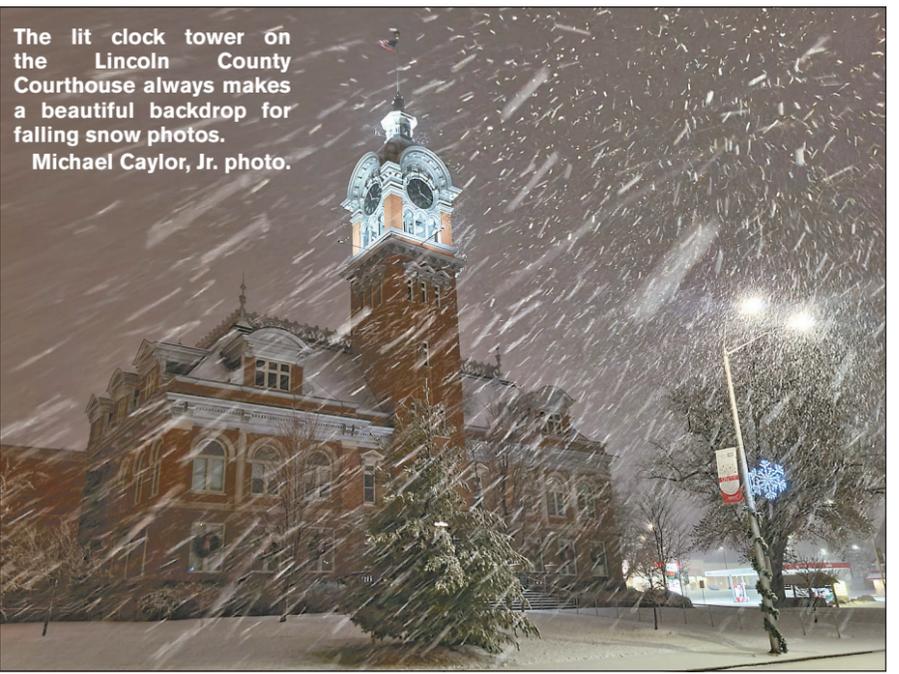
STORM from page 1

and the judging for the City of Merrill and Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce first Merrill Christmas Decorating Contest. The Bus Tour was rescheduled from Wednesday, Dec. 14, at 7:00 p.m. to one week later on Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 7:00 p.m. Winners will be published in

next week's Foto News.

Light snow is forecast for this week, with another snowstorm scheduled to arrive just before Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, along with frigid temperatures. Bundle up, drive safe, enjoy the magic of Merrill's winter wonderland, and have a very Merry Merrill Christmas!

The lit clock tower on the Lincoln County Courthouse always makes a beautiful backdrop for falling snow photos.
Michael Caylor, Jr. photo.



Top to bottom: Kylie, age 12; Melody, age 8; and Ariana, age 4, daughters of Trina and Zach Lutzke of Merrill, were hard at work exercising their creativity on Thursday's snow day. All three girls, together with their mom, made the snow bear.

Trina Lutzke photo.



8-year-old Melody Lutzke inside the snow fort that she, her older sister, and her mom built on a snow day from school.

Trina Lutzke photo.



L to R: JannaKay Bushar, Madi Schneider, Xena Bushar, and Issac Bushar used a new snow pile from clearing snow in their yard to create a snow fort big enough for one-or two- depending on your size!

Renee Koebe photo.

More photos online
merrillfotonews.com

May the

Joy

of Christmas fill your hearts this season and throughout 2023




Merrill & Tomahawk Merrill

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year

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MERRILL HOUSE OF MUSIC

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Downtown Merrill 715-536-5352

May all your dreams and wishes come true this holiday season.



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Merrill

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- Health & Fitness Center
- Supportive Home Care
- Adult Social Center

Merry Christmas from our family to yours!



May Christmas Bring Happiness and Peace to you & your Family this Holiday Season!

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!



1501 E. Main Street
Merrill, WI 54452
Phone (715) 536-1444

Dr. Steven Silverman, DC CCST
Excellence in Chiropractic Care

www.silvermanchiropractic.com

MERRY CHRISTMAS

and a special thank you to all who have given us the opportunity to serve you. We appreciate your business.



ONE WAY COLLISION
2602 E Main Street
MERRILL • 715-536-6511

Warmest Thoughts and Best Wishes for a Wonderful Holiday and a Very Happy New Year



Repair Service, LLC
Heating • Cooling • Sheet Metal

W2810 Hwy, C, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452
(715) 536-6791

MERRY CHRISTMAS and HAPPY NEW YEAR!

M-F 8:30AM-7PM • Sat. 8:30AM-2PM • Sun. Closed



POWER HOUSE
LAWN & LEISURE

2500 E. Main Street
Merrill, Wisconsin 54452
www.powerhouseell.com
Phone: 715-722-0232



PETS from page 3

environment, leading to anxiety.

- Hugging a pet could also be seen as ignoring the animal's preferences and may cause anxiety.
- Giving them human Christmas food - such as Brussels sprouts or cake - can cause conditions such as obesity or malnutrition.

Allen continues: "So just remember that while a pet is for life, and not just for Christmas, they are also animals, not people, and it's important to treat them as such. That way, both humans and pets can equally enjoy the holidays!"

OodleLife has created an interactive slideshow on how best to treat pets over the festive period, available here: <https://www.oodlelife.com/pet-pawsitive-christmas/>
This article is provided courtesy of OodleLife.com.



images
Hair - Merrill

715-536-1345
Sandy Gipple
Owner

MERRY Christmas

Pet of the Week

Meet **Asher!** He was surrendered due to the family having allergies. He is talkative and playful. He gets along with other cats and even dogs. **Asher's** adoption fee includes his neuter. He is up to date on vaccinations and microchip. Come meet **Asher** today!

SPONSORED BY **Brickners Park City, Inc.**

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

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

If you enjoy offering:

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If you are age 55 or older, meet income criteria, and able to volunteer a minimum of 5 hours a week or more.

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AmeriCorps Seniors If Interested Call Jim at 715-536-8386 ext. 1220 or email at: James.Larkin@wisconsin.gov

PUBLISHER'S LETTER

Christmas and Hanukkah are Coming

Dear Reader,

Christmas and Hanukkah are upon us. Inherent in these holidays are bringing home a tree, decorating the tree, house, and yard, lighting the menorah, the sweet smells of cooking and baking, sending cards to those who are far away, going caroling, singing the Ma'oz Tzur and reciting the Psalms, and the climax of finding and giving special presents on Christmas morning.



Spiritually, we have an opportunity to renew ourselves. One can go to a midnight service and reflect on the goodness of being alive - alive with those we love.

Merry Christmas, and joy to you as you celebrate.

PATRICK J. WOOD
PUBLISHER

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

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENTS

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>NOVEMBER 30, 2022
Girl, Ella Veronica, born to Marie Waldvogel and Dylan Hanke of Merrill.
Boy, Koda Bennett, born to Brooklyn West and Bryce Ruesch of Wausau.</p> | <p>DECEMBER 11, 2022
Girl, Danika Lynn, born to Nicole Rodriguez and Daniel Rodriguez of Merrill.</p> |
| <p>DECEMBER 2, 2022
Girl, Oaklynn Rose, born to Angel Gehrke and Allan Luedtke of Merrill.</p> | <p>DECEMBER 13, 2022
Boy, Lane Jeremiah, born to Amy Schmidt and Jeremiah Schmidt of Merrill.</p> |
| <p>DECEMBER 4, 2022
Boy, Gideon, born to Olivia Schwake and Virgil Schwake of Nekoosa.</p> | <p>DECEMBER 14, 2022
Girl, Maggie Ann, born to JoBeth Wistein and Jonas Jacobson of Merrill.</p> |

Did you know?
The Merrill Foto News website contains even more stories and photos that don't fit into our print edition. www.merrillfotonews.com

Merrill Area Chamber of Commerce

Wishing you a Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year!

705 N Center Ave., Merrill, WI 54452-1275
(715) 536-9474 • www.merrillchamber.org

Closed Monday, December 26th and Monday, January 2nd

LIVE UNITED United Way

Merry Christmas to our Merrill Companies and individual donors who have given wonderful support to help people in our community. Thank you for supporting us in our 75th year. **Happy Holidays!**

Merrill Area United Way Board of Directors and Executive Director, Dee Olsen.

Wishing you and yours a **VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS** and a **HAPPY NEW YEAR!**

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Proud to call Merrill home.

Learn about our commitment to the community at churchmutual.com/hometown.

MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is **Weldon Leist**
Son of **Ethan & Courtney Leist**
Weldon is in Kindergarten at Kate Goodrich Elementary School. He was nominated by Ms. Schultz & Mrs. Suchocki.

What is your favorite subject in school?
Why?
I love to do math because I like to learn about numbers.

What is your favorite part of school?
Why?
I love to go gym, music and art. I love to paint, sing songs and play games in gym.

What would you like to do/become someday?
Why?
Some day I would like to be an animal vet, because I love animals.

Weldon comes to school with a smile on his face that is sure to make those around him smile too. He is a leader in the classroom that sets a great example by being respectful, helpful and kind. Weldon always tries his best and has a positive attitude. His fun personality brightens your day, as well as his jokes and singing. We are so proud of him!
- Ms. Schultz & Mrs. Suchocki

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



The view from the large windows in the T.B. Scott Library in Merrill is magnificent, as it overlooks the walking bridge that crosses the Prairie River, and the trees in the park, all covered with a thick layer of new snowfall.

Sarah Sturm photo.

The canopy of tree branches heavily laden with the recent winter snow looks like a Christmas postcard. One can almost imagine a couple riding in a one-horse open sleigh will come along at any moment.

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.



Covered with glistening ice, everything has a more nostalgic, magical appearance.

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.



Frost and ice cover this mailbox in the countryside, giving it an old world charm.

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.



The clouds part, blue sky peeks through, and the sun shines down on a winter scene, where branches bend beneath the weight of the wet, heavy snow along a Lincoln County road.

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.



Inches of fresh snow are piled up on a mailbox trimmed for the holidays with evergreen boughs and ribbons, and who better to notice the beauty of nature's simple white adornments than the mail carrier who snapped this photo?

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.



After the recent snowstorm, the whole world seems made up of variations in white ... this country road and the overcast sky, the trees and their branches on either side ... all beckoning to journey a little further down this narrow lane dressed in winter white.

Connie Driscoll-Staeck photo.

At Waid Funeral Home, we appreciate the trust and friendship that families extend to us when we care for their loved ones. As you gather this holiday season, may you cherish each other and create precious memories.

MERRY CHRISTMAS
from our family to yours.

WAID FUNERAL HOME
& Cremation Service
301 Eagle Drive, Merrill, WI 54452
www.WaidFuneral.com




“Everyone needs a little help sometimes”
Thank you for allowing us to be the ones to help you this year.
Wayne, Marion, Sarah, Chris, Rich & Greg



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Season's greetings to you and yours
At this time of year, we're reminded of what's truly important. Sending our warmest wishes to you.



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**• MERRY •
CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY
NEW YEAR**



INTERFLEX GROUP
Image is everything.
Packaging defines it.

Lincoln County completes post-election audit

CHRISTOPHER J. MARLOWE
LINCOLN COUNTY CLERK

Residents in Lincoln County can be confident that votes were counted accurately in the Nov. 2022 election following the completion of a post-election audit of voting equipment used in County elections on Nov. 8, 2022.

During the week of November 28, election workers completed their audits of their voting equipment in four reporting units (typically a ward or wards that report out election results) in the Cities of Tomahawk and Merrill and the Towns of Skanawan and Pine River. These municipalities were randomly selected for the audits by the Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) during an event open to the public. The audits provide an additional way to ensure that voting machines worked properly, and that the election was conducted accurately.

Wisconsin Statutes re-

quire a post-election audit of voting systems used in Wisconsin after each General Election. During the post-election audit, election officials check to make sure the vote totals compiled by the voting equipment on Election Night are accurate. During this process, elections workers conduct an independent hand count of paper ballots and tally the results of the selected contests. The final hand-count tally was totaled and compared to the election night voting system results. In all four reporting units, the hand-count tallies mirrored those of the originally reported election night results.

Audit materials are submitted to the WEC for review. The WEC analyzes the audit results and investigates any discrepancies and can request a voting machine vendor investigate and provide explanation for any unexplained discrepancies. Once this work is complete, WEC

staff will prepare a public report for review by the six Commissioners during the Feb. 2, 2022, Commission meeting.

Post-election audits, conducted in a record 10% of reporting units across Wisconsin for the November 2022 election, serve as a triple check on the election results. While not every reporting unit or municipality is selected for post-election audit, state election officials ensured that the 2022 sample of 358 reporting units includes at least one reporting unit per county, and at least five reporting units for each type of equipment used.

Discrepancies in the vote totals are infrequently reported, and if they are, they are typically due to human error, which election officials then work to prevent by developing new training protocols.

In a separate pre-election voting equipment audit that occurs before every election and in every municipality, voting

machine programming is verified by feeding a set of pre-marked ballots into each machine and reviewing the results tape that is generated. An errorless count is required at the conclusion of the testing. Additionally, election officials at the county and state level review state election results for any discrepancies before they are certified by the chair of the WEC.

More information about the 2022 post-election audit can be found here: <https://elections.wi.gov/2022-voting-equipment-audit>

More information about audits generally can be found here: <https://elections.wi.gov/elections/voting-equipment-wisconsin/voting-equipment-security>



Jon Leiskau of the Merrill Fire Department stands alongside AmericInn staff Kristi Dymora and Lisa Schmidt, with Paul Peterson of the Merrill Fire Department, posing with items collected at the AmericInn for the Fire Department's Annual Toy Drive.

Submitted photo.

AmericInn partners with the MFD for Annual Toy Drive

Firefighters from the Merrill Fire Department (MFD) picked up donations that were collected at the Merrill AmericInn on Sunday, Dec. 3, 2022. The donations are part of the Annual Toy Drive that the Merrill Fire Department (MFD) conducts every year.

See TOY DRIVE page 11

Merry Christmas
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR

AGRA Industries
www.agraind.com

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From: The Auto Jockeys Crew

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Dec. 24, 25, 26
Jan. 2

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PUSS IN BOOTS
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THURSDAY: 7:00PM
FRIDAY: 1:00, 7:00, 9:30PM
CHRISTMAS EVE: CLOSED
CHRISTMAS DAY: 7:00PM ONLY
MONDAY, TUESDAY, THURSDAY:
1:00 & 7:00PM
WEDNESDAY: 10:00AM, 2:00 & 7:00PM

I WANNA DANCE WITH SOMEBODY
"PG13" (2HR 26MIN)
OPENS FRIDAY 12/23: 1:00 & 7:00PM
CHRISTMAS EVE: CLOSED
CHRISTMAS DAY: 7:00PM ONLY
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 1:00 & 7:00PM

AVATAR: THE WAY OF WATER
"R" (1HR 52MIN)
FRIDAY: 1:00, 7:00, 9:00PM
CHRISTMAS EVE: CLOSED
CHRISTMAS DAY: 7:00PM ONLY
MONDAY THRU THURSDAY: 1:00 & 7:00PM

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NO FOOD SERVED: Sat., Sun., Mon.-Only Special Events

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DEC. 27TH - BOURBON CHICKEN
JAN. 3RD - LIVER N ONIONS
Dinner served: Tuesday 4:00-8:00 PM

FRIDAY NIGHTS
DEC. 23RD - LAKE PERCH
DEC. 30TH - BLUEGILLS
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& FRI. 4-8pm
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3pm - close | Fri.-Sun. noon - close
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HOURS
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\$4.50 - 16 oz. Pint

FRIDAY DEC. 23RD
CHRISTMAS PARTY
HORS D' OEUVRES
6pm
LIVE MUSIC-TOM BURT
8pm

OPEN CHRISTMAS EVE AND CHRISTMAS DAY

SATURDAY DEC. 31ST
NEW YEAR'S BINGO
Opens 11am Starts 1pm
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Merrill's Biggest & Funnest
NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION

NYE FAMILY GLOW BOWL
1 1/2 Hours of Glow Bowling
Shoe Rental Included
Hats, Tiaras, & Leis
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\$59 per lane
(up to 6 people per lane)

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www.RatherBeBowling.com

BLUEJAY 96.3 WJMT
The Spirit Of Christmas

Gather 'round the radio as BLUEJAY 96.3, AM 730, streaming on bluejay963.com and smart speakers fills your Christmas Eve and Christmas Day with 38 hours of Christmas Church Services, encore concerts, encores of Merrill area school Christmas presentations, delightful stories, and traditional Christmas choral and instrumental music selections

Christmas Eve on WJMT	Christmas Day
6:00am Polka Rendezvous	12:00am The Spirit of Christmas Overnight Presented by Mitchell Metal Products
9:00am Polka Christmas Show	6:00am The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Merrill Sheet Metal Works
10:00am The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Pine Ridge Convenience Store	7:00am The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Holy Cross Sisters
11:00am The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Richard Mamer, CPA	8:00am The Spirit of Christmas Presented by AmericInn in Merrill
12:00pm The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Red Roof Mini Storage Red, White & Blue Air Force Christmas Show	9:00am The Littlest Angel Presented by Merrill Manufacturing
1:00pm Trinity School Christmas Concert Presented by VIP Office Products	9:30am Trinity Lutheran Church Live Service Presented by Trinity Lutheran Church
2:00pm Merrill High School Choir Concert Presented by Chips Hamburgers	10:30am Trinity Festival of Carols Presented by Taylor and Stine Funeral Home & Cremation Services
3:00pm Sing for Joy Christmas Special Presented by Our Saviour's Church	11:30am Christ Evangelical Church Christmas Message Presented by Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church
3:30pm Christ Evangelical Church Christmas Message Presented by Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church	12:00pm St Stephens Choir Concert Choir Presented by St Stephen's United Church of Christ
4:00pm Alleluia Ringers Presented by Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service	1:00pm The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Arby's of Merrill
4:30pm Lullabies Of Christmas Presented by Merrill Manufacturing	2:00pm Prairie River Middle School Holiday Concert Presented by Merrill Ace Hardware
5:00pm Trinity Lutheran Church Live Service Presented by Waid Funeral Home & Cremation Service	3:00pm The Spirit of Christmas Presented by Tomahawk Monument Company
6:00pm Merrill Elementary Schools combined concert Presented by Merrill Park and Recreation Department	4:00pm The Spirit Of Christmas Presented by One Way Collision Center
7:00pm St Stephen's United Church of Christ Live Service Presented by St Stephen's United Church of Christ	4:30pm The Spirit Of Christmas Presented by Merrill Monument
8:00pm Merrill High School Band Concert Presented by Brickner's Park City	5:00pm The Spirit Of Christmas Presented by Baumgart Waste Removal
9:00pm The Spirit of Christmas Presented by DC Motors	6:00pm The Spirit Of Christmas Presented by Merrill Police Association
10:00pm St John's Lutheran Church Live Service Presented by St John's Church	7:00pm Red, White & Blue Air Force Christmas Show Presented by Merrill Eagles Club
11:00pm The Spirit of Christmas Presented by RAJ Services, LLC	

Movie Reviews

BY CHRISTOPHER STAMM
GUEST MOVIE REVIEWER

"Hallmark Christmas Movies"

(Now showing on the Hallmark channel, with similar-type movies on most streaming channels)

★ ★ ★ ☆ ☆

These films are rated suitable for all.

Ah, good people, that time has come round again. The weather is getting

See **REVIEWS** page 11



DINNER @ FIVE
A COMMUNITY TABLE AT SAINT STEPHENS

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

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

Not serving dinner
Monday, December 26th
Merry Christmas

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

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

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Seasons Greetings
to all and **PEACE** in the **New Year!**
Closed Dec. 24th, 25th & 26th

New Year's Eve Surf & Turf Buffet
\$25.00 per person
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DECEMBER 31

NEW YEARS EVE RED CARPET AFFAIR

HO-CHUNK GAMING
WITTENBERG

REVIEWS from page 10

funky, the lights are up, the bell ringers are guilting us for a loose dollar, parents are counting the days until school lets out and then goes back into session, and Hallmark floods the airwaves with roughly 6,985 Christmas movies.

So, let us begin with the formula: Big city gal gets assignment she doesn't want in some hillbilly heaven one left turn from being off the grid. Big city gal gets to hillbilly heaven and discovers the meaning of Christmas after meeting not-so-redneck hunky fellow with sad back story (insert dead wife, empty life, something like that).

Every dozen or so movies they toss in a curveball and have some magical twist like, "Could that nice old man who runs the toy shop be the REAL Santa?"

Add one sweet little muppet of a kid with or without sad backstory (dead parent, lost dog, whatever), a grumpy neighbor who learns the true meaning of Christmas, and a sweet old couple that embody the spirit of Christmas in their love for one another.

It's a tired and old formula, but darn it, don't we all just love it!

The reason why there are so many of these films and why it has become an industry of itself (my wife actually has Hallmark Christmas-movie-watching socks, no kidding and you can download Hallmark Christmas movie bingo cards) is because they show us stories of the way we all wish the world was: kind, sweet, and with good-natured, clean humor.

So, with that being said, dim the lights, curl up on the couch with the one you love, and just enjoy the super

cheese that is every Hallmark Christmas movie ever made, because there are as said 6,985 of them, but honestly, there are only four actual stories. And remember to hold a moment of silence for all the big city suit-wearing guys who are about to be dumped by their girlfriends/fiances for a small-town, flannel-wearing guy in nearly every one of these movies.

Three out of five stars for Hallmark Christmas movies, because however cheesy they may be, we still love 'em!

TOY DRIVE from page 9

AmericInn owners, Gary and Mary Schwartz, enjoy partnering with the MFD in the toy collection and advertised that the lobby at the hotel was open 24/7 to accept donations. In addition to the traditional toy drive, this

year clothing and hygiene products were also collected. The Schwartz's and the MFD are grateful for the many contributors who helped and brought in items for the Annual Toy Drive and also donated clothing and/or hygiene products, and they consider it another very successful year.

Wishing Our Friends and Family a Joyous Holiday Filled with Peace, Love and Prosperity.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

MERRILL PARK & RECREATION CENTER
SMITH CENTER
 1100 Marc Drive, Merrill, Wisconsin 54452
 Phone 715-536-7313
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May the Glory and Beauty of the Season stay with you throughout the New Year!

The Officers, Members and Staff of the Merrill Eagles Aerie and Auxiliary would like to take this time to thank Merrill Area Businesses and Residents for your continued support of our Fundraising activities. We would also like to thank our customers for your patronage and allowing us to host your special occasions. We have been able to raise thousands of dollars which has helped many local causes.

Wishing everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year!

May we all remember the real reason for this Holiday season

It's easy to get wrapped up with all the extra activities during the holidays. Take time to enjoy what's really important with your family and friends.

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

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LOVE BEGOTTEN

REJOICE! EMMANUEL HAS COME TO YOU!

- Christmas Eve Worship: 4:30 & 7:00 PM
- Christmas Day Worship: 9:00 AM
- Services will be on Facebook and YouTube

ALL ARE WELCOME

OUR SAVIOUR'S LUTHERAN CHURCH - ELCA
 300 Logan St., Merrill

Wishing you a joyous holiday season and a prosperous new year. We look forward to continuing to serve you in 2023.

Closed on Christmas Eve. Open on New Year's Eve.

Holy Cross Sisters

Christmas Blessings

Celebrating 100 years in Merrill!

park city CREDIT UNION

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Some decorated trees even had delightful home decor like this sign tucked into the branches, and one lucky winner got to take home the entire tree-ornaments, lights, tree stand, tree skirt, decor, and all! **Tina L. Scott photos.**



Gnomes are a popular Christmas theme this year. This tree was donated with a gnome theme and included a variety of different gnome ornaments of different sizes and kinds.



O'Tannenbaum Tour 2022

A break in the stream of visitors at the O'Tannenbaum Tour provided an opportunity to get a better view of the variety of trees spread throughout two large rooms. Tables displayed dozens of gift baskets and wreaths that were also raffled off during the O'Tannenbaum Tour at St. Stephens on Dec. 3 and 4.



**Behold,
the Greatest
Christmas
Gift of
them all.**

*Wishing Everyone
a Blessed Christmas and
Peace in the New Year*

MERRILL MONUMENT CO.
N282 County Hwy. K., Merrill, WI • 715-536-6654



One tree was decorated with ice-cream novelties, malts, and other sparkling delights.



A child stares in awe at all the candy, treats, and Christmas ornaments on a tree decorated with children in mind.



From Santa's main workshop area, visitors enter into the O'Tannenbaum Tour under this arch, where they are greeted by an array of lights and sparkling decorations and this year, 114 different items being raffled off to raise funds for 4-H and other area programs for youth, including 23 fully decorated Christmas trees.

*Wishing our friends
and customers a very
Merry Christmas!*



**BREAMAN
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**Closed
December 24th
and
December 25th
for Christmas.**

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St. Francis Xavier Catholic School announces 2022-2023 first quarter Honor Roll

HIGHEST HONORS 3.75 – 4.00
Lilly Hoffman (4.0), Emily Raymer (4.0), Kaylana Vickery (4.0), Jacob Shimel, Matthew Burkhart, Hannah Rell (4.0), Louisa Fleischman, Abigail Rell (4.0), Margaret Delp, Julia Fleischman

HIGH HONORS 3.50 – 3.749
Lauren Hoffman

HONORS 3.25 – 3.499
Michael Creel, Anthony Galella, Daven Saeger, Addison Plautz, Emmett Johnson

HONOR ROLL 3.00 – 3.249
Kayden Klement, Aidan Plautz, Elias Pakonen

St. John Lutheran School announces 2022-2023 first quarter Honor Roll

HIGHEST HONORS - 4.0

Ruby Hoffman - 5th Grade, Ella Humphrey - 5th Grade, Joanna Szeto - 6th Grade, Addelyn Ineichen - 7th Grade, Siobhan Schuetze - 7th Grade, Evan Voigt - 7th Grade

HIGH HONORS - 3.76 - 3.99
Samuel Szeto - 5th Grade, Christian Voigt - 5th Grade, Delana Podeweltz - 5th Grade, Isabelle Podeweltz - 5th Grade, Lola Klug - 6th Grade

HONORS 3.5 - 3.75
Eli Boehm-Wendt - 6th Grade, Marshall Besaw - 5th Grade, Poppy Geisler - 5th Grade, Adalyn Schooley - 5th Grade, Madilynn VenRooy - 5th Grade, Izabella Erickson - 7th Grade, Malayna Kufahl - 5th Grade, Eva Storm - 5th Grade, Logan Klug - 6th Grade

Prairie River Middle School 2022-2023 1st Quarter Honor Roll

Fifth Grade

GOLD: 4.00 – Parker Hannemann, Preston Hannemann, Oliver Kahr, Delyla Maudrie, Connor Savagian-Demoss, Makayla Talerico, Cameron Thom, Brayden Wiederhoeft, Claire Ziebell

SILVER: 3.750-3.999 – Willow Bathke, Emma Daley, Ian Eggebrecht, Connor Holdridge, Mackenzie Matthias, Emma Myers, Payten Nelessen, Lexi Renken, Carter Schmidt, Aiden Schultz, Atreya Stone, Ashton Thom

BRONZE: 3.50-3.749 – Caelyn Belant, Darren Breunig, Iva Brownell, Chloe Carstensen, Sylvia Durbin, Libby Erickson, Mason Fuchs, Alayna Galarza, Aaron Haltinner, Allie Isaacson, Mykayla Kuhn, Trenton Lapsenberg, Vincent Morgan, Addilyn Mulrooney, Brennan Olson, Caleb Opper, Claire Schroder, Kaspar Schulz, Kolbie Shimel, Taylor Timm, Colton Vanlieshout

Sixth Grade

GOLD: 4.00 – Alle Bergh, Ella Bergh, William Chula, Keira Clerveaux, Colton Fox, Autumn Genisot, Jaedyn Goetsch, Jacob Hanson, Cody Henson, Andrew Josiger, Mara Kautzer, Willett Knospe, Payge Osness, Abigail Parks, Michael Schreiber, Cadence Stutting, Luke Wegner

SILVER: 3.750-3.999 – Brianna Boyd, Ella Burrow, Henry Chrudimsky, Aaron Collinsworth, Summer Essex, Lydia Faber, Areya Franklin, Moses Gates, Madilynn Geiss, Jameson Gerdes, Ella Glisch, Cassandra Johnson, Aubrey

Krombholz, Mathew Mueller, Kelsey Pankow, Korbet Ravn, Draven Sangster, Madelyn Scantlin, Kinzie Stevenson, Emma Welch, Matthew Woller

BRONZE: 3.50-3.749 – Jaxson Ames, Aiden Becker, Quinn Block, Tanner Carpentier, Bethany Crockford, Alexandria Derizzo, Wil Detert, Mia Hanson, Landen Hattery, Kyla Hoffman, Evelyn Johnson, Karder Rampart, Easton Romatoski, Aili Sayles, Allisun Springer, Robert Woller, Nicole Zeinert

Seventh Grade

GOLD: 4.00 – Azalea Blake, Brady Genisot, Caleb Gennrich, Megan Gustum, Marie Hagemester, Kane Hanson, Kallen Henson, Haley Hooch, Marihanna Hulce, Connor Josiger, Claire Kufahl, Mylie Kufahl, Annabelle Lee, Alexis Lonsdorf, Jameson Morgan, Emmanuel Ollmann, Karlee Ravn, Kylie Roberge, Brianna Schmirler, Broc Suchocki, Cameron Wszalek, Benjamin Zastrow

SILVER: 3.750-3.999 – Brooklyn Bellin, Alexis Fehr, Collin Franzen, Shane Gibson, Lilee Haltinner, Orion Hill, Kylee Hoffman, Noelle Iverson, Avery Kolinski, Finlee Lange-Peronto, Denver McCaskill, Alina Savagian-

See HONOR ROLLS page 18

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CAMPUS NEWS

Semling receives scholarships to Northwood Technical College

Kyle Semling of Merrill, who attends the Northwood Technical College Rice Lake Campus, was recently awarded two scholarships for the Spring 2023 semester to help him pursue his education in the field of Construction and Cabinetmaking. Semling received both the MAC Construction Scholarship and the Northwest Building Inspectors Association Scholarship.

More than \$57,838 in scholarships were awarded for the Spring 2023 semester in total, thanks to generous donors through the Northwood Technical

College Foundation. Each semester, the Northwood Tech Foundation has an application period for students to apply for any scholarships to help offset the costs associated with attending college.

"The Northwood Technical College Foundation relies heavily on the generosity of our donors to fulfill the dreams of the students we serve and the employment needs of our community," said Kim Pearson, Executive Director for Northwood Tech Foundation. "With the college's enrollments increasing and the financial gap for our students widening,

ongoing support is essential. Together, we turn students into success stories."

Scholarships help students with education-related costs such as tuition, fees, books, classroom supplies and more. For Northwood Tech students, these scholarships and other forms of aid provide support while they achieve their goal and begin their career path with little to no student debt. Some of these students are fresh out of high school, while others are returning to school for a variety of reasons, including after years of working in a different career field or being a

stay-at-home parent. No matter what level or age these individuals are enrolling at Northwood Tech, any assistance they receive makes the journey to achieving their degree less difficult and allows them to focus on Northwood Tech's overall objective of Learning First.

Northwood Technical College is a nationally top-ranked college and designated Silver 2022-23 Military Friendly(r) School that puts Learning First. Northwood Technical College serves the educational

See CAMPUS NEWS page 18

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HONOR ROLLS from page 16

Demoss, Mikenna Vandeweerd, Madeline Voigt, Dylan Weber, Anna Whited, Shelby Yates

BRONZE: 3.50-3.749 – Madisyn Anderson, Karmen Brietzke, Peyton Brown, Brooklyn Clabots, Jennavecia Conrad, Kaleb Cook, Bryanna Doerr, Cecilia Gerbig, Mykenzie Hinz, Christian Kinningham, Addisyn Krause, Morgan Kucirek, Ava Latzig, Jacey Lyon, Zander Meyer, Izabella Nelson, Eliza Rogers, Alicia Schneider, Adriana Schram, Avalynn Schult, Nikolajs Schulz, Cadence Seliger, Alexa Staskiewicz, Kaleb Staus, Fletcher Talerico,

Tanner Vanvuren, Emma Wendt
Eighth Grade

GOLD: 4.00 – Lily Berndt, Paige Byer, Marvin Downs, Rory Gates, Josilynn Geiss, Erik Grunenwald, Peyton Hagenbucher, Mackenzie Herdt, Shanna Herdt, Claire Hintz, Brody Klebenow, Justice Kunze, Mark Marvin, Mya Meyer, William Miemietz, Landon Mootz, Marielle Nass, Carlina Nebbergall, Tyson Ott, Greta Peterson, Addison Pickard, Grace Reimann, Colton Ruplinger, Layla Schmidt, Evyn Schmitz, Derek Schult, Deylah Schulz, Peyton Smith, Isabella Stutting, Charlotte Van Der Nest, Grace Wegner, Morgan Wienke, Laci Wirtala, Lauren Zuelsdorff

SILVER: 3.750-3.999 – Allyson

Boquist, Maycee Eisner, Stuart Gehris, Davin Harder, Izabella Klockow, Mason Meyer, Jackson Millard, Elayna Olson, Jackson Pierce, Vanessa Pintor, Grant Polak, Sadie Schleif-Roberts, Kayleigh Strey, Emma Ziebell

BRONZE: 3.50-3.749 – Tatiana Anderson, Zachary Bacon, Landan Blaubach, Damion Brietzke, Alexandra Carreto, Emilie English, Abigail Gauerke, Jayden Graap, Arianna Gray, Xavier Hanke, Reese Kaminski, Madison Kersten, Trenton Klimek, Juniper Kocimski, Danika Kuehl, Deliah McDaniel, Evan Olson, Jack Polak, Eliza Rathbun, Ryker Remington, Cole Rudie, Darren Sitte, Marcus Slagoski

CAMPUS NEWS from page 17

and career needs of more than 15,000 residents of Northwestern Wisconsin each year. With multiple campuses, Northwood Technical College offers career-focused associate degree programs, technical diplomas, short-term certificates, customized business training, and a wide array of courses for personal or career enrichment. Northwood Technical College is a member of the Wisconsin Technical College System and is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission (www.hlcommission.org). For more information, call 800.243.9482 or visit northwoodtech.edu. For more information about the Northwood Tech Foundation and its mission, visit <https://www.northwoodtech.edu/alumni-and-giving/about-the-foundation>. For information on how to contribute, visit northwoodtech.edu/give.

Merry Christmas Merrill!

Worship with us at Trinity this Christmas!
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Chicken Breast Skinless - Boneless - Frozen ONLY \$2.89	Butter - Salted Quarters 16 oz. ONLY \$3.29	Mayo - Light 22 oz. ONLY 79¢
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Alayna Pozorski (#4) has the ball, but Wausau West is looking for an opening. **Joseph Frederick photo.**

EMU Bluejacks Varsity Hockey Team still battling for a win

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2022, the East Merrill Newman United Bluejacks played Mosinee in a tournament at the Mosinee Recreation Center. It was a tough game for the Bluejacks, because Mosinee came out fierce, scoring a goal in the first 30 seconds of the game, and they didn't let up. Bluejacks Goalie Truman Schull has his work cut out for him defending his goal, and he did an incredible job, keeping Mosinee down to single digits in the final score. But the

Bluejacks offense just couldn't get one in for a score and remained scoreless throughout the game.

The highlight of the game for EMU Defense for sure: "Truman Schull had 44 saves for the Bluejacks," EMU Assistant Coach Greg Glovinski said. His performance in the game was the standout. Now the Bluejacks just need to get focused to get their offense on the board as they move forward in their season.

Box Score
East Merrill Newman United 0
@ Mosinee 9

Merrill Girls Basketball Team scores a much-needed win over Northland Pines

After a five-game losing streak, the girls celebrate a win

PATIENCE PYAN AND TINA L. SCOTT

The Wausau West Girls Basketball Team brought their A game to Merrill on Friday, Dec. 9, 2022, but the Merrill Girls Basketball Team was also ready to defend their home court. The score went back and forth for a while, before West took a decent lead on the Bluejays. Towards the end of the first half, the Bluejays cut the lead down to single digits and went into



Prayla Pyan (#23) plays defense as the Warriors look to enter the ball into the post. **Patience Pyan photo.**

halftime down by nine points. The second half was back and forth, as well, and the girls got it down to trailing by just three at one point in the half, but West battled ahead again. Both teams played a great game, but in the end, Wausau West came out on top, with a seven-point advantage. Mia Ott led the Lady Jays, scoring 23 points, followed by Alayna Pozorski with 6 and Addy Schmeltzer with 5.

Box Score: Wausau West 53 @ Merrill 46

The Merrill girls traveled to Northland

See **BASKETBALL** page 20



Maddie Drew (#3) plays defense on the ball in the game against Wausau West. **Patience Pyan photo.**



Mia Ott (#14) is in control and is taking the ball down the court. **Joseph Frederick photo.**

2022-2023 Merrill High School Winter Sports Schedules

Boys Basketball (Varsity, JV, and JV2)

Fri. Dec. 23	Wittenberg-Birnamwood (JV & JV2)	Away	6:00 pm
Fri. Dec. 23	Wittenberg-Birnamwood (Varsity)	Away	7:15 pm

Girls Basketball (Varsity & JV)

Wed. Dec. 28	Elmwood (JV & Varsity)	Away	T. B. D.
Thurs. Dec. 29	Elmwood (JV & Varsity)	Away	T. B. D.

Boys Hockey (Varsity and JV)

Thurs. Dec. 22	Northland Pines (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Tues. Dec. 27	Waupaca (JV)	Away	T. B. D.

Girls Hockey (Varsity and JV)

There are no scheduled events for this week. Merry Christmas!

Boys Wrestling (Varsity and JV)

Wed. Dec. 28	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	8:00 am
Thurs. Dec. 29	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	8:00 am

Girls Wrestling (Varsity)

Thurs. Dec. 22	Rhineland (Varsity)	Away	11:00 am
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The Sports Calendar of events is sponsored by:



ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Molly White, a Sophomore at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week. This is Molly's second year as a member of the Merrill Varsity Dance Team, and she and her duet partner recently took first place in the Hip Hop Duet category at competition in Little Chute. In addition, Molly does studio dance at the Wausau Academy of Dance where she has taken lessons since beginning ballet at age three. "I take absolutely every dance class I can," she said. "My favorite kind of dance is lyrical."

At school, Molly's favorite classes are history and chemistry, and she participates in Junior Optimist Club, Raise Your Voice, and Theatre Jays. She was also 2022 Sophomore Homecoming Princess. Outside of school, Molly works part-time time at the Americinn and also volunteers at the Wausau Academy of Dance.

In her spare time ... "All I do is dance," Molly said. "I like to read, too, but most of my time is dance." When pressed, she added she likes to hang out with friends listening to music and playing board games and spend time watching movies with family.

The daughter of Erin and Evan White of Merrill, Molly has a 3.8 GPA and plans to get a degree in nursing to work in pediatrics, but she is not yet sure what school she will attend.

Congratulations from these sponsors:



Molly White

Athletes highlighted in this feature are selected by the Foto News editorial staff, not by the sponsors.

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Merrill Boys Basketball Team wins against Wausau West in first WVC game

TINA L. SCOTT
EDITOR

On Friday, Dec. 9, 2022, the Merrill Boys Basketball Team traveled to Wausau West High School to take on the Warriors on the court.

“We got down early 19-11 mostly, I think, because we weren’t executing on the defensive side of things,” Merrill Boys Basketball Head Coach Troy Pieper said. “However, after a quick timeout, I think the guys really got refocused on that end, and we went on a nice run, closing out the half on a 16-11 run to pull within 3 at the break.”

“We mixed things up a little in the second half and came out in a 2-3 Zone that really caused West some issues, I thought, and we came out and went on a nice run with the help of a few three’s from Bradyn (Pieper),” he said.

“Once Bradyn hit those three’s

early in the half, it really opened things up for Troy (Mootz), as they stopped helping off of Bradyn when Troy would drive, and Troy is one of the best at getting to the rim and finishing,” Pieper said, “so once his defender was no longer getting much help, Troy had his way for a good stretch in the second half.”

“For the third straight game, we had a different combination of players to reach double figures,” he said. “Each game having three guys in double figures is a positive thing, and then to have a different combination of three guys to reach that in each game is pretty impressive and speaks to the balance and depth we have this year.”

“Troy (Mootz) (25 points) and Bradyn (Pieper) (17 points) led us in scoring, and our third player in double figures was Sophomore EJ Weix with 12,” Pieper said.

“I thought EJ played awesome,” he added. “He’s been working his way back to full strength after missing some time from being sick, but tonight you could see that he’s back. He looked aggressive and confident all night. He was huge for us tonight.”

“I also liked the way Carter Baade played on the defensive side of things, and while battling a little foul trouble to stay mentally in the game and stay locked in says a lot, and he hit a big three down the stretch that pretty much put the game on ice,” Pieper said.

“It was nice to start the conference season with a nice road win. There are no easy games in the Wisconsin Valley Conference (WVC), and to open the conference season on the road and come out with a win is a positive.”

Box Score
Merrill 68 @ Wausau West 61

BASKETBALL from page 19

Pines on Dec. 13 for a non-conference match-up. The Lady Jays came ready to play and, after a brief 2-2 tie at the beginning of the game, they took the lead and kept it. The energy was awesome this game and the girls needed this one to boost their confidence back up after losing five straight games. The Bluejays dominated in just about every category with a higher field goal % (36.9), higher free throw % (71.4), more transition points (14), and higher points off turnovers (19), and the Bluejays also out rebounded the Eagles 48-33.

And the highlight of the game? Everyone on the team scored! The Bluejays were led in scoring by Mia Ott (13 pts, 3 reb, 4 ast), Sophie Wendorf (13 pts, 6 reb, 2 def) and Prayla Pyan



Addy Schmeltzer (#33) takes the ball in for the lay up to score two of her four game points in the game against Northland Pines.

Patience Pyan photo.

(10 pts, 6 reb, 2 stl) as they racked up the points for an ecstatic win.

Box Score: Merrill 67 @ Northland Pines 40

2022 Christmas Season Church Services

Ascension Episcopal Church

218 Pier St., Merrill
(Corner of 3rd & Pier)
Rev. Amy Heimerl
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM Candlelight Service
Christmas Day: 10:30 AM Mass
New Year’s Day: 10:30 AM Mass
We worship every Sunday at 10:30 AM. All are welcome!

Bible Presbyterian Church

1605 County Road G, Merrill
Pastor Andy Perry
Christmas Eve: 6:00 PM Service
Christmas Day: 10:30 AM Service

Calvary Lutheran Church

N365 Cain Creek Road, Merrill
Pastor Jennifer Hoffman
Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM Candlelight Service

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

1204 N. Sales Street, Merrill
Pastor Neal Behm
Christmas Eve: 6:30 PM Service
Christmas Day: 9:00 AM Service
New Year’s Day: 9:00 AM Service

Christ United Methodist Church

300 N. Mill Street, Merrill
Pastor Mike Zahn
Christmas Eve: 2:00 PM & 6:30 PM Services
New Year’s Day: 10:30 AM Service

Faith Lutheran Church

15425 S. County Road K, Merrill
Pastor Donald Love
Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM Worship Service
Christmas Day: 10:15 AM Worship Service w/Holy Communion
New Year’s Day: 10:15 AM Worship Service w/Holy Communion

Highland Church – Merrill Campus

508 Eugene Street, Merrill
Christmas Eve: 5:00 PM Service
3:00 PM Watch Wausau Livestream
Christmas Day: 9:00 AM Service
9:00 AM Watch Wausau Livestream

Highland Church - Wausau Campus

1005 N. 28th Ave., Wausau
Christmas Eve: 11 AM, 1 PM & 3 PM Services
Christmas Day: 8:45 AM Traditions
9:00 AM Contemporary Service (Also will be Livestream)

Hillside Church

1501 N. Pier Street, Merrill
Pastor Brandon Wade
Christmas Eve: 6:30 PM Candlelight Service
New Year’s Day: 10:00 AM Service
Go to Hillside Church Facebook Live

Immanuel Lutheran Church

N1660 Leafy Grove Road, Merrill
Rev. Joel S. Danner
Christmas Eve: 5:00 PM Children’s Program;
7:30 PM Candlelight Service
Christmas Day: 10:00 AM Christmas Service w/Holy Communion

Luther Memorial Church

N5302 Town Hall Road, Gleason
Pastor Greg Laska
Christmas Eve: 7:30 PM Candlelight Communion Service
Christmas Day: 10:30 AM Communion Service
New Year’s Eve: 6:00 PM Communion Service
New Year’s Day: 10:30 AM Communion Service

New Testament Church

N2519 County Road K, Merrill
Pastor William Hohman
Christmas Day: 10:00 AM –11:00 AM

Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church - ELCA

300 Logan Street, Merrill
Interim Pastor Kathy Tulman
Christmas Eve: 4:30 PM Family Worship
7:00 PM Worship Service
Christmas Day: 9:00 AM Worship Service
New Years Eve: 4:30 PM Worship Service
Services will be on Facebook and YouTube.

St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church

1708 E. 10th Street, Merrill
Fr. Maria Vallabhaneni
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM Service
Christmas Day: 7:30 AM & 9:00 AM Service
Vigil Solemnity of Mary: 4:00 PM
Solemnity of Mary: 7:30 AM & 9:00 AM

St. John Lutheran Church-Merrill

1104 E. 3rd Street, Merrill
Rev. David Szeto
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM Family Service
7:00 PM & 10:00 PM Candlelight Service
Christmas Day: 10:00 AM Worship Service
New Year’s Day: 8:00 AM & 10:30 AM Divine Worship Service

St. John The Baptist Catholic Church

HWY 17 & HWY J, Bloomville
Fr. Maria Vallabhaneni
Christmas Day: 11:00 AM Service
Solemnity of Mary: 11:00 AM

St. John’s Lutheran Church - Hamburg

134058 County Road L, Athens
Pastor Donald Love
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM Worship Service
Christmas Day: 8:30 AM Worship Service w/Holy Communion
New Year’s Day: 8:30 AM Worship Service w/Holy Communion

St. Paul’s Ev. Lutheran Church - Irma

N6537 Old Hwy 51, Irma
Pastor David Sutton
Christmas Eve: 7:00 PM Children’s Service
Christmas Day: 10:30 AM Service
New Year’s Day: 8:30 AM Service
Join us for Sunday Services in 2023 at 8:30 AM

St. Paul’s Lutheran Church-Pine River

W2604 County Road P, Merrill
Pastor Gregory Laska
Christmas Eve: 5:00 PM Service w/Communion
Christmas Day: 8:30 AM Worship Service w/Communion
New Year’s Day: 8:30 AM Worship Service w/Communion

St. Stephens UCC

903 E. 2nd Street, Merrill
Rev. Michael Southcombe
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM & 7:00 Service
The 7:00 PM Service will be broadcast on WJMT 96.3
Christmas Day: 9:00 AM
New Year’s Day: 9:00 AM

Trinity Merrill Lutheran Church

107 N. State Street, Merrill
Pastor Scott Gustafson
Christmas Eve: 3:00 PM Contemporary Candlelight Service
5:00 PM & 7:00 PM Traditional Candlelight Service
Christmas Day: 9:30 AM Traditional Service w/Communion
New Year’s Eve: 6:30 PM Traditional Service w/Communion
New Year’s Day: 8:00 AM & 6:00 PM Traditional Service
10:30 AM Contemporary Service

Wildwood Chapel

W106 County Rd. C, Gleason
Pastor Mike Zahn
Christmas Eve: 4:00 PM Service
New Year’s Day: 9:00 AM Service

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