

Can people learn to ‘disagree better’?

By MATT GEIGER
Mount Horeb Mail

In a time when it feels like division and ideological intolerance are ubiquitous, the Mount Horeb Public Library is working to help people

“Disagree Better.” This multi-part series is designed to offer tangible ways to have difficult conversations in a more productive way. The focus isn’t on changing people’s minds or

points of view, but rather to find common ground and mutual understanding in a way that allows conversations and goals to move forward.

The Disagree Better: Building Connection Across Difference initiative began in March with a discussion led by Amber Wichowsky, Associate Professor of Public Affairs and Leadership at the LaFollette School of

Public Affairs. “Communicating Across Political Divides: The Power of Talking Together” offered up the latest research on civil discourse initiatives, as well as best practices and methods of public engagement. Following the public talk, participants will have the opportunity to brainstorm and discuss ways to apply

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Program to reduce food waste comes to Mount Horeb

Local Scrap Stop station will be located in the village, say local Lions Club members

By MATT GEIGER
Mount Horeb Mail

Delaney Gobster, Outreach Coordinator for

Dane County Department of Waste and Renewables, recently presented at the Mount Horeb Lion’s Club

meeting and shared information about the Scrap Stop Program in the county. Organics such as food and yard

waste are one of the largest waste streams entering the Dane County landfill, she explained. There are currently five locations around

Dane County to drop off residential kitchen scraps. As a Lion’s Club member, one

of their missions is to help the environment, and local

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Historium seeks volunteers for April 21st ice cream tasting

The Driftless Historium (100 S 2nd St) needs your help choosing the 2026 Flavor of the Year! This ice cream will be a site-exclusive, can’t-get-it-anywhere-else sweet treat. Community feedback is requested via an upcoming taste testing, to be held on-site on Tuesday, April 21 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Participating volunteer tasters will sample eight unique ice creams designed and hand-crafted by UW-Platteville Dairy Science students, record their observations and rank their favorites. The 2026 theme is “America the Beautiful!”, with students challenged to create ice creams inspired by the 250th anniversary of the United States.

This is the eighth annual collaboration between the Driftless Historium and UW-Platteville’s Dairy Sciences Program and Director Dr. Tera Montgomery. The event is free and all are welcome. Reservations are not required, and ice cream will be served until supplies run out.

The winning flavor will be announced on May 01, 2026.

To learn more, call 608-437-6486 or email mthorebahs@gmail.com.



March Rotary Students Anna Tranel, left, and Clemetine Christian, right. Photo by Zandra Heilmann.

Clemetine Christian and Anna Tranel named Student Rotarians

March brought with it the first warm days of spring, and Mount Horeb Area High School students Clemetine Christian and Anna Tranel, who attended weekly Rotary meetings during the month. Christian has been active in music, school activities and sports during her four

years of high school. She’s been a member of the Tuesday Jazz Ensemble, March-

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DHS Announces Plan to Invest \$31 Million in Opioid Settlement Funds

Wisconsin saw a historic 42.5 percent decline in opioid overdose deaths from 2023 to 2024, dropping from 1,422 to 817 deaths. While this progress is significant, the misuse of opioids

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MOUNT HOREB AREA Job FAIR

April 25 | 9-11am
Mount Horeb High School

Gleanings

By **Barb Johnson**
Mount Horeb Mail

140 Years Ago- April 21, 1886

John Beat, of Springdale, had his leg amputated last week, caused by a cancer at the bottom of his foot.

That warm weather is here it is easy to be seen by the number of heads over which lawn mowers have been run.

The News presents an improved appearance by the addition of new type on the second and third pages. The matter is fresh and newsy and the type clear and readable.

J. B. Johnson, last summer a youth broken down in health, left this country on account of his poor health last June, for his mother country, Norway, weighting 105 lbs. Last week he again put in his appearance, not the same looking, but fat and fleshy, having gained two-fifths of his actual weight during this short time, while inhaling the pure mountain air of Norway.

130 Years Ago- April 16, 1896

A good eighty-four dollar bicycle for sale or will trade for horse. Geo. Britton

Brice and Snyder have rented a room in the Opera block where they will open up a pool and billiard room.

The large iron safe for the town clerk's office was moved last Tuesday. It was quite a job to load same as it weighs about 3500 lbs.

A young cyclone struck South Mount Horeb last Monday, tearing up sidewalks, capsizing out-houses, and blew down another chimney on the Academy building.

Peter Male received another surprise last Monday. It was ladies' doing this time also, but came without anything. It was twin girls weighing seven pounds each, both pretty as pins and are thrifty. Mother and Babies doing well.

Mrs. Saunderson, the well known elocutionist, assisted by Miss Emily Finch, will give an entertainment at Union church Friday evening, April 24, consisting of dramatic readings

and impersonations, Scandinavian gymnastics, aesthetic movements and statue posing in beautiful Greek costume.

A stranger entered our sanctuary recently and made this statement. "I have always heard that the more saloon license money received by a town, the better the sidewalks but I want to say that Mt. Horeb without any saloon money has better sidewalks today than any of the surrounding villages, not excepting those that are blessed with breweries as well.

120 Years Ago- April 19, 1906

Many an Easter hat remained in the box last Sunday.

The big boiler and engine for the Lee & Harmon electric light plant have arrived and looks as if they would have plenty of power. It's a 150-horse power.

At the home of the bride in the city of Minneapolis, Dr. A. Thompson of this place was united in marriage to Miss Mary Anderson, April 18.

We overheard a couple of big curfew lads discussing the new marshal appointment, and agreed that he was rather too well qualified for the position to suit them. One says, "You know he can run like a whirlwind."

A great many cheese factories in this vicinity have been greatly improved and most all have now cement floors put in, making it more convenient to keep clean and neat. These are the institutions that are moneymakers nowadays and as a consequence are well looked after.

Wm. Witte left for Rice Lake, Wis., where he will work their fine 160-acre farm. He took an immigrant car and the pet coon.

L.L. Martin, the newly appointed street commissioner, promises a general cleaning up of streets and alleys, and not only clean up but here after kept clean. The practice of using streets and alleys for a dumping place for garbage and refuse must, the official says, be discontinued from now on.

110 Years Ago- April 21, 1916

It is a disgrace to the town of Springdale to keep the road on the town line here without a bridge, and five ditches crossing the road.

The local Telephone Co. has installed a new bookkeeping system and fitted up office room on the same floor opposite the operating room.

Work excavating for the basement of the new Creamery building started Monday and the work will be pushed until one of the finest and most up-to-date creameries in the state will adorn our village.

Jas. Gesme has invested in a fine new "carryall" adopted to many uses, it has long benches on the side to accommodate eight passengers and two in the drivers seat, the side seats can be turned up which makes the rig convenient to hall caskets, etc. The rig is nicely built, has a 40-horse, 4 cylinder engine and all the latest equipments, it is a Studebaker and was purchased through the Mt. Horeb Auto Company's agency.

A. Hoff Co. broke ground Saturday for the erection of a new brick store building to be erected this summer. The big structure will be a two story brick 80x120 with basement under entire building. This will be some store.

100 Years Ago- April 20, 1926

Mt. Horeb Times

Work will soon be started to remodel the Diamond Cheese factory situated on Highway 81. It will be torn down with the exception of the living rooms and rebuilt of tile. During this work the basement will be so equipped that cheese making can be resumed. The factory has been operating for 37 years.

Death came suddenly to Mrs. A. H. Elver yesterday afternoon as she and her husband were completing preparations to leave for Minneapolis. She had long been afflicted with leakage of the heart and the excitement and exertion of packing for the trip is believed to have brought on the fatal attack.

100 Years Ago- April 23, 1926

C.F. Wittwer has installed a new Buffalo silent meat chopper in his meat market this week.

George Lund of the Mount Horeb Hardware Company reports the sale of 14 Maytag washing machines, the last one sold was purchased by Joe Solvie.

Carl Groth, Verona, was seriously injured last Sunday when an angry bull trampled over him.

Ole Olson is making extensive repairs on his residence, residing it and also building a new porch.

Mrs. W.J. Helmenstine, Blue Mounds, passed away at her home Friday evening, April 16, at the age of 46 years.

60 Years Ago- April 21, 1966

Roman Sutter proudly accepted a plaque presented to him by Fr. Lawrence Clark, pastor of St. Ignatius Catholic Church, in recognition of his 24 years as trustee-treasurer of the church.

The top price of any farm for some time is the John Fluckiger farm, Verona that was sold to Fay Hammersley, the 169-acre farm selling for \$90,000.

Jimmy Hanson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Lowell, RFD1, Mount Horeb, received a toy truck as his prize in the drawing at Gilbertson Hardware.

50 Years Ago- April 15, 1976

The new Country Crafts shop in the lower level of the Keller Trading Company and Antique Shop is now open for business. The proprietors are Irene Prunuske, Casey Grove, Anne DeWitt and Nancy Albert.

George Samardich has begun his duties as administrator of the 119-bed Ingleside Nursing Home.

Vicki Krohn is a patient at Madison General Hospital where she was taken by ambulance on Monday, April 5, after she injured her back in a fall down the stairway in her home.

Customers of the Mount Horeb Telephone Company will notice a siz-

able hike on their May 1 billing as a result of Wisconsin Public Service Commission action. For private lines, the standard monthly rate for residences increases from \$6.85 to \$9.65.

Dr. Merle M. Darrow, Mount Horeb dentist for the past 40 years, died unexpectedly at a Madison hospital on Tuesday, April 6, 1976, at the age of 67 years.

40 Years Ago- April 17, 1986

The non-teaching staff of the Mount Horeb School system, made up of 58 part and full-time employees, has voted to form a union under the guise of the Southwest Teacher's United of the Wisconsin Education Association.

Jan Mostrom, and eighth-grader, was awarded the "Presentation of the Year" Forensics award at the award ceremonies at the Middle School last week.

Mrs. Ida Durtschi, Mount Horeb died on Friday, April 11, 1986, at the Ingleside Nursing Home where she had been a resident since Feb. 1, 1984. She was 92.

30 Years Ago- April 18, 1996

Margaret B. Lee, age 93, passed away peacefully on April 10, 1996 at her son's residence.

The Village of Blue Mounds received good news in early April, having been awarded a State of Wisconsin Community Development Block Grant of \$707,000 for the construction of the sewer treatment plant so desperately needed.

20 Years Ago- April 20, 2006

Eric and Christine Swiggum of Mount Horeb proudly announce the birth of their daughter Madeline Marie, born on Monday, April 10, 2006, at Meriter Hospital, Madison. Pastor Jacqueline Sharer Robertson of the Mount Horeb United Methodist Church recently published a book "Women in the Wings: 20 Biblical Monologues."

Recreation Notes

SAVE THE DATE! It is almost time for the Recreation Departments Annual Shop Event at DICK'S Sporting Goods! DICK'S Sporting Goods will be hosting a 20% off shop event for all Mount Horeb Recreation athletes, families, and community supporters at the

West Madison store on 5/1-5/4/2026. The discount is for in-store purchases only. Some exclusions apply. If you can't find an item in the store, ask a sales associate if it can be ordered, and still receive 20% off. See our Facebook Page or website for the coupon link. This is

available for ALL Mount Horeb community members.

Pool passes for the Mount Horeb Family Aquatic Center are now available! Call or visit our website to purchase your family or individual pass. *Purchase family pass before May 14th and get \$10 off!*

Find your Zen this summer with Body Wise Yoga!

This 6-week yoga-based functional fitness program is designed for ages 55 and up. Each class blends gentle motion, balance practice, functional strength, and mindful breathing to help you feel stronger, more stable, and mobile! Chair support and modifications are always available. Classes are Mondays, 12:30 to 1:30 pm, May 4 - June 15 (no class 5/25), in the Mount

Horeb Rec Dept Multipurpose room. The class fee is \$60 for residents and \$70 for non-residents. Sign up by April 27!

Turn your favorite furry face into a one-of-a-kind art piece with our Paint Your Pet class! No experience? No problem! Our instructor makes it easy by hand-sketching your pet's portrait onto your canvas before you arrive and will provide step-by-step instruction in class to ensure a fun and beginner-friendly experience! For examples and more information, please see our website. This class takes place on Thursday, May 7 from 5:30 - 7:30 PM in the Recreation Department Multipurpose Room. Paint your pet is intend for ages 18 and up. The class fee is \$90 for residents and \$100 for non-residents.

HOW TO REGISTER:

There are multiple ways to register for summer programs and activities.

Online (go to <https://secure.rec1.com/WI/mount-horeb-wi/catalog>).

In-person at 105 N. Grove Street.

Place completed registration form (found on Rec Dept website) and payment in 24-hour drop box.

Email completed registration form (found on Rec Dept website) and payment to mhrec@mounthorebwi.info.

UPCOMING REGISTRATION DEADLINES:

4/27: Body Wise Yoga (ages 55+)

4/30: Paint Your Pet (ages 18+)

5/1: Machine Pitch Baseball (ages 8-10)

5/7: T-Ball and Coach Pitch (ages 4-7)

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COMMUNITY SUPPER

Village Vignettes

Sawyer: Red Oak Take Me Home

By **LAURENCE KRUCKMAN**
Village Vignettes

Winter came early this year with a surprising amount of cold and snow for early December. No complaints from me, as I was on top of Blue Mound, our closest state park, snowshoeing in bright sunshine and feeling incredibly happy, almost euphoric, to be out on such a beautiful day (not to mention doing so at my age). As usual, we park at the east Lookout Tower, clamp on our old twenty-dollar Menards snowshoes, and head west to enjoy the vast open space and woods surrounding the circular road.

But I'm getting ahead of myself as I try to find words to explain something that literally stopped me in my tracks (snowshoes that is). I've had a few times in my life where I've felt sudden shifts in mood, but nothing like this event that rooted me to the spot and, for a moment, paralyzed me with its intensity.

To set the scene, I need to back up. Why was Blue Mound selected on this particular day? Well, at 1716' of elevation, it looms over the rest of the Driftless landscape making it the highest point in southern Wisconsin. Not to be bogged down by science but air temperature cools by 2 to 3, maybe even 9, degrees per thousand feet of elevation and even subtle changes are predictors of weather (one reason weathermen send up balloons).

Blue Mound is what geologists call an outlier, a lone remnant of a once higher landscape that has survived, while the surrounding region has slowly eroded away over millions of years.

And I do mean millions. Dolomite makes up much of the mound but the top is capped by a very resistant Silurian deposit laid down in a sea 430 million years ago. It's the same resistant rock formation that Niagara Falls drops over, 700 miles to the east. This partially answers my question: we are up on the mound because it is higher, cooler and flat! And yes, it offers great vistas, our secret Blue Ridge Mountain, albeit on a much smaller scale.

And then there is the vegetation, a key to my rapid mood shift mentioned above. We were in all our glory tromping through a mixed deciduous forest featuring two primary ecological communities: Oak-Hickory and Maple-Basswood. On this day, a red oak was the culprit.

Making our way through a foot of snow, we came across a freshly cut oak. Why it and several others were cut is puzzling as they were large, almost 2' in diameter, but I'll leave that up to the wisdom of the state forester. The point I want to stress is that the tree was just cut, indicated by the fresh sawdust scattered on new snow at the base of the trunk. More important to me, and key to my story, is that the raw trunk and sawdust left behind a powerful and polarizing scent that startled me...a kind of earthy smell, somewhat pungent. My companions noticed it too.

The strong fragrance, I have learned, is due to a

combination of tannic and fatty acids. Red oaks are unique in that these acids serve as a natural defense against insects and fungi, and when you cut into the wood you break cell structures, releasing their protective compounds.

But scent was not the thing that came to my mind as I stepped closer. What hit me was not so much the fragrance of that oak, but the memories that immediately transported me back to March 26, 1948. I was about five when a massive F4 tornado struck my town. It was so powerful it's been labeled in the climate records as the Good Friday tornado, striking at five in the afternoon, with winds estimated between 207 and 260 mph. Dozens of homes were destroyed and hundreds more, including ours, severely damaged.

My young mother had the foresight to take us into the basement when she saw the sky suddenly go dark and heard the classic roar similar to a freight train. That red oak brought back every minute detail. It was a blustery day. The sky was completely blue. It was so windy we found it hard to hear others speak. I could see their lips moving, but there were no words. Then,

all of a sudden on this bright early spring day, that incredibly black sky, and that roar. I was reliving it, and my sunshining-snowshoeing-euphoria turned to fear.

Once in the basement, the roar became even more deafening and we could hear all kinds of crunching which turned out to be the shattering and lifting out of the earth with large red oaks in our front yard being tossed like toothpicks. Then, just as quickly, the dust fell, the storm was gone and everything was silent. Within an hour the sun was shining again, the blustery wind dissipated. All of a sudden, my dad appeared from his workplace across town and yelled to us to stay put until the utility people could cut the power. Soon we were off to safety at my grandparents' house across town.

When we kids stepped outside, there was visual shock but, also, we could smell the downed trees from the tornado damage, all oaks and huge. But, no doubt, my fragrance connection was from a week later when my grandfather showed up with a huge handsaw and a team of his friends, to saw those big oaks. Whatever the source, the downed oak on Blue Mound took me back to that very street, that very

house, to those trees...and all that fear.

Scientists have found the link between fragrance and childhood memories. I've since learned this kind of experience even has a name, the "Proust effect," named after Marcel Proust, who famously described how a tea-soaked cake triggered his own childhood memories. Unlike other senses smell bypasses the thalamus entirely and is neurologically connected to the amygdala, which produces emotions, and the hippocampus, which handles memory. A direct pipeline to the past. Science also says that the earlier one has these impressionable memories, the more likely the brain creates strong, clean associations between smells and the environment, a permanent bookmark for that feeling.

That feeling for me was fear, and anthropologists say this makes sense from an evolutionary point of view, because our ancestors needed to remember

instantly if a smell meant delicious fruit or deadly predator. A fast, emotionally charged memory would ensure that these organisms didn't have to think about whether a smell was dangerous.

As I resumed my pace through the deep snow, the sharp scent of the red oak eventually faded, leaving behind only the crisp, quiet air of the Mound. It is a strange, enduring gift of the human mind that a single fragrance can bridge seven decades in a heartbeat, pulling a child's fear into an aging man's euphoric afternoon.

Laurence Kruckman, a retired anthropologist who did research on birth and the postpartum in South America and the Pacific, returned to his roots in Mount Horeb to live in the house his father built in the early 1950s. Upon arriving back, he reconnected to many old friends, and recalled others long gone - the ink started flowing.

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Opinion

The Built Environment and What It Means for Our New Elementary School

By JEREMY GOLDSMITH
Special to the Mail

A few years ago I took a course called The Built Environment. I had spent a good portion of my life in and around the trades, so I figured I had a decent handle on how buildings work. I was wrong, or at least incomplete. The built environment is not just about construction. It is about how the spaces humans create affect the people living and working inside them, and around them. A school, a highway, a park, a neighborhood strip, how it is laid out, how we interact with it, how sustainable it is, and how the future might affect it. All of it shapes us in ways most people never stop to consider. Two weeks into that course I could not stop thinking about it, and honestly I still have not.

With Mount Horeb’s new elementary school recently approved, it seemed like a good time to talk about what thoughtful school design can actually look like, not just a new building with updated features, but a place where the environment itself does the teaching.

The building as teacher

Most new schools are built to house education. What I am talking about is different. A school designed around the built environment becomes a place where the building itself is part of the lesson, every single day. The mechanical systems, the materials, the water, the energy, the plants growing in the hallway. All of it visible, accessible, and connected to what kids are learning inside the classroom. Not as a field trip or a special unit, but as the backdrop of ordinary school life. That shift

in thinking changes what a school is for.

How kids actually move through a building

Children are not wired to sit still. Most adults are not either, but we have had decades of practice pretending to. Schools that ignore this tend to spend a lot of energy managing behavior that better design might have prevented in the first place. A staircase built to a child’s scale does more than fit their stride. It makes climbing stairs feel like an invitation rather than a chore, and that extra movement throughout the day adds up. Wobble stools, adjustable chairs, and varied textures throughout the classroom give kids an outlet for energy while naturally building dexterity, coordination, and sensory awareness. None of this is radical, and much of it has already been put to use in newer school builds. It is simply designing with the actual occupants in mind.

Nature inside the walls

Walk into most schools and you will find linoleum, fluorescent light, and painted cinder block. It is functional. It is also completely disconnected from the living world outside. A school designed around the built environment looks different. Trees and plants in the hallways, tended by students and staff. Flowers near windows. Air that is actually being cleaned by living things rather than filtered by a machine alone. Children who help care for growing things develop a relationship with the natural world that no worksheet can replicate. It becomes part of how they understand themselves and where they live.

This is not decoration.

Plants and trees indoors have documented effects on air quality, stress levels, and general wellbeing. But the deeper value is harder to quantify. A kid who has watered the same plant every morning for a year understands something about care and patience and living systems that will stay with them.

Air, light, and the indoor environment

Indoor air quality does not get talked about much, but it probably should. High CO2 levels and poor ventilation are connected to drowsiness, more sick days, and reduced ability to concentrate. Modern heat recovery ventilation systems, HRV units, circulate continuous fresh filtered air without the energy waste of cracking windows in January. Low-VOC materials for flooring, paint, and furniture reduce the chemical load that kids are quietly breathing throughout the day.

Natural light not only helps our eyes, it has also been shown to lift our spirits. Studies consistently rank natural lighting among the most important factors in classroom interior design. Classrooms that rely entirely on overhead fluorescents feel different from ones with good window placement and skylights, and students tend to perform differently in them also. Full-spectrum LED lighting can fill the gaps when daylight is not enough. Flooding a school with as much natural light as possible lowers the energy bill and has measurable effects on grades, energy levels, and mood. Using less and getting more is the idea, and light is one of the clearest examples of how that

works in practice.

The garden as curriculum

A school garden is one of those ideas that sounds a little idealistic until you think through what it actually does. But the version worth building is not a plot of soil that one class visits for a semester and then forgets about. It is something fully woven into the school day, something kids engage with regularly, across grades, across seasons, across years.

They grow food. They learn where nutrition comes from and what it takes to produce it. With some planning that food ends up in the cafeteria instead of a processing facility somewhere. What children eat during the school day has a direct effect on their energy, focus, and long-term health habits. Composting handles the waste and keeps it on site. The whole loop closes right there on school grounds, and students are part of every step of it.

Faculty benefit too. Teaching elementary school is demanding work. A living green space outside gives staff somewhere to decompress that is not a break room, a place to step outside and be around something growing. The surrounding community can be part of it as well. Shared knowledge, shared effort, shared produce. A garden tended by a neighborhood becomes something the neighborhood genuinely cares about.

Water

Clean water is easy to take for granted until it is not. A school that takes the built environment seriously treats water as something worth understanding, not

just something that comes out of a tap. Rain barrels that collect and store runoff. Simple filtration systems that students can observe and learn from. The connection between land, weather, and the water we drink made visible rather than hidden underground.

In the Driftless Area, where the landscape is shaped by springs and streams, water quality is not an abstract concern. Agricultural runoff carries excess nutrients into local waterways, contributing to algae growth and ecosystem disruption that affects drinking water, aquatic life, and the health of the watershed over time. Teaching kids where their water comes from, what threatens it, and how land use decisions upstream show up in a stream downstream is as practical an education as anything that happens inside a classroom. A rain barrel or a simple filtration demonstration on school grounds makes that connection tangible.

Energy that is visible

Rooftop solar or a small wind installation does something a utility bill never could. It makes energy something students can see and ask questions about. An energy monitoring display inside the building, showing what is being generated and used in real time, turns that infrastructure into something students interact with daily. The savings keep money in the district, and the education it provides costs nothing extra.

Outside

Not a maintained lawn with a few benches, but trees to climb, trails to walk, and native plants teeming

with the kind of small life most kids rarely get close to anymore. Unstructured natural space where the learning is not directed but absorbed. The research on what this does for children is consistent and has been for years. Time in natural environments reduces stress, improves attention, and supports overall health in ways that are difficult to replicate indoors.

Room to change

Building with the future in mind also means thinking about materials. Lower embodied carbon, recycled content, and bio-based options are more accessible than ever. Some projects now keep a digital registry of every material used so components can be recovered and reused rather than heading to a landfill when the building eventually comes down. The less we lock in permanently, the more flexibility we leave for the people who come after us.

Worth getting right

Of course, this list is not conclusive, nor does it consider the massive amount of variables for this particular project. Much of this costs no more than conventional construction. Some of it costs less over time. The point is not to make the school a showcase for sustainability ideas. It is to build something that works well for kids, holds up for the community, and does not create problems down the road that a little more thought at the design stage could have avoided.

Protests spread courage, foster community and beyond

Dear Editor,

Are protests effective? March 28th saw the largest single day protest in the US and the world. We gathered to raise our voices in protest to the ongoing lawlessness and corruption of the current administration. There is an urgent need to reform,

strengthen and rebuild a government that works for ALL of us. Rallies play an important role in this effort:

Change the narrative. A massive show of popular opposition everywhere in the country can disrupt Trump’s effort to project strength. It shows that resistance is big, powerful, growing, and ev-

erywhere.

Bring in new people. Mobilizations of this scale and scope reach people who aren’t yet engaged, and help to draw them into a cycle of action and relationships on the ground.

Foster community. When you show up, you realize that you’re actually part of

something enormous. And that helps to build the shared sense of identity we’ll need for the path ahead.

Show support. Many people have endured significant hardships due to the policies of this administration – government workers, beneficiaries of programs that have been cut, immi-

grants, etc. Your presence is a show of support.

Spread courage. We all become more courageous. Elites become emboldened by the protests to stop proping up the regime (corporations, law firms, universities, politicians, etc.). And we brace ourselves to be ready to take stronger nonviolent

action (such as a general strike) when it becomes necessary.

Thank you to all of you who participated in these joyful and peaceful protests!

Myra Enloe
Dodgeville

WASTE

continued from page 1

club members like Kathy Plath were motivated me to find out how they could get a Scrap Stop in Mt. Horeb. While the drop-off stations were designed and built

right here in Mount Horeb, the closest location is currently Verona.

“With the generosity of the community, I secured funding from the Lion’s and Rotary Club to fund the first six months of the program,” said Plath. “It is

free for users, but there are fees associated with pick-up and delivery to Purple Cow where it will be composted and diverted from the landfill. Spring Garden Family Restaurant has agreed to provide space for the drop-off location. The Mt. Horeb

scrap stop will be available starting April 15.”

“It is easy to do,” she continued. “I keep a coffee can under my sink and when that is full I empty it into a larger 5 gallon container that I keep in the garage. When that is full, I’ve been taking

it to the scrap stop in Verona. This is especially helpful for apartment dwellers and those who don’t have the room for a compost bin in the yard, or those who don’t care to compost at home. You will be amazed by how much your garbage will be

reduced.”

Information will be posted around town about how to sign up or go to the county’s website: landfill.danecounty.gov/compost. Residents will need to sign up to receive the lock code for the container.

Local Government

Blue Mounds Village Board looks at new grease disposal policy, salt shed, food trucks and more

By Abigail Karbusicky
Mount Horeb Mail

The Blue Mounds village board approved the controversial grease, fat and oils ordinance after delaying the vote last month due to resident questions and board members wanting more information.

Village President Paul Baum clarified at the April 8 meeting the ordinance regulating grease, fat and oils and allowing for inspection would regulate commercial businesses, not individual

property owners.

Baum said improper dumping of grease can harm the village’s wastewater treatment plant, and inspections would be set by building and plumbing codes, and not be at the whim of public works staff. Inspections will happen annually, and if anyone is found to be out of compliance, there is a 90 day grace period to reach compliance.

Village Trustee Steve Burbank said “I think it’s a bad idea to not have this,”

and motioned for approval. The board approved the ordinance unanimously.

Resident Audra Anderson objected again, arguing the ordinance is too vague. She said at previous meetings she didn’t feel the village was transparent about the process of deciding the ordinance.

The village board also approved the design of a new salt shed as the current one is falling apart.

Nick Bubolz from Town and Country Engineering

said the village is currently storing salt at adjacent municipalities, and the new salt shed would be adjacent to the current wastewater treatment plant.

Bubolz said it would cost about \$40,000-\$43,000 for getting the plans together, getting a design, going out for bid and deciding on a bid.

The village would then go with the lowest bidder and start construction.

Representatives from the new Dream Makers Market

also addressed the board with some questions about this summer.

Krisann Hopwood asked about using Mounds Park and the parking area for food trucks at the market. And Amber Gorham asked about using a small road near the park for parking by the municipal building and crafting a rental agreement with the village.

On parking, Baum said that was a question for public works.

Village Clerk Mary Jo Michek said the village would charge \$100 for use of the shelter and they would get \$50 back if nothing was damaged, as with all other renters. Representatives from the market said that would work.

The Dream Makers Market will be on the fourth Sunday of the month from June to September from 4 to 7 p.m. at Mounds Park.

Mount Horeb Lions Club

Local Lions have been busy helping the community



From left to right: Mount Horeb Lion Jill Kietzke working at a diabetes awareness display table at Makers Market; Lion Bob Faliveno collecting plastic film for their recycling project (so far they have placed nine benches around town) and Lions Jud Carver and Becky Faliveno conducting a children’s vision screening session at our four pre-schools.

ROTARIANS

continued from page 1

ing Band and Varsity Band, as well as a member of the Band Board. She’s a varsity swimmer and member of the track team. She’s class secretary, a member of the student council and a co-founder of the Socratic Seminar and Debate Club.

Christian qualified for state in the Science Olympiad and serves as a chem-

istry and biology faculty assistant. She participated in the Rotary World Affairs Seminar and the Rotary Ethics Symposium. Outside of school, she works at Brix Cider, Family Dental Care, and volunteers at the Driftless Historium and as a Red Cross blood donor.

She is the daughter of Chris O’Shasky Christian and Russell Christian and the sister of Django Christian.

Anna Tranel is also a musician and athlete and involved in many activities at school and in the community. She serves on the choir and band boards, and sings with Chamber Singers, Vocal Jazz, and Madrigal Choir. She plays percussion in the Thursday and Friday Jazz ensembles, and in the Fiddle Band, where she also plays cello. She’s been involved in the musical all four years, and served as

Drama Club Student Director for two years.

Tranel played soccer for four years and ran cross country for two. She’s the class president, serves on student council, and is a board member of POWER, and an officer with DECA. She helped found the Green Team, and is a member of Club Interact, Ecology Club, Energy Team, Social Justice Club, Book Club and the National Honor Society.

Outside of school, Tranel is working on her Gold Award for Girl Scouts on a “reinventing recycling” project and volunteers at the Evangelical Lutheran Church. She sings in the church choir, and the Mount Horeb Chorale and plays in the

Barneveld Community Band. She volunteers at Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the Girls Scout Camporee, Roadside Cleanup, the

library, and Vacation Bible School. She also organized Organized Parents Night Out.

She is the daughter of Chris and Kari Tranel and the sister of Claire and Ethan. She plans to attend UW-Madison and double major in Biology and Environmental Science with the goal of helping reduce human impact on the environment.

OVERDOSES

continued from page 1

continues to claim lives and devastate families and communities across the state.

Last week, DHS announced its plan for its annual share of \$794 million

in opioid settlement funds that total \$14.5 million in 2025 and approximately \$16.5 million this year. These funds come from settlements reached by the Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) with major pharmaceutical distributors, manufacturers, and pharma-

cies.

Michelle Haese, DHS Director of Substance Use Initiatives, will be available to answer your questions about how these dollars will be used to work to prevent misuse of opioids and opioid overdose deaths.

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DISAGREE

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these insights in our own community.

The next installment, scheduled for April 28, features UW-Professor Michael Wagner, who will share research on fake news, fact-checking, selective exposure to like-minded media outlets and describes the implications for democracy. Wagner is William T. Evjue Distinguished Chair of the Wisconsin Idea and Professor of Journalism and Mass Communication at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where he directs the Center for Communication and Civic Renewal.

His work explores how individual interactions in the information ecology affect what people believe, what they want and what they do.

The series is the brainchild of Melissa Roelli, adult programming director at the Mount Horeb Public Library.

“As the librarian who plans [and] leads adult events and discussions for our library, I often hear a need to help people on different sides of an issue better understand each other — or at least to be civil to each other,” Roelli said. “It seems no matter the topic, people are on very opposite sides and instantly seem to choose hatred or distrust of ‘the other side.’”

“That said, though I hear the divisiveness often, I also hear a desire from people to figure out how to help bring people back towards each other,” she continued. “The more I thought about it, I realized the library is a perfect place to offer assistance. We constantly strive to connect people with resources, so

why not provide resources for this? After a lot of research and conversations with different organizations and experts, the Disagree Better series was born, and I’m incredibly excited about it.”

“In my role at the library, I often lead question and answer sessions and discussions as part of programs,” said Roelli. “I absolutely love that libraries give people a safe place to ask questions, challenge themselves and connect with other people. In fact, my favorite part of programs is watching people interact with each other. That said, these days I tend to feel a little nervous during discussion sessions. I worry about someone making a little comment that is disrespectful to people with other viewpoints. I’m afraid people will not feel comfortable asking something that could be seen as controversial when they are just trying to understand. I really hate that I feel this way. I think a lot of people are craving civil conversations about topics that matter, but don’t know where to begin. I hope the Disagree Better programs give people a starting place for this important work.”

She said the kick-off event was a success.

“Amber Wychowsky did a wonderful job highlighting the importance of community conversations and striving to reduce the constant friction,” Roelli said. “Though I think many of us are aware of how polarized things are, I didn’t realize how deeply this affects people on a personal level. The program pointed out many people have dissolved friendships over politics, how volunteering has dramatically declined and

how membership in service organizations is dropping. The increase in people who are now choosing to isolate themselves rather than trying to build friendships was the most shocking to me, though I can understand why this is happening. It is definitely time to work towards a solution.”

Village trustee Tim White is a big fan of the initiative. In fact, he said “passionate disagreement” is essential in any democracy. He also said there is more common ground than people realize.

“[W]hen we honestly examine the issues, it becomes clear that there is far more that unites Americans than divides us,” he said. “However, what we are facing today is not normal political disagreement. It is a toxic climate fueled by demagogues who have deliberately exploited fear and division to consolidate wealth and power. That influence has driven a deep ideological wedge between families, neighbors, and entire communities - damaging the very fabric of our democracy.”

“I know it doesn’t have to be this way,” said White. “I grew up in a politically mixed household. My mother was a Dwight D. Eisenhower Republican, my father a Franklin D. Roosevelt Democrat. Both respected leaders like Gaylord Nelson and William Proxmire and found traits in them that both respected.”

“I recall no shouting matches nor contempt,” he continued. “Just thoughtful, respectful discussion grounded in shared values. That kind of civic disagreement does not weaken us but serves to make us stronger.”

Dr. Steve Salerno, superintendent, said Disagree Better is designed for individuals to “validate and reacquaint ourselves with the virtues we were taught at a much younger age.”

“Civility can sometimes be seen as a lost gift,” said Salerno. “As Saint Francis of Assisi implored, ‘listen

to understand, not be understood.’”

The Mount Horeb Area School District is doing its own work to foster collaboration and compassion. The district is tentatively hosting a “Deliberation Dinner” on July 21. While details are still being developed, the focus will be on mental health and wellness.

Such efforts dovetail with what the library is doing, so Salerno was immediately supportive when Roelli contacted him.

“As a former Mount Horeb Public Library board member, I have a great affinity for the work of libraries and the people who carried out this high mission,” Salerno continued. “When Melissa approached me with the idea, I appreciated another opportunity to work together.”

He went on to praise Wychowsky’s event and the insights it provided.

“I can think of no better way to have kicked off this series than to learn about the ‘brain science’ behind fraternization, grouping [and] subgrouping, and tribalism,” Salerno said. “Awareness encourages me to consciously work to rewire my thinking with the goal of achieving consensus and compromise”

“I happen to believe that people are inherently good,” added Salerno. “I try to start from a basis that individuals’ who possess contrary opinions want the same as I do: betterment of whatever topic is at hand. How do I know when I’m doing a good job of listening and accepting contrary opinions? Those individuals come back to engage with me.”

Mount Horeb village president Ryan Czyzewski said he, too, jumped at the chance to get involved with Disagree Better.

“When Melissa first introduced it to me, I was definitely intrigued,” he said. “I’ve seen how polarized disagreements negatively affect municipal operations not just in our community, but [in] many other Dane County communities. I was interested in being part of

creating an understanding and framework for people to engage in productive communication.”

Czyzewski said the series isn’t merely intended to break down communication barriers; it’s also designed to “help us understand that we ... agree a lot more than we disagree.”

“We may still vehemently disagree with their ideas or goals, but should still retain value and appreciation of the person,” he said.

Czyzewski has served in village government for more than a decade now, and he said he knows passionate disagreements are inevitable, but that “[e]verything in life doesn’t need to be a battle and compromise is not a bad word.”

“Municipal governance is usually tedious, but as I’ve experienced, there are several policies or projects that generate discussion, and disagreement, each year,” Czyzewski said. “Everyone views ‘what is best for our community and myself’ differently because we all have different backgrounds, experiences, values. When that is forgotten, disagreements can turn into a binary categorization of those we disagree with, whereas the reality is somewhere in between.”

“In Mount Horeb Village government, we have a good track record of being able to respectfully disagree on item A, but agree on items B, C, D, and E,” he continued. “Polarized disagreements on item A lead to less respectful discussions or compromise on B, C, D or E.”

Wichowsky’s presentation hit on several of those themes, and Czyzewski urged people who weren’t able to attend to watch it now on TrollwayTV.

“I think she did a great job broadening the focus to the audience,” he said. “It was great to see many engaged members of our community.”

Czyzewski said this kind of programming illustrates why the Mount Horeb Public Library is such a valuable asset to the community.

Programming like this is what makes our local library

such an asset to the community, and the partnership with our organizations on it show the importance and benefit of productive collaboration, especially when we disagree on things.

People who listen to those they disagree with often get accused of giving a platform to bad people and ideas. But hearing people isn’t the same as agreeing with, or condoning the things they believe. In fact, it could be the first step toward bridging seemingly vast ideological divides.

“I have many ideas, but it comes down to individuals actually thinking about this question,” said Roelli. “I mean honestly thinking about it, and being willing to acknowledge that there is value to learning from people we disagree with. Until we are able to entertain the idea of talking with - and listening to - someone with differing viewpoints, there won’t be real growth and change.”

“We can reclaim civil disagreement,” said White. “But it requires rejecting the politics of division and consciously choosing to recognize our shared humanity over the stream of manufactured outrage. I commend the library not just for this program, but for standing as a place where ideas can be exchanged with respect, curiosity, and integrity. Something our country desperately needs more of right now.

Roelli said a key component of the Disagree Better series is training community members to moderate difficult conversations, giving them skills they can carry forward to support civic discussions, community groups and future community conversations.

“In fact, we need moderators for our Come to the Table deliberation dinners we will have this summer and fall,” she said. “Our library is working with The Wisconsin Institute for Public Policy and Service (WIPPS) with support from UW-Extension’s Health & Well Being Institute to offer training in public deliberation. This free event will be Saturday, May 2 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at the Mt. Horeb Public Library.”

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Registration is required. Deliberative Dialogue is a decision-making process composed of analyzing three or more approaches to a particular issue, learning how and why people value different actions, and seeking common ground to address the issue. Genuine public deliberation is a thoughtful public process by which residents learn from one another and strive to come to judgment together about real policy matters. Learn more at mhpl.org/disagree-better or call Melissa Roelli at 608-437-5021.

Student Spotlight:



Herschberger honored

Finley Herschberger, a first-grade student in Mrs. Shields’ class, is the latest Student Spotlight recipient, recognized for consistently demonstrating excellence in learning and growth, well-being, and community engagement.

Finley’s teacher, Mrs. Shields, highlights her dedication, stating, “Finley is constantly following the expectations without having to be told ANYTHING! She knows the group plan well and serves as a wonderful role-model for other students.” Mrs. Shields also noted her supportive nature: “Finley is always very helpful and caring towards students that are struggling with an activity or problem and will often take time out of her day to help a friend!”

Mr. Steck, Physical Education Teacher, echoed these sentiments, stating, “Finley is always setting the example for her classmates to follow. She is constantly doing the right thing, following the group plan, and encouraging others to do so as well. I know that I can always count on Finley to help out another student or to be the go to for a demonstration. She is the definition of what it means to be a Viking.”

Pictured above, Finley’s extended family, Board member Tom Schlinggen, Mrs. Shields, proud siblings Lane and Johnny, Dr. Steve Salerno, Mrs. Herschberger, star Finley, Mr. Steck, Principal Johnson, Mr. Nichols, and Mr. Herschberger.



Lonnquist to perform at the Old Schoolhouse

Ken Lonnquist will perform a concert at the historic District #1 Schoolhouse in Mount Horeb on Saturday, April 18, at 7 pm. The Schoolhouse is located at 110 N. Second Street in Mount Horeb. He will be joined by his friend Henry Boehm. Lonnquist began performing professionally in his college days. He won a national audition and became “Minstrel for the Environment,” traveling widely and addressing environmental concerns in concerts. Lonnquist writes about nature with passion and purpose, performing in nature centers, folk clubs, colleges and conferences about issues related to water, woods, animals, energy, and more. His environmental education songs are sung worldwide. Lonnquist also has a keen eye on what’s happening in America, and writes topical songs for the times we live in. Expect to be inspired, enlightened and entertained. This event is sponsored by the local Southwest Wisconsin Area Progressive organization, (SWWAP).

Major changes on the horizon in Blue Mounds government

In a Monday, April 13 message to village residents, Blue Mounds Village President Paul Baum congratulated Bob Messinger and Curt Winter, both of whom won seats on the village board in the April 7 Election.

“With the two new Trustees and President elected 12 months ago, the entire village board has now

turned over,” wrote Baum. “Thank you to the outgoing Trustees Rick Kelly and Jim Frame who both served multiple terms. And special thanks to our Clerk-Treasurer, Mary Jo Michek, who is retiring on April 29. Feel free to stop by the Village Office or call to wish her well. She worked hard for our village and was greatly appreciated

by very many residents.”

Baum said the village is still in the process of finding a new Clerk-Treasurer.

He also said work is progressing on the new village website.

Baum went on to announce a restructuring of village government.

“I am re-introducing some structure into the village government,”

wrote Baum. “The Board has two committees, one to oversee public works, and one to oversee our other employees (police, clerk, office staff). These have been somewhat dormant but will become active again.”

“Finally, I want to thank Shanna Amble and Jason Dorgan, who ran in the recent election but didn’t

win,” Baum continued. “I respect that you were willing to be part of the solution instead of the problem. For being willing to deal with the complaints, the backseat drivers, and potentially harassing behavior by those unwilling to take on the responsibility by running for office.”

Dane County is seeking Climate Champions

The Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change (OECC) encourages businesses, nonprofits and local governments to apply to be a 2026 Dane County Climate Champion. OECC developed the Climate Champions program to recognize the leadership of local entities that are taking significant action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. The Climate Champion application will be open until July 1st, 2026. To learn more, people and organizations are encouraged to visit daneclimateaction.org.

To date OECC has recognized more than 200 entities across Dane County for their leadership on climate action.

“Leading on climate action is the Dane County way so it’s no surprise that dozens of businesses, nonprofits and local governments take pride in calling themselves Dane County Climate Champions,” said Dane County Executive Melissa Agard. “I look forward to seeing what kind of innovative sustainability efforts will be recognized this year.”

The Dane County Climate Champions program recognizes achievements across twelve categories this year. OECC added

two new categories for 2026 in response to requests from past participants.

Those new categories are:

- Renewable Energy – for entities with facilities powered and/or heated by renewable energy sources*
- Food Waste – for entities that prevent, reduce, or mitigate food waste*

In addition, OECC continues to offer the ten categories from prior years:

- Building Energy Use - for entities with very energy-efficient buildings*
- Building Design - recognizing facilities still being planned or built that are projected to be very energy efficient*
- Fleet Operations - for entities with a fleet powered by clean fuels*
- Employee Commuting - for entities that encourage their workforce to commute via bike, foot, transit, or telecommuting*
- Water Saving Practices - for entities that have implemented practices to reduce water consumption*
- Waste Diversion Practices - for entities that have strong waste diversion practices*

- Sustainable Land Use Practices - for entities that have strong land use practices*
- Catalysts - for entities that help others take climate actions*
- GHG Emissions - for entities that have measured and reduced their emissions footprint*
- Other - for entities that have taken actions that don’t fit into other categories*

Applying to be a Dane County Climate Champion is relatively simple with a short online form. OECC encourages entities to fill out the simple application to apply for recognition. Community members can also use the OECC forms to nominate a business or nonprofit for recognition.

“Achieving the ambitious goals set in the Dane County Climate Action Plan requires participation from everyone—residents, businesses, faith organizations, nonprofits, schools and local governments. That’s why we are so excited to recognize another cohort of Climate Champions in 2026,” said Kathy Kuntz, Director of Dane County’s Office of Energy and Climate Change. Dane County Climate Action Plan set a path to cut countywide emissions in half by 2030 and to

achieve carbon neutrality by 2050.

Last year, OECC presented 23 Climate Champions awards. Awardees ranged from local businesses to nonprofits and public schools.

“I’m proud to showcase the organizations that are leading on climate action. The variety of actions and dedication of local entities to reducing their emissions is inspiring to everyone in Dane County” said Agard.

To learn more and apply to be a 2026 Climate Champions, visit the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change website and the related Climate Champions map.

Established in 2017 the Dane County Office of Energy and Climate Change leads the county’s efforts to address climate change. As a division within the County Executive’s Office, the Dane County Office of Energy & Climate Change works with local governments, businesses, community groups and other stakeholders to identify innovative ways to reduce countywide greenhouse gas emissions, consistent with the County’s 2020 Climate Action Plan.

Green Team works to create pollinator habitat with ‘A Yard in Every Yard’ initiative



The Yard in Every Yard project is run by Mount Horeb Green Team funded by the Mound Vue Garden Club. Photos contributed.

By Katie Hartman-Grohn

There is a mystery afoot in Mount Horeb. People are asking about the squares of black plastic in local parks around town. Whispers of a butterfly project are on the wind, and cute paper bags with yellow stickers popped up at the Historium, Open House Imports, Isaac’s, and Jangle. Have you seen them? Have you heard? What is it?

It’s the Yard in Every Yard project from the Mount Horeb Green Team, funded by the Mound Vue Garden Club! Our goal is to get residents like you to plant one square yard of pollinator-friendly native plants in your yard. Why? Fireflies on a summer night are awesome. Gorgeous songbirds need food, and bumblebees are gentle and derp garden

friends. Remember colorful butterflies, hummingbirds, grasshoppers, toads, and dragonflies? Let’s bring those back to our neighborhoods. One of every three bites of food you eat need pollinators to grow. Strawberries? Pumpkins? Apples? Cherries? Tomatoes? Yes please! All of those need pollinators, and our pollinators are disappearing really fast.

How can you participate? First, get a free kit! They are available at the places mentioned above and will also be at the Mound Vue plant sale on May 9. There are only 300 kits available this

year, so don’t wait. The process is simple. Stake down the black plastic. Leave all summer to kill the grass. In the fall, pull up the plastic and put down seeds. Weed a little in spring. That’s it. You could also use a winter-proof pot for a balcony or patio. If you spray your lawn, make sure to cover your “yard” with a plastic bag first. This will require some patience on your part. There are some annuals in the kit for color the first year. The perennial prairie plants, however, take a couple of years to bloom. Why? Because they create

super-deep and hardy root systems that can survive the worst of Wisconsin. A bit of salty snow? They don’t care. Drought? They shrug it off. -50 degree winter? They laugh. That strength takes time to build, so it can take up to three years to get the full native flower experience. If you don’t want to wait, you can also buy fully grown plants at the garden center. There is a list on the website you could take to a nursery this summer. Or do both! No one can stop you. Visit yardineveryyard.com for more info. Here you can see the list of seeds and add your address to the

village map. If you register your email, you will get reminders when it’s time to plant seed and spring “pull this not that” weeding instructions. That’s all, no spam. Also check out the pilot plots planted last year in Grundahl, Waltz, Viking, Liberty, Station, and Sunrise parks. Mount Horeb is already humming with gorgeous pollinator plantings in public spaces. Let’s also fill our yards with butterflies, birds, moths, and fireflies. Put a “yard” in your yard this summer!

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Spring burns help rejuvenate Wisconsin landscape

Across the Driftless region and beyond, smoke has filled the air as controlled burns have readied the soil for a season of growth. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, frequent fires historically “played an important role in plains, grasslands and prairies by removing accumulated litter, stimulating native grass production, and impeding establishment and spread of cacti and woody plants.” But in recent centuries over much of the Great Plains and beyond, native grasslands were replaced by monoculture, degraded by overgrazing, or lost to the establishment and spread of woody plants. Native prairies now only occur “in a small portion of their former range and are so fragmented that historical fire regimes are seriously disrupted.” Pictured above, workers at Crossroads Community Farm on Klevenville-Riley Road carefully managing the burn of a restored prairie on Friday. Photos by Matt Geiger.

Autism Acceptance Month Highlights Inclusion, Education Across Wisconsin

By Alec Finger
April marks Autism Acceptance Month, a time dedicated not only to raising awareness but to fostering true inclusion for individuals on the autism spectrum. Across Wisconsin, organizations, families and advocates are using the month to promote understanding and encourage communities to take meaningful steps toward acceptance.

For the Director of Community Education and Training with the Autism Society of Wisconsin, Megan Hufton, the distinction between awareness and acceptance is critical.

“Awareness is recognizing someone is at the table,” Hufton said. “Acceptance is inviting them in and asking what they need to feel included.”

With Tony Evers proclaiming April as Autism Acceptance Month, communities statewide are increasing efforts to engage with the topic.

The designation often leads to a surge in trainings, outreach and conversations, though advocates stress the work should extend year-round. Hufton brings both professional expertise and personal experience to her role. A former teacher, she is also the mother of two autistic sons. Her journey into advocacy began after noticing developmental delays in her oldest child, eventu-

ally leading her to leave the classroom and focus on supporting her children and others navigating similar paths.

Her work is also deeply rooted in her connection to the local community. A native of the Black Earth area, she grew up in the Wisconsin Heights region, where she is raising her family. After moving back to the area in search of support, she said the Wisconsin Heights School District has played a vital role in her children’s growth, embracing them and helping provide the resources they need to succeed. With family members working throughout the district and a strong community network behind her, Hufton said the experience has shown firsthand what true acceptance and inclusion can look like at the local level. That dual perspective helps her work as she trains law enforcement, healthcare providers, educators and community organizations on how to better serve individuals with autism.

“When I’m training, I can speak from real experiences,” she said. “I’ve been in those situations, and I understand where the barriers are.”

Earlier this year, the Autism Society of South Central Wisconsin became the statewide Autism Society of Wisconsin, expanding services to families across

the state. The organization now provides a range of trainings tailored to different settings, from schools and hospitals to libraries and first responder agencies. Each training begins with a foundation of understanding autism before shifting to practical applications, such as how to recognize signs of autism, adjust communication approaches and create more sensory-friendly environments, followed by question-and-answer sessions to tailor efforts to each organization’s specific needs.

In addition to community education, Hufton works closely with families, particularly those navigating a new diagnosis. Through a monthly question-and-answer program, she helps parents sort through options and manage the often-overwhelming early stages.

“A lot of families leave a diagnosis appointment still feeling confused,” Hufton said. “We try to help them take a step back and focus on one or two priorities instead of everything at once.”

She emphasizes there is no single path for support and encourages families to find what works best for their child and household.

“This is a marathon, not a sprint,” she said.

While access to diagnosis and early intervention has improved in recent years, Hufton said significant challenges remain. Among them are a shortage of respite care workers, limited services for adults transitioning out of school systems and inconsistent training for law enforcement and healthcare providers.

She advocates for statewide, mandated autism training for law enforcement, noting that interactions between officers and individuals with autism are inevitable.

“It’s not a matter of if — it’s when,” she said.

Despite those gaps, Hufton said she has seen encouraging progress, particularly in the willingness of communities to learn and adapt.

For her, acceptance is best

demonstrated through action — small but meaningful efforts that make spaces more inclusive. Whether it’s adjusting a routine, offering additional support or simply taking the time to understand, those actions can have a lasting impact.

“Those little steps make a big difference,” she said.

As Autism Acceptance Month continues, advocates hope the increased attention leads to lasting change, creating communities where individuals with autism are not only recognized, but fully included. Community members looking to make a difference during Autism Acceptance Month can get involved in a variety of

ways through the Autism Society of Wisconsin.

Volunteer opportunities range from helping at community events, such as walks and sensory-friendly activities, to assisting with local support groups and outreach efforts. Individuals can also support the mission by advocating for inclusive practices in their workplaces, schools and neighborhoods, or by participating in trainings to better understand autism. Hufton noted that even small contributions—whether it’s volunteering time, sharing resources or simply creating a more welcoming environment—can have a meaningful impact.

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Baseball Vikings start strong

Mount Horeb sweeps Eagles, improves to 4-1

by DENNIS SEMRAU
Sports Reporter

It was a classic duel between a pair of aces when Mount Horeb senior right-hander Hayden Anderson faced Sauk Prairie senior right-hander Marty Hanna to open the Badger Small Conference season on April 7.

The visiting Vikings got the best of the host Eagles, as Anderson tossed a strong six innings in Mount Horeb's 8-2 victory at Chuck Hall Memorial Field.

Anderson's second plate appearance against Hanna, with the teams tied at 1-1 in the bottom of the fourth inning, won't soon be forgotten, either.

Hanna needed 10 pitches to finally retire Anderson on a swinging strike three, which drew a chuckle from the three-sport athlete, who will be playing football next year at NCAA Division I St. Thomas (Minn.).

"He got me on a fastball. It was a 3-2 count, so he was just pumping fastballs," Anderson said with a grin. "Marty's a really, good pitcher. He got me, though. We've played (summer ball)



Ethan Morrisard slides home during Mount Horeb's win over Sauk Prairie on April 7. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

together, so we're really good friends. I'm going to go to his grad party. He's a great kid and pitcher and a phenomenal athlete.

"Not only was it pitcher vs. pitcher, but I was also going against one of my good friends. Just being able to go against him is awesome, so I had a fun time."

While Anderson struck out during his first two

bats against Hanna, he reached base on a fielder's choice and eventually scored during a four-run sixth inning that extended Mount Horeb's lead to 6-2 and helped put the game out of reach.

Mount Horeb then made it a series sweep when Vikings' senior right-hander Brecken Dudley scattered five hits and threw a com-

plete game shutout two days later to spark a 6-0 victory at Mount Horeb on April 9.

The Vikings capped a perfect week with an 8-0 non-conference victory over Monroe on April 10 and are now 4-1 overall and 2-0 in the conference.

Mount Horeb manager Ryan Finley said Anderson's marathon at-bat against Hanna was a key element in

Mount Horeb's successful conference opener.

"Hayden made Marty (Hanna) throw 10 pitches in one at bat, and that's part of trying to wear a pitcher down," Ryan Finley said. "You have to get that pitch count up, especially early in the season. It paid big dividends.

"I've been coaching Marty since he was nine, 10

years old in summer ball. I love it when he's on my team. He's still fun to watch. I'm glad I won't have to see him too many more times in high school ball."

Hanna lasted 5 1/3 innings, allowing 10 hits with six runs, five earned, seven strikeouts and just one walk.

Senior shortstop Terek Isley's RBI single, which extended Mount Horeb's lead to 5-2, ended Hanna's day when he reached the mandatory 100-pitch limit. Hanna finished with 101 pitches, 67 for strikes.

"He has composure and obviously has good velocity," Ryan Finley said of Hanna. "He has that nice off-speed curve ball that is really, tough. Then he holds runners well, and fields his position. He's the complete package on the mound."

Anderson eventually got the upper hand on this day, though, allowing just two runs, one earned, on two hits with five strikeouts and no walks in six innings. He threw 87 pitches, 63 for strikes, before Dudley finished up throwing a scoreless seventh inning.

"I was throwing a lot of fastballs," Anderson said. "In the fifth inning, I changed it up to a two-seam

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Off and running

Mount Horeb's girls softball team races to a 6-0 start

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

They lost a handful of standouts from a year ago due to graduation.

They had plenty question marks when the new year began.

But Mount Horeb's girls softball team has quickly answered all queries, and the two-time defending Badger Small Conference champs haven't missed a beat.

The Vikings won all three of their games last week and improved to 6-0 on the young season. Mount Horeb is also 3-0 in the Badger Small Confer-

ence and tied for first place in the league with Stoughton, who it will host Thursday at 5 p.m.

"In all three games, the girls played great defense," Mount Horeb coach Jeramie Holman said. "The pitching has been rock solid and we've been coming up with clutch two-out hits. I couldn't be prouder of the girls the way they are competing and getting after it for being a very young team."

Here's a recap of the Vikings' terrific week.

• **Mount Horeb 4, Portage 2** — Ella Baber threw

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Jozie Clifton and Mount Horeb's softball team have raced to a 6-0 start. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

MoHo golfers enjoy solid week

Mount Horeb third at conference mini-meet

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

Mount Horeb’s boys golfers continued their solid start last week. The Vikings finished in third place at the first Badger Small Conference mini-meet of the season on April 8. Mount Horeb also placed eighth at the 18-team Sauk Prairie Invite on April 7. Here’s a recap of the Vikings’ week.

BADGER SMALL CONFERENCE MINI-MEET

The Vikings had four golfers in the top-14 and finished third at a conference meet held at Norsk Golf Club. Sophomore Jace Stadele and freshman Nolan Niemetscheck led Mount Horeb with 84s, which was good for eighth individually. Mount Horeb freshman Breck Boyle was 12th overall with an 85, while senior Nick Ibinger was 14th with an 86. Stadele had three birdies, including back-to-back birdies at No. 1 and 2 on his way to a 40 on the front nine. Stadele also finished with five pars.

Niemetscheck had a birdie at No. 9, eight pars overall, and shot a 39 on the back nine. Boyle had a steady round that included six pars, while Ibinger had seven pars in his round. Madison Edgewood finished first with a 323, while McFarland was second with a 337. Mount Horeb was third at 339, while Reedsburg (344) and Stoughton (352) rounded out the top five. “I thought we were able to take advantage of our home course knowledge for much of the round,” Mount Horeb coach Nolan Krentz said. “We put ourselves in position to finish as a high as second, but could not and McFarland overtook us down the stretch. “We did come out on top of Reedsburg, a team that had beaten us by 11 strokes the day before and one that was picked to finish higher than us in the conference standings. While it was just one conference event, hopefully we gained some confidence that we can compete with anyone in the Badger Small and be a factor in the conference race this year.”

SAUK PRAIRIE INVITE

The Vikings finished eighth overall with a 344 during an 18-team invite held at Lake Wisconsin Country Club. Mount Horeb was also fourth among Division 2 schools. Madison West won the invite with a 311, while Baraboo (319), Stoughton (330), DeForest (332) and Reedsburg (333) rounded out the top five. Stadele and Niemetscheck led Mount Horeb with 85s. Junior Finn La Fleur carded an 86 and Ibinger shot an 87. Stadele carded five pars and 11 bogeys, while Niemetscheck made seven pars. La Fleur and Ibinger both had six pars in their rounds. “We showed some good improvement as a team from our first meet,” Krentz said. “For much of the day we were in the top three (in Division 2), but did not finish as well as we would have liked, which had a lot to do with our inexperience playing some of the more difficult holes on the course. “I thought we did a better job with our decision-making throughout the course,



Finn La Fleur and Mount Horeb’s boys golf team have impressed early this season. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

but still need to continue to work on and improve upon that as we gain experience. While this was just our second event of the year, it was nice to see how we stacked up against some of the other teams in our conference and regional and see we stand early in the season.”

- **On deck:** Mount Horeb was at the RCF Invite in the Dells at Wild

Solid start

Mount Horeb’s girls soccer team goes 1-1-1 in first three games

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

Mount Horeb’s girls soccer team began the new season going 1-1-1 in its three games. McFarland defeated the Vikings, 4-0, on April 7. Mount Horeb then went to the Raider Invite in Belleville last Saturday where it had a 0-0 tie with Monona Grove and defeated Platteville, 1-0. Here’s a recap of the Vikings’ three games.

- **McFarland 4, Mount Horeb 0** — The Spartans reached the WIAA Division 2 sectional finals last season and showed they’ll be a force again this spring. McFarland scored two goals in each half and rolled past the visiting Vikings. “I think we played well, but McFarland is a very good team,” Mount Horeb first year coach Megan Lemire said. “We also hadn’t had many practices with the full team because spring break the week before meant some of our players were gone.”

Mount Horeb’s Avery Monroe had seven saves in the first half and allowed two goals. Sara Seibel then had 10 second half saves and allowed two goals. “It was unfortunate that we had to begin the season with one of the toughest conference matchups,” Lemire said. “But it gave us a good idea of what the teams to beat in the post-season will look like. Plus, it was a good test of our strengths and weaknesses.”

- **Mount Horeb 0, Monona Grove 0** — Sara Seibel was sensational in goal, finishing with 15 saves to help the Vikings earn a draw at the Red Raider Invite. Mount Horeb finished with three shots on goal. To determine which teams played in the next games, there was a shootout that Monona Grove won, 4-3. “As usual, Monona Grove is a tough team,” Lemire said. “But we held our own.”
- **Mount Horeb 1, Platteville 0** — Maren Johnson



Mount Horeb’s Maren Johnson had a goal in the Vikings 1-0 win over Platteville. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

scored just before halftime on an assist from Jadyn Schellpfeffer to lift the Vikings during the second game of the Red Raider Invite. “Persistence was the key to scoring that goal, both from Jadyn fighting to keep the ball, and Maren racing to tap the ball in before the keeper could grab it,” Lemire said. Overall, Lemire liked how the Vikings performed during the four-team quadrangular held at Belleville High School. “In both Saturday games we had some contributions from players across the roster,” Lemire said. “They’ve been putting in effort and asking questions at practice, and it showed on Saturday. I’m looking forward to seeing player growth over the season.”

- **On deck:** Mount Horeb hosted Stoughton Saturday, then is at River Valley Friday at 5 p.m. The Vikings then travel to Poynette/Portage April 21 at 5:30 p.m.

BADGER SMALL CONFERENCE BASEBALL PREVIEW

Mount Horeb picked for third in league

Editor’s Note: The following is a preview of the Badger Small Conference from Baseball Wisconsin, the Official Yearbook of the Wisconsin Baseball Coaches Association.

OUTLOOK

Reedsburg won its third straight conference title in a tight race between the Beavers, Madison Edgewood and McFarland. Reedsburg then won its sectional and punched a ticket to state, where it fell to eventual champion New Berlin Eisenhower.

Conference coaches are giving the Beavers a slight edge in the league race this season, which would make a four-peat for Reedsburg and eighth-year coach Chris Hahn.

Veteran coach Rich Newton and Madison Edgewood return a veteran team devoid of any all-conference players, but hungry after losing in the regional semifinals last season. Jack and Liam Bishop and fellow senior Alex Schoepp will lead this year’s pitching staff. All three players had ERAs below 2.00 last season.

Mount Horeb and McFarland are expected to also make strong challenges for league supremacy. A conference title would be especially satisfying for McFarland Hall of Fame head coach John Feldner, who will be hanging up his spikes after 52 years as the Spartans’ skipper.

1. REEDSBURG
2025 overall record: 22-7, Conference: 12-2
Prediction: 1st

Coach: Chris Hahn — 8th year, 10th overall, (118-63), 18th year with Reedsburg.

Assistants: Erik Ribbke (8th), Ryan Budnik (6th), Jacob Huebsch (4th), Derek Martin (4th).

Returning Pitchers (60% innings return): Luke Verch (12th-R, 7-3), Kane Kennedy (12th-R, 2-0), Baron Koch (12th-R, 2-1).

Returning Starters (62% at bats return): Winston Alonso (12th-L-SS-.393), Ian McClure (10th-R-OF-.329), Gavin Budnik (12th-L-C-.264).

Looking back: The Beavers won the conference title and advanced to the state tournament a year ago. Pitching and defense were the strength of the team. They were led by Conference Pitcher of the Year, Jack Fenwick, and four-year starting center fielder Alek Southworth.



Ryan Finley’s Mount Horeb baseball team was picked to finish in third place in the Badger Small Conference this season. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Looking ahead: Reedsburg returns several players with varsity experience. The Beavers will be led by senior Winston Alonso, who was named the 2025 Badger Small Conference Player of the Year.

Luke Verch will lead the pitching staff as he steps into the ace role. Other players with high expectations are Gavin Budnik, Kane Kennedy, and Ian McClure.

One to watch: WINSTON ALONSO returns for a fourth and final year for the Beavers. The defensive anchor at shortstop, Alonso is a three-year, first-team, all-conference pick and a two-time conference Player of the Year. He is also the offensive sparkplug in the leadoff spot and has been exceptional in the classroom as well.

“He is a leader on and off the field, has a high baseball IQ and is internally motivated to be great,” coach Hahn said.

Alonso will be attending Madison College in the fall.

2. MADISON EDGEWOOD
2025 overall record: 19-4, Conference: 11-3.
Prediction: 2nd

Coach: Richard Newton — 23rd year, 24th overall, (361-187), 24th year with Edgewood.

Assistants: Nate Andrews (12th), Joel Schneider (7th).

Returning Pitchers (63% innings return): Jack Bishop (12th-R, 4-0, 0.52),

Liam Bishop (12th-R, 2-2, 1.89), Alex Schoepp (12th-R, 1-0, 1.40), Kaleb Oeth (10th-R, 1-0, 2.17).

Returning Starters (50% at bats return): Liam Bishop (12th-R-1B-.364), Mac Lombardo (12th-R-IF-.357), Kaleb Oeth (10th-R-OF-.257), Mikey Hackworthy (12th-R-3B-.263), Ben Smarrella (12th-R-C-.250).

Looking back: Edgewood’s 2025 was a disappointment for an experienced team as they finished the season losing in the regional semifinals. There were several players that returned from the 2024 state title team, yet the Crusaders were unable to capture the same type of magic.

Looking ahead: The Crusaders have a returning group that should recapture the ability to play team baseball and have the chemistry and talent to get back to the D2 state tournament and win the Badger Small, their last conference title coming in 2022.

One to watch: Jack and Liam Bishop, twin brothers, are preparing for their third year on the varsity squad. Having been part of the state title-winning team in 2024, their experience and skills are expected to play a vital role in the team’s success this season.

The Bishops’ proven track record and dedication to the sport make them essential assets for veteran head coach Rich Newton as the Crusaders enter the season

with high expectations.

3. MOUNT HOREB
2025 overall record: 16-12, Conference: 6-8
Prediction: 3rd

Coach: Ryan Finley — 19th year, 19th overall, (183-165), 21st year with Mount Horeb.

Assistants: Vern Martin (12th), Cory Morrisard (4th), Brett Myers (4th), Paul Manchester (4th), Shane Mesenberg (2nd).

Returning Pitchers (55% innings return): Hayden Anderson (12th-R, 5-1, 2.44), Jaxen Finley (12th-L, 1-3, 2.44), Terek Isely (12th-R, 3-0, 6.75), Brecken Dudley (12th-R, 3-1, 2.45).

Returning Starters (62% at bats return): Josh Kuntz (12th-L-OF-.271), Logan Ford (12th-R-OF-.370), Jaxen Finley (12th-L-OF-.247), Jackson Myers (12th-R-C-.333), Hayden Anderson (12th-R-1B-.269), Ethan Morrisard (12th-R-IF-.268), Terek Isely (12th-R-IF-.240).

Looking back: The Vikings got off to a slow start in 2025, but put things together as the season went on and played their best baseball at the end of the season.

Looking ahead: Mount Horeb returns a lot varsity experience on the mound and in the field, which should be a tremendous asset. The Vikings will need to be more consistent in the field and at the plate if they hope to take that next step in

the playoffs.

Ones to watch: Tucked around rolling fields of corn and wheat just southwest of Madison, Mount Horeb will have three seniors that will hit their school’s diamond for a final season, a year that they figure to be serious contenders in the Badger Small.

Veteran head coach Ryan Finley is 17 career wins short of 200 victories, and he will make a serious run at that mark with the squad he’s fielding this season. His team starts with Josh Kuntz, a seasoned center fielder, whose bat will near the top of the order for the Vikings.

Already inked to play for UW-La Crosse post-graduation, Kuntz boasts a formidable résumé, having earned all-conference honors for three consecutive seasons. Widely regarded as one of the most proficient center fielders in the state, his on-field prowess is complemented by his invaluable leadership within the program, according to Finley.

Jaxen Finley, a mainstay in the Vikings’ lineup, is poised to build on his impressive track record as a three-year starter and returning first-team all-conference player. With a solid tenure on both the mound and at the plate, expectations run high for Finley to leave a mark in his senior season that could once again garner him post season honors.

Rounding out this formidable trio is Hayden Anderson, the towering presence

on the mound whose junior campaign saw him shatter pitching records for the Vikings. Tasked with shouldering a significant role once again in his senior year, Anderson’s athletic prowess across multiple sports has honed his competitiveness and he is looking forward to taking the ball in the Viking’s biggest games.

These seasoned seniors represent the backbone of the Mount Horeb baseball program. The Badger Small is loaded with talent this season and these Vikings are well aware of that, having competed with great players from great programs since they were kids.

Despite that, they are confident in their chances of winning a conference title and going deep in the tournament.

They should be.

4. MCFARLAND
2025 overall record: 15-10, Conference: 10-4
Prediction: 4th

Coach: John Feldner — 52nd year, 52nd overall, (486-495), 52nd year with MHS, WBCA HALL OF FAME, 2015.

Assistants: Matt Hounsell (19th), Erik Massey (4th), Carson Werwinski (2nd).

Returning Pitchers (50% innings return): Grayson Gauwitz (11th-R, 7-1, 2.15), Sawyer Punzel (10th-R, 1-1, 2.84), Brandon Maly (12th-R, 1-2, 7.29), JJ Blattner (12th-R, 0-0, 4.00).

Returning Starters (50% at bats return): Grayson Gauwitz (11th-R-U-.310), JJ Blattner (12th-L-2B-.333), Brody Samuel (12th-L-C-.290), Henry Bieri (12th-R-1B-.294), Parker Westphal (12th-R-2B-.286), Sawyer Punzel (10th-SS-.222), Nolan Wells (11th-R-OF), Nolan Canty (11th-R-C).

Looking back: The 2025 baseball season was very exciting for the Spartans, who battled for a conference title for a third straight season.

The 2025 Spartans were picked to finish in the middle of the conference. However, they got off to a quick start and were either tied for first or in first place by themselves going into the last game of the season. McFarland had the lead going into the seventh inning of its final game against Mount Horeb, but was not able to finish it.

It was a great year and one they hope to build upon for 2026.

Looking ahead: Going into the 2026 season, the Spartans have some solid re-

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BADGER SMALL CONFERENCE BASEBALL PREVIEW

RETURNING ALL-BADGER SMALL CONFERENCE PLAYERS

FIRST TEAM

Winston Alonso, sr., Reedsburg
Jaxon Finley, sr., Mount Horeb
Grayson Gauwitz, jr., McFarland
Marty Hanna, sr., Sauk Prairie
Peyton Poker, sr., Baraboo
Matthew Simonson, sr., Portage

SECOND TEAM

JJ Blattner, sr., McFarland
Logan Ford, sr., Mount Horeb
Parker Frosch, jr., Sauk Prairie
Josh Kuntz, sr., Mount Horeb
Owen Rogers, jr., Baraboo
Luke Verch, sr., Reedsburg
Saxon Wiest, soph., Stoughton

BADGER

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turning starters who played big roles in their 2025 success including senior catcher Brody Samuel (left) and senior shortstop JJ Blattner (right).

The Spartans will also be depending on junior Grayson Gauwitz, who was named first-team all-conference as a sophomore, to keep improving and become a dominating pitcher. There were also underclassmen who gained valuable varsity experience last year.

The Spartans also had a successful JV team in 2025 and there are players who are ready to contribute to the varsity in 2026. This will reportedly be Hall of Fame coach John Feldner’s final season.

If so, the half century he has led McFarland baseball and the contributions he made at the state level through the Association will never be forgotten as generations of young men will carry with them what they have learned from him throughout their lives.

Ones to watch: Brody Samuel and JJ Blattner return after providing key contributions to the success of the 2025 team. Blattner, a second-team all-conference pick and Samuel, an honorable mention pick, were also very important contributors to the Spartan hockey team that made it to state last year.

Both would like nothing more to duplicate that experience on the ice and keep Coach Feldner’s squad in the hunt for a conference championship this spring.

5. PORTAGE

2025 overall record: 13-13, Conference: 5-9

Prediction: 5th

Coach: Mike Hemming — 27th year, 27th overall, (325-253-1), 36th year with PHS.

Assistants: Josh Krueger (3rd), Ethan Wilkinson (3rd), Sam Robbins (6th), Mike Nelson (14th), Kody Brost (2nd), Adam Walz

(2nd).

Returning Pitchers (42% innings return): Jackson Maass (11th-L, 4-2, 2.00), Brody Kayartz (12th-R, 2-0, 5.10).

Returning Starters (37% at bats return): Matthew Simonson (12th-R-SS-.393), Brody Kayartz (12th-R-C-.286), Donovan Navone (12th-R-3B-.286), Jackson Maass (11th-R-1B-.269).

Looking back: The Warriors had a solid season while dealing with some injuries from their top pitchers. Some younger players stepped up to make it a positive season that included three walk off wins and an opening round tournament win.

Looking ahead: Portage will return some solid players from last season. Some players that gained valuable varsity experience will be asked to step up in more producing roles.

Ones to watch: Matthew Simonson, a seasoned veteran, is set to make his mark as a three-year starter for the Warriors in the upcoming season. Displaying a remarkable level of production and unwavering work ethic, Simonson epitomizes the caliber of players who have graced the Portage roster under the watchful eye of coach Hemming.

Hemming expresses gratitude for Simonson’s leadership role within the team, recognizing his ability to lead by example and make coaching a truly enjoyable experience.

6. SAUK PRAIRIE

2025 overall record: 16-11, Conference: 4-10

Prediction: 6th

Coach: Darin Pape — 10th year, 10th overall, (99-102) 27th year with Sauk Prairie.

Assistants: Clint Williams (6th), Brendan Coy (10th), Jon Adair (10th), Bill Dettman (44th), Lucas Koenig (14th), Scott Neu (2nd).

Returning Pitchers (60% innings return): Marty Hanna (12th-R, 5-3, 0.25), Gavin Larsen (11th-



Carter Vesely and Mount Horeb’s baseball team are expecting big things this spring. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

R, 3-1, 2.92), Sam Patterson (10th-L, 2-2, 3.90), Bryan Breunig (12th-R, 0-0, 1.62).

Returning Starters (87% at bats return): Marty Hanna (12th-R-SS-.356), Gavin Larsen (11th-R-OF-.301), Brayden Adair (12th-R-IF-.257), Parker Frosch (11th-R-C-.225), Cayden Hermsdorf (12th-R-OF-.220), Lupe Alcantar (12th-R-2B-.211), Bryan Breunig (12th-R-3B-.197), Boden Breunig (12th-R-.196).

Looking back: The Eagles had a very solid 2025 campaign. In a very tough Badger Conference, Sauk Prairie finished below .500. However, the Eagles went 12-0 in non-conference games in the regular season. Pitching and solid defense kept the Eagles in every game.

Sauk Prairie’s 16 wins tied a program high. The Eagles were playing their best baseball at the end of the season, but were eliminated in the regional final.

Looking ahead: The Eagles are looking forward to the 2026 season. Several players return with multiple years of varsity experience.

The senior class is battle-tested, ready to lead, and looking to take the next step. There are also several younger players that had terrific seasons last year.

Marty Hanna, a first-team all-conference player, will anchor the rotation, and the Eagles return several pitchers with valuable experience. The team’s pitching depth and solid defense will be a strength this season.

Returning second-team

all-conference catcher, Parker Frosch, is the iron-man leading the team from behind the plate.

One to watch: Marty Hanna is back for a fourth varsity spin in 2026. The first-team, all-conference pitcher in 2025 will have a lot on his plate this season, anchoring the pitching rotation, playing shortstop when not pitching and hitting somewhere near the top of the batting order.

Hanna has done his business in the classroom as well, as a member of National Honor Society. He is planning to major in business and continue his playing career at Rock Valley Junior College (Ill.) in the fall.

7. STOUGHTON

2025 overall record: 11-16, Conference: 4-10

Prediction: 7th

Coach: Jeremy Duniho — 15th year, 15th overall, (115-197), 15th year with SHS

Assistants: Sam Raff (8th), Erick Sperloen (4th), Ben Gerber (4th), Connor Kalinowski (3rd), Ryan Ellingson (6th).

Returning Pitchers (99% innings return): Saxton Wiest (10th-R, 2-2, 3.11), Jaxson Nielsen (11th-R, 0-3), Givon Storkson (10th-R, 3-2, 2.62), Reign Altenburg (11th-R, 2-4, 4.92).

Returning Starters (87% at bats return): Givon Storkson (10th-OF-.313), Reign Altenburg (11th-R-1B-.397), Jaxson Nielsen (11th-R-SS-.277), Logan Hedstrom (12th-R-

OF), Oliver Pietruszynski (12th-R-OF-.254), Colyn Kotlowski (12th-IF-.235), Saxton Wiest (10th-R-IF-.282), Paxton Nelson (11th-R-IF-.298).

Looking back: Last year, the Vikings were very young and relied heavily on their freshmen and sophomore players. Those players grew a lot, played a very aggressive style of baseball, and set a school record for stolen bases in a season.

Looking ahead: With all starters returning but one, the Vikings are much more experienced and ready to compete. Stoughton will need to improve its defense and quality at bats to have more success in close games, as many slipped away last year. Despite many players returning, some position changes will occur due to needing to replace their catcher from last year.

One to watch: Logan Hedstrom returns for the Vikings this spring. He is a familiar name in multiple sports at Stoughton, having been a multi-year starter and all-conference running back in football and returning to the basketball team this year after not playing his junior year.

Hedstrom will be leaned on as a leader. He’s a three-year starter, and his 12-RBI week late last spring gave a sneak peek to what he is capable of on the diamond.

“He will be a bat we rely on to produce for us this season,” coach Duniho said of Hedstrom. “Logan is the exact guy you want up in any clutch situation.”

8. FORT ATKINSON

2025 overall record: 11-17, Conference: 4-10

2026 Prediction: 8th

Coach: Greg Riddell — 2nd year, 2nd overall, (11-17), 3rd year w Fort

Assistants: Josh Crandall (4th,) Trevor Zimmerman (2nd), Tim Garant (2nd).

Returning Pitchers (7% innings return): Alexis Martinez (12th-R, 0-1, 2 saves, 1.50), Levi Huettl (10th-L, 1-1, 1 save, 3.23).

Returning Starters (25% at bats return): Alexis Martinez (12th-R-3B-.382), Vasher Sampson 11th-R-OF-.308).

Looking back: With a senior heavy team, the Blackhawks were able to start off with early success. They hit a lull in the middle of the conference season, but ended strong.

Fort Atkinson lost in the regional final game in the last inning, but they won five more games than the previous year.

Looking ahead: This season will be a great opportunity for many players to make a name for themselves. The Blackhawks lost 16 seniors, so they have plenty of open slots on the roster.

They have four seniors returning, but only two have varsity experience. The junior group will be strong, but limited in varsity experience because of the large senior group last year. It should be exciting to see how they all take to the challenge.

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TOWN OF PERRY
NOTICE OF ANNUAL MEETING OF THE ELECTORS
PERRY TOWN HALL, 10084 COUNTY HIGHWAY A
TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 2026, 7:30PM

Notice is hereby given that on Tuesday, April 21, 2026 the Annual Meeting of the Electors for the Town of Perry, Dane County, Wisconsin, will be held for the transaction of business as required or permitted by law, WI § 60.11, beginning at 7:30PM, at the Perry Town Hall, 10084 CTH A.

Agenda

1. Call to order.
2. Minutes of the Prior Annual Meeting – April 15, 2025.
3. Review Financial Report for the year ending Dec. 31, 2025.
4. Annual Reports – Committees, special projects, updates, etc.
5. Comprehensive Plan amendment process and survey.
6. Friends of the Parks of Perry report.
7. Hauge Historic District Park updates.
8. Town Hall Restoration project.
9. Any other business lawfully presented per WI § 60.11.
10. Adjourn.

Mary L. Price, Clerk

Posted: Town Hall, Town Garage, Daleville signpost, Town web-site.

Publish: 4/16/26 **WNAXLP**

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VILLAGE OF MOUNT HOREB
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
APRIL 9 & APRIL 16, 2026
CONTRACT 26-100 2026 STREET IMPROVEMENTS
SOUTH FIRST STREET (CARVER ST TO FRONT ST)
HENRY STREET (PARKWAY DR TO S FIRST ST)

The Village of Mount Horeb will receive sealed bids for the referenced project until **11:00 A.M., Thursday, April 23, 2026**, at the Village Office, 138 East Main Street, Mount Horeb, Wisconsin 53572. At that time, bids will be opened and read aloud.

Bids are to be addressed to the Village of Mount Horeb, ATTN: Village Clerk, Mount Horeb Village Hall, 138 East Main Street, Mount Horeb, Wisconsin 53572, and shall be marked "Sealed Bid – CONTRACT 26-100, 2026 STREET IMPROVEMENTS."

A complete set of the PDF Electronic Contract Documents may be obtained by contacting Sarah Pelletier of SmithGroup at Sarah.Pelletier@smithgroup.com. Drawings may not be picked up at the SmithGroup office as the Contract Documents (Drawings and Specifications) are **NOT** pre-printed.)

Drawings for the work will be available as PDF electronically from SmithGroup on or after April 9, 2026.

Drawings for the work are on file for inspection at the Village Office, 138 East Main Street, Mount Horeb on or after April 9, 2026.

Plan Holders are required to provide an e-mail address to receive addenda and other information electronically. Plan Holders are required to designate whether they are a prime contractor, subcontractor, or supplier, which will be posted on the project Plan Holders List.

All bidders must include a Statement of Bidder's Qualifications with sealed Bids.

Bidders who submit a bid must be a Plan Holder of record at the issuing office. Bids from Bidders not on the Plan Holders List may be returned as being not responsive.

Each bid must be accompanied by a Bid Bond equal to at least 10% of the maximum bid as a guarantee that if the bid is accepted, the Contractor will, within 10 days of receipt of the Notice of Award, furnish the Owner with a Performance and Payment Bond equal to the Contract price.

The project engineer contact is Nick Johnson at SmithGroup, 44 East Mifflin Street, Suite 500, Madison, Wisconsin 53703, (608)421-7323 or Nick.Johnson@smithgroup.com.

Portions of this Contract are funded with WisDOT Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP) / Dane County Municipal Street Improvements (MSI) funds.

The Village of Mount Horeb reserves the right to reject any and all bids, to waive any technicality, and to accept any bid that it deems advantageous. All bids shall remain subject to acceptance for forty-five (45) days after the time set for bid opening. The Contract award shall be made based on the lowest responsive and responsible Bidder.

ESTIMATE OF PRINCIPAL ITEMS		
Excavation	6,700	CY
Concrete Curb & Gutter	5,720	LF
Concrete Driveway	205	SF
Concrete Sidewalk (5")	11,080	SF
Base Course (12")	13,800	SY
Bituminous Pavement	12,200	SY
Water Main	2,825	LF
Hydrants	9	EA
Sanitary Sewer Main (Spot Repair)	35	LF
Sanitary Sewer Structures	2	EA

Published by the authority of the
Village of Mount Horeb, Wisconsin
138 East Main Street
Mount Horeb, WI 53572
Alyssa Gaffney, Village Clerk

Publish: 4/9/26, 4/16/26 **WNAXLP**

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**TOWN OF PRIMROSE
NOTICE**

The Town of Primrose Planning Commission meeting for April 2026 will take place at 8468 County Road A, Verona WI, on Monday, April 20th, 2026, beginning at 7:30pm. The agenda for this meeting will be posted at the Town Hall, Mount Vernon Auto, Primrose Church, and on the Town website. A summary of the agenda will be available on the voice message system at 608-832-6660.

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**TOWN OF PERRY
TOWN BOARD
MEETING AGENDA**

Tuesday, April 21, 2026
Perry Town Hall
10084 County Highway A
8:00PM, following
Town's Annual Meeting

1. Call to order.
2. Roads, Equipment, Facilities – Open bids submitted for 2026 road construction.
3. Adjournment.

Action might be taken on any agenda item shown above. Public comment might be invited on any agenda item presented.

Mary L. Price
Town Clerk
www.perry-wi.gov

Posted and published: April 16, 2026 – Town Hall, Town Garage, Daleyville Sign Post, Town website.

Publish: 4/16/26 **WNAXLP**

**TOWN OF PRIMROSE
NOTICE
ANNUAL TOWN MEETING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Annual Town Meeting for the Town of Primrose, Dane County, Wisconsin, will be held on Tuesday, April 21, 2026, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at the Town Hall, 8468 County Road A, Verona, Wisconsin.

The Annual Town Meeting will be held for the purpose of conducting all business as provided under Wisconsin Statutes, including review of the 2025 financial report and any other business that may lawfully come before the meeting.

The agenda for this meeting will be posted at the Town Hall, Mount Vernon Auto, Primrose Church, and on the Town website. A summary of the agenda will be available on the voice message system at 608-832-6660.

Publish: 4/16/26 **WNAXLP**

**TOWN OF SPRINGDALE
REQUEST FOR BIDS**

The Town of Springdale, 2379 Town Hall Rd., Mt. Horeb WI, is seeking bids for crack filling, chip sealing (single seal), hot mix wedging, and culverts/ditching on various roads in 2026. For project specifications and deadlines, contact Town Patrolman, Devin Dahlk, at (608) 444-5707. All bids must be received no later than 5:00 PM, April 21 and include proof of insurance. Mark envelope with the type of work being bid. Bids will be opened at the 7:00 PM Town Board meeting on Tuesday, April 21. The Town reserves the right to accept or reject any bids, and to award bids to the lowest responsible bidder (Wis. Stat. 60.47(1)(b)).

Jackie Arthur, Administrator/Clerk

Post: 3/30 Town Hall and springdalewi.gov

Publish: 4/9/26, 4/16/26 **WNAXLP**

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BASEBALL

continued from page 10

fastball instead of a four-seam. That was working well because it was cold. It was hard to grip, but it was working well. The curve ball was there sometimes. On the lefties, the changeup was working well.”

Mount Horeb finished with 12 hits with senior second baseman Ethan Morrisard leading the way with three hits. Senior left fielder Logan Ford, senior center fielder Josh Kuntz, senior catcher Jackson Myers and Isely added two hits apiece.

Senior right fielder Jaxen Finley drew a one-out walk in the first inning and eventually scored when Myers grounded into a force play for a 1-0 lead.

Sauk Prairie tied the game, 1-1, in the bottom of the second inning after senior second baseman Brayden Adair singled to right field, moved to second when senior third baseman Bryan Breunig was hit by a pitch and eventually scored when senior first baseman Bo Breunig bounced into a force play.

Mount Horeb made it 2-1 in the top of the fifth when sophomore third baseman Carter Vesely reached base on a fielder’s choice and later scored on a throwing error.

Hanna’s RBI single in the bottom of the fifth tied the game, 2-2, before Mount Horeb put up a crooked number in the sixth inning.

Dudley and Isely delivered RBI singles and Ford drove in a run when he was hit by a pitch with the bases loaded to key the four-run sixth inning,

Mount Horeb added two more runs in the seventh inning against junior reliever Tyler Jorgenson.

Morrisard drove in a run with a bunt single, and senior pinch hitter Evan Preimesberger capped the scoring when he drove in a run after reaching base on a fielder’s choice.

“We were facing some tough stuff, and the kids battled,” Ryan Finley said of the Vikings’ offense. “When Marty (Hanna) got them, at least we made him work. When you go up there,

you’ve got to compete. We had to try and get the pitch count up and take advantage of it, and we did that.”

Sauk Prairie manager Darin Pape said the Vikings accomplished several goals that the Eagles were unable to execute.

“Mount Horeb executed the small ball elements today, which was the difference in the game,” Pape said. “They got guys on. They had enough hits. They did the things to get the guys over and get them in.

“We couldn’t get enough baserunners on and cause enough chaos, which we take pride in getting the guys on and being aggressive. We just didn’t have enough opportunities today. Anderson was on. We were having trouble out there.”

Pape said Anderson was hitting his spots, which prevented the Eagles from making any solid contact.

“He kept us off-balance,” Pape said of Anderson. “He mixed in just enough breaking balls to keep us on our toes. His game is to try and throw it by you, and he was able to do that.”

In a battle of each team’s No. 2 starters, Dudley bested Eagles’ sophomore left-hander Sam Patterson two days later. Dudley threw 92 pitches, 62 for strikes, to notch the victory in his high school starting debut.

A powerful right-hander, Dudley allowed just five hits and no walks with nine strikeouts to earn his 6-0 complete game shutout.

“I was going at right at guys,” said Dudley, who struck out eight of the nine starters in the lineup for Sauk Prairie. “I was really feeling the heater. I felt I could locate that well.”

Dudley said he appreciated the Vikings’ offense, particularly his battery mate, catcher Jackson Myers who went 3-for-4 with an RBI.

“When I go out there and I see my catcher getting three hits and everybody else is kind of rallying behind him, getting good swings in, it makes me feel even more confident and able to pound the zone with all those runs for me,” Dudley said.

Dudley’s stellar outing came as no surprise to Finley.

“He’s capable. I’m not shocked because I know what kind of athlete he is and the talent that he has and the stuff he brings to the table,” Finley said of Dudley. “It was great to see him put it all together in his first conference start in his career. He has been waiting for his turn. He’s had some really, good arms in front of him when he was a young guy.

“But we knew about the stuff he had and that’s why we put him out there. We had confidence in Brecken to do what he did. We played good behind him.”

Mount Horeb got the only run it needed in the third inning when Jaxen Finley blasted a lead-off double to left field, moved to third on Myers’ RBI single to right field and then scored on a throwing error.

Myers, who batted .600 (6-for-10) for the week, said he was impressed by Dudley’s shutout effort.

“That was a great performance by Brecken. I can tell that he was working a lot in the off-season,” Myers said. “He looked sharp. It really showed today. I’m really, proud of him as a catcher.

“His fastball was locating well. We started off curve ball and adjusted to a slider as the game went on. His splitter was looking good, too.”

The Vikings made it 4-0 against Patterson in the top of the fourth inning when Kuntz drove in a pair of runs with a single to center field and, after stealing second base, scored on Myers’ RBI single.

Myers led Mount Horeb’s eight-hit attack with three hits, while Vesely added two hits.

Patterson tossed four innings against the Vikings, allowing seven hits and four runs, two earned, with five strikeouts and three walks.

After the Vikings added a pair of insurance runs against reliever Bryan Breunig in the bottom of the sixth inning, Sauk Prairie mounted its best attack of the game when it loaded the bases on singles by freshman right fielder Chris VonHaden, Bo Breunig and Bryan Breunig.

But Dudley struck out



Josh Kuntz and Mount Horeb’s baseball team are off to a terrific start this season. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

senior left fielder Cayden Hermsdorf on a 3-2 count and retired Hanna on a fly ball to deep center field that Kuntz was able to track down for the final out.

“I was happy to see him complete that game,” Ryan Finley said of Dudley. “We were kind of happy he got in that little jam there to experience it and work himself out of it.”

While Hanna’s blast appeared destined to clear the bases, Kuntz did his part to preserve the shutout.

“We call it a can of Kuntz because he covers so much ground out there,” Ryan Finley said of his star center fielder, who will play baseball at UW-La Crosse next year. “When the ball’s in the air, instead of a can of corn, it’s a can of Kuntz. He’ll go get it. He can cover a ton of ground, and Jaxen (Finley) and Logan (Ford) are pretty good out there as well.”

Ryan Finley said the 2-0 start was just what the doctor ordered to keep the Vikings’ bid for a conference title on track.

“It feels really good be-

cause Sauk is going to win a lot of games in this conference,” Ryan Finley said. “They’ve got two great arms in Patterson and Hanna. With the talent they’ve got they will win a lot of games, so it feels really, good.”

• **Mount Horeb 8, Baraboo 0** — Starter Jaxen Finley and reliever Terek Isely combined on a three-hit shutout to power the host Vikings past the visiting Cheesemakers in a non-conference game at Madison’s Warner Park on April 10. The duo combined for 13 strikeouts and needed only 107 pitches to secure the victory. Jackson Myers led the offense with a double and two runs batted in.

• **On deck:** After a Badger Small Conference home game against Reedsburg on Tuesday, Mount Horeb travels to Reedsburg Thursday at 5 p.m.

The Vikings host Platteville in a non-conference game on Friday at 5 p.m. and host a non-conference doubleheader against Antigo on Saturday beginning at noon.

April 7
Mount Horeb 8, Sauk Prairie 2
MoHo 100 014 2 — 8 12 3
Sauk 010 010 0 — 2 2 3
Pitchers (ip-h-r-er-so-bb) — MH: Hayden Anderson (W: 6-2-2-1-5-0), Bracken Dudley (1-0-0-0-0-1). SP: Marty Hanna (L: 5.1-19-6-5-7-1), Sam Patterson (0.2-0-0-0-2-0), Tyler Jorgeson (1-2-2-2-0-1).
Leading hitters — MH: Logan Ford 2x3, Josh Kuntz 2x3, Ethan Morrisard 3x4; Jackson Myers 2x4. SP: Marty Hanna 1x3; Brayden Adair 1x3.

April 9
Mount Horeb 6, Sauk Prairie 0
Sauk 000 000 0 — 0 3 4
MoHo 001 302 x — 6 8 1
Pitchers (ip-h-r-er-so-bb) — SP: Sam Patterson (L: 4-7-4-2-5-3), Bryab Breunig (2-1-2-0-1-1). MH: Brecken Dudley (W: 7-5-0-0-9-0).
Leading hitters — MH: Jackson Myers 3x4, Carter Vesely 2x3. SP: Sam Patterson (2B).

April 10
Mount Horeb 8, Monroe 0
Monroe 000 000 0 — 0 3 2
MoHo 203 300 x — 8 7 0
Pitchers (ip-h-r-er-so-bb) — **Mo.:** Zane Seffrood (L: 3.1-6-8-4-2-3), Landon Wuebben (2.1-1-0-0-5-1). MH: Jaxen Finley (W: 4-2-0-0-7-2), Terek Isely (S: 3-1-0-0-6-1).
Leading hitters — MH: Jackson Myers 1x2 (2B).



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