Novak, Gruber and Tataje face off in the 51st State Assembly District: PAGE 2







MOUNT HOREB MAIL

TRUTH THROUGH JOURNALISM

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Village historic preservation and planning commissions to discuss future of the 'It's Too Big' site

The fate of the site that spawned Mount Horeb's rancorous "It's Too Big" debate will be on the agenda at the next Historic Preservation Commission and Planning Commission meetings. The Historic Preservation Commission will start at 6 p.m. and Planning Commission will start at 7 p.m. Both will be at the Senior Center, 107 N Grove Street on October 28 to accommodate the possibility of a larger-than-usual crowd.

Mt. Horeb Police police offer Halloween safety tips for Trick-Or-Treaters

2026 TRICK-OR-TREAT HOURS:
Saturday, October 31
5:00 - 8:00 p.m.

COSTUMES

· Masks, beards, wigs and costumes should have a flame-resistant label.

· Use non-toxic make-up if you can. If you choose to wear a mask, hat or scarf, etc., it should fit properly and not obstruct vision or restrict breathing.

· Use reflective tape on costumes and trick-or-treat bags.

· Wear sturdy, well-fitting shoes.

· Keep costumes short enough to prevent trips and falls.

· Swords, knives, wands, etc. should be short, soft and flexible to prevent injury.

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Witches Night Out draws a crowd

The Mount Horeb American Legion Auxiliary set up Witches Night Out on Thursday, Oct. 15. They offered a photo opportunity for all the Witches passing by, a small bag of pretzels and a mocktail of lemonade. "We wanted people to be aware of who we were and where we were located," said Connie York. "It was a very rainy night but lots of people of all ages came out including fur animals." Pictured above are York (as Lady Liberty) with Theresa Hofstetter.

Both political parties dumping six figures into race for local Wisconsin State Assembly seat

By Annie Pulley
The Badger Project

A Republican incumbent and former newspaper man is facing off against a game warden for control of a state Assembly district that hasn't been held by a Democrat since 2010.

State Rep. Todd Novak (R-Dodgeville) has represented the 51st Assembly District in southwestern Wisconsin since 2015. Before Novak, state Sen. Howard Marklein (R-Spring Green), who is now fighting to defend his own Senate seat, represented the district.

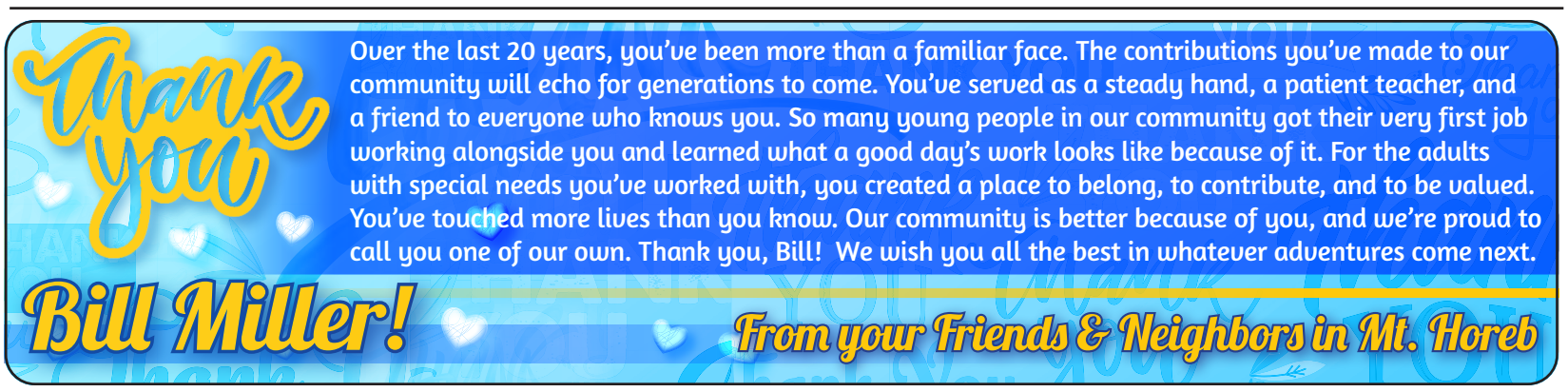
Raised on a family farm in little Cobb, Wisconsin, Novak, now 61, says he worked in accounting before he covered government for 25 years at the Dodgeville Chronicle newspaper, rising to editor. He served as the mayor of Dodgeville for 12 years before he was elected to the Wisconsin Assembly in 2014.

Ben Gruber, 43, who lives in Arena, Wisconsin, is the Democratic challenger.

Gruber says he has worked as a volunteer EMT, paramedic, firefighter and police officer. He now works for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and spends his time "stopping polluters, catching poachers, and rescuing injured hikers from the bluffs of Devils Lake," according to his campaign website.

Nathan Tataje is also running for the seat as the American Solidarity Party's candidate. The party was formed in 2016 and is based

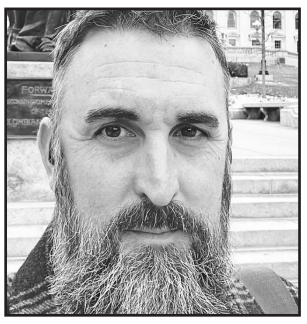
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Fall Election

Get to know the 51st Assembly candidates

There are three candidates running for Representative to Assembly District 51, Ben Gruber (D), Todd Novak (R), and Nathan Tataje (American Solidarity Party).



Gruber



Novak



Tataje

Bio

Ben Gruber: I've been a Firefighter, EMT, Paramedic, Tactical Medic, and Conservation Warden. I've served as a VP of Kids and Mentors Outdoors, on the Board of Directors of the WI Chapter of Backcountry Hunters and Anglers, and volunteered as a mentor on hunting outings for Purple Heart recipients.

Todd Novak: I grew up on our family farm in Cobb, where we raised dairy, hogs and beef. Much of the farm has been in our family since the 1860s, and someday my brother and I will be the fifth generation to own it. Growing up on a farm taught me the value of hard work and looking out for your neighbors.

After graduating from Iowa-Grant High School and Southwest Vocational School, I worked in accounting at Lands' End for five years. I joined the Dodgeville Chronicle, where I spent 25 years covering local government, schools and courts, eventually becoming Government Editor.

That experience led me to serve as a foster parent and ultimately adopt my two sons. For more than 30 years, I have also served as a court-appointed guardian for people unable to make their own financial or healthcare decisions.

I served as Mayor of Dodgeville for 12 years before being elected to the State Assembly in 2014. I have spent my career listening to people, solving problems and working to make Southwest Wisconsin a better place to live.

I currently represent Iowa County on the Southwest Regional Planning Commission, serve on the board of the Wisconsin Housing & Economic Development Authority (WHEDA), serve on the Wisconsin League of Municipalities Insurance Board, serve on the Iowa County Aging & Resource Disability Resource Center (ADRC) board. I was a founding member of the Iowa County Humane Society in 1998 and served on the board until 2012.

Nathan Tataje: I have lived in Wisconsin almost all my life, never living more than 45 minutes from Madison. I live in the village of Arena in Iowa County, and that is where I vote. I am a husband and a father to two young sons, and my wife and I are currently blessed to be expecting our third son. Everything I do in this campaign is driven by the desire to build a stable, prosperous, and self-reliant future for our family and for all working families across southwest Wisconsin.

I am a first-generation American, blessed with two wonderful parents. The values they raised me with were simple and uncompromising: keep faith in God, work hard with your own hands, treat every person with dignity, and always look out for your neighbor. I went to St. Ambrose Academy for middle and high school, where I served as student body president and captain of the debate team. I am deeply active in my community, serving as Grand Knight of Knights of Columbus Council 7811. I am a practicing Catholic and strive to embody the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, those being: Life and dignity of the human person, call to family/community/participation, preferential option for the poor, solidarity, subsidiarity, dignity of work/worker's rights, and care for creation.

What are your top priorities if elected?

Gruber: Fix public school funding and restore shared revenue to communities, so that communities are not forced to raise property taxes to keep the lights on.

Address rising costs for families, including housing, groceries, health care, and property taxes.

Protect and preserve our natural resources.

Novak: My priorities are affordability, strong schools, clean water, healthcare, agriculture, public safety and a strong local economy.

I want to continue improving school funding, particularly for rural districts and special education. I want to build on our bipartisan work on water quality and make sure Wisconsin continues investing in clean water without putting the entire burden on farmers.

I also want to keep healthcare affordable, support our hospitals and caregivers, expand economic opportunities in rural communities and make sure taxpayers receive responsible relief from the state's strong fiscal position.

Most importantly, I want to continue listening to constituents and turning their ideas into legislation that actually makes a difference.

Tataje: First, getting rural schools off the referendum treadmill. For 2025-27, the state raised what school districts may spend by over $300 per student while freezing general school aid, which means local property taxpayers cover the increase. K-12 property tax levies have risen significantly as a result. I want new state school aid written specifically to lower that levy, not just to authorize more spending. I have also proposed my own rural school endowment plan that would invest a portion of the state surplus to local, secured trusts and allow for schools to begin funding themselves off of the interest that builds and compounds, and it will also be funded by sunsetting the Manufacturer and Agriculture Credit, reallocating portions of the new tax revenue to this and other projects.

Second, helping families raise kids. I propose a two-year pilot paying $100 a month for each child under six. The full benefit would go to households earning up to $100,000, then gradually decline to zero at $150,000, so a raise never costs a family its entire benefit. Capped at 5,000 children, the pilot would cost no more than $13.2 million, including administration and an independent evaluation.

Third, keeping businesses and farms in local hands.

Fourth, giving communities a real voice over major developments.

Fifth, opening up the Capitol. Every bill I sponsor will say what it costs and where the money comes from.

What's something that makes you uniquely qualified to lead and govern?

Gruber: I've been a Firefighter, EMT, Paramedic and Law Enforcement officer. I've always shown up to help our communities, and that has given me unique insights into the needs of our communities.

Novak: I have experienced government from almost every angle. I grew up on a working farm, worked in accounting, spent 25 years covering government as a journalist, served 12 years as mayor and have now served more than a decade in the Legislature.

I have also been a foster parent, adopted my two sons and served as a court-appointed guardian for more than 30 years. Those experiences have taught me how government decisions affect people in very different circumstances.

I understand Southwest Wisconsin because I have lived it, worked in it and served it my entire life.

Tataje: I am not a career politician. I manage a small business and know what it is like to meet a payroll, absorb rising costs, and live with the paperwork Madison creates. I am raising two boys and see what families are up against. As Grand Knight, I lead a council of volunteers who serve our community. That experience shapes how I would test every bill: Can a working family afford it? Can a small business owner understand it? Who is accountable if it fails? Running independently of the two major parties also means my vote answers to my neighbors and my conscience, not to party leadership.

Prices are soaring and property taxes have doubled for many working-class Wisconsinites in recent years. What can state government do to help the middle class survive these turbulent times?

Gruber: The current state legislature has chosen to defund public schools and defund our communities in order to give tax breaks to billionaires and wealthy corporations. Two billion dollars alone to data centers. That is money that should be in our communities funding public safety and public schools, keeping our property taxes and costs down.

Novak: State government needs to focus on both lowering costs and creating opportunities for people to earn more.

Wisconsin is in strong fiscal position, and taxpayers should benefit from that success through sustainable tax relief. This is why I voted to return our budget surplus to taxpayers and have voted numerous times to cut taxes for all taxpayers. At the same time, we need to be careful about shifting costs onto property taxpayers. State support for schools, local governments and shared services matters because when the state underfunds those responsibilities, local property taxpayers often make up the difference.

I voted to repeal Governor Evers' 400-year veto in hopes this multi-century automatic property tax increase would end. I'll work with the next governor to persuade them this needs to go. Families can't afford it.

We should also continue policies that grow the economy, expand housing and strengthen workforce opportunities. The goal should be a Wisconsin where working families can afford to live, raise a family and get ahead.

Tataje: Property tax bills differ from house to house, but the pressure is real, and school levies are the biggest driver right now. Here is what I would do.

Fix the school-funding formula so state aid replaces local property taxes rather

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ASSEMBLY

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than shifting the burden onto homeowners. Wisconsin is projected to end June 2027 with a balance of about $2.25 billion, according to the Department of Administration (https://doa.wi.gov/DEBFCapitalFinance/2026/General%20Fund%20Monthly%20Report_2026.08_No_Cover.pdf). That is largely one-time money, so I would use it for one-time relief and transitions, not permanent promises it cannot sustain.

Modernize the Homestead Credit. Right now, a household earning more than $24,680 cannot qualify, according to the Department of Revenue (https://www.revenue.wi.gov/Pages/FAQS/ise-home.aspx). I would raise and index that limit and phase the credit out gradually so it reaches struggling homeowners and renters.

Create paid family leave. Wisconsin's family leave law is unpaid and applies only to employers with at least 50 workers, according to the Department of Workforce Development (https://dwd.wisconsin.gov/er/civil-rights/fmla/default.htm). I support a self-funded insurance program, designed by actuaries before rates are set, with help for small employers who must cover an absent worker.

Finally, make it easier to build modest homes, repair older homes, and add accessory units so young families can afford to stay in the towns where they grew up.

Healthcare costs and health insurance are far beyond what many middle-class Wisconsinites can afford. Is there a solution?

Gruber: Yes. For starters, an option for family farms and small businesses to buy into the successful State group insurance and retirement programs. A farmer deserves access to the same healthcare and retirement program that a state legislator gets. For far too long, politicians in Madison have sided with health insurance executives and big drug companies. When I'm in the Assembly, I'll put patients over profits so we can get affordable care when we need it.

Novak: There is no single solution, but Wisconsin can make healthcare more affordable by attacking costs from several directions.

I authored the Wisconsin Healthcare Stability Plan to help reduce premiums in the individual insurance market. That was an example of a practical state-level solution to a real problem.

I've recently voted for more than $7 Billion for quality healthcare in our state, including postpartum health care for new mothers. We should continue supporting competition, price transparency and programs that help stabilize insurance markets. We also need to support rural hospitals, nursing homes, caregivers and other providers that are essential to keeping healthcare available outside Wisconsin's largest cities.

Tataje: There is no single fix, but we can stop making it worse. I would require clear upfront prices for common hospital services and prescriptions, strengthen protections against abusive medical debt collection, and scrutinize hospital mergers that close rural clinics and maternity units.

Rural Wisconsin needs doctors, nurses, and birth care close to home. I would fund loan repayment and training incentives tied to rural service. Wisconsin already extended postpartum Medicaid coverage to 12 months starting July 1, 2026. In September, federal regulators approved a Wisconsin plan allowing doulas to work through prenatal care-coordination programs, according to Medicaid.gov. Now we need to make sure moms can actually get appointments, rides, home visits, and mental health care. I propose an $8 million, two-year pilot targeting places with the largest shortages, with safety standards and emergency backup plans.

On Medicaid expansion, I want an honest current estimate. Federal changes eliminated a $1.3 billion temporary incentive and restricted provider taxes, according to the Department of Health Services (https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/news/releases/fed-reconciliation-082825.pdf), so old savings estimates no longer apply.

Can Wisconsin remain America's Dairyland? Should it?

Gruber: Yes and yes. Dairy farming is a part of our culture and the foundation of our rural economy. I will work with anyone in Madison to make sure we can support our family farms and continue Wisconsin's legacy as the "Dairy State."

Novak: Absolutely. Agriculture is part of Wisconsin's identity, economy and way of life, and dairy remains central to that.

I grew up on a dairy farm, so I understand that supporting agriculture means more than putting a slogan on a license plate. Farmers need markets, reasonable regulations, a reliable workforce, strong rural infrastructure and access to the research and technology that can help them remain competitive.

We also need to recognize that Wisconsin agriculture is changing. We should support dairy farms while creating opportunities for other agricultural businesses and value-added industries.

I believe Wisconsin can remain America's Dairyland, but we need policies that allow the next generation of farmers to make a living and continue the agricultural traditions that built our communities.

Tataje: Yes, and it must . Wisconsin produced 3.64 billion pounds of cheese in 2025, more than any other state. But the number of licensed dairy herds fell from 5,200 to 4,977 in just one year, according to USDA statistics. That is more than four dairy herds lost every week.

Dairyland should mean farm families can make a living, not just that the state produces a lot of milk. I would help farmers plan transitions to a child, an employee, or a beginning farmer. I would support small-scale and cooperative processing, and give farmers a right to repair their own equipment without waiting on a dealer. I would also fund a $5 million well-testing and cleanup program so farm families and neighbors can trust their water.

What steps would you take to promote transparency in state government?

Gruber: Make the same open records laws apply to the legislators that apply to other government entities. I've hosted over 20 public town halls and meet and greets during this campaign and will commit to holding at least 12 per year throughout the district while in office.

Novak: The public has a right to know what its government is doing and how its money is being spent. My background in journalism gave me a firsthand understanding of why Wisconsin's open-records laws matter.

I have supported efforts to protect those laws and have been recognized by the Wisconsin Newspaper Association for my work protecting open government and the newspaper industry.

Transparency also means making government information accessible and understandable. Agencies should respond to legitimate records requests in a timely manner, spending should be easy for taxpayers to track, and public officials should be accountable for their decisions.

Government should never treat transparency as a partisan issue.

Tataje: I would introduce the Sovereign Witness Act. Wisconsin's records-management law excludes legislators' records from the ordinary state definition, according to state statute (https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/16/iii/61?view=section). Partisan caucuses are also exempt from the Open Meetings Law, according to state statute (https://docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/statutes/statutes/19/v?view=section). Too many decisions are made behind closed doors and presented to the public as done deals.

My bill would:

Require legislators to keep official emails and messages under a clear retention schedule.

Guarantee free, searchable recordings of every public hearing and floor session.

Publish a log of every meeting with a registered lobbyist within seven days, including who attended and what was discussed.

End secret caucus meetings where public business is decided.

It would still protect constituents' medical and financial information, security matters, and privileged legal advice. From day one, my office would publish my calendar and lobbyist meetings without waiting for a law.

Explain how you would bring different ideas to the table, and even disagree, in a way that is productive, helpful, and does not detract from civil discourse:

Gruber: The same way that I show up as a first responder, with a practical problem solving approach that is centered on positive outcomes for people, not political parties.

Novak: Listen first.

My years as a journalist taught me to ask questions and understand both sides of an issue. My years as mayor taught me that you still have to find a solution when people disagree. And the Legislature has reinforced that lesson.

I don't expect everyone to agree with me. I do expect people to be treated with respect.

I try to separate the person from the issue, identify where we agree, explain where we disagree and then determine whether there is a practical solution. You can have strong disagreements without making everything personal.

Tataje: I begin by assuming the person across the table loves this state as much as I do. We usually agree on the problem: expensive housing, stretched schools, struggling farms. We disagree about the solution, so I ask what evidence would change their mind and answer the same question myself.

If someone finds a flaw in my plan, I will fix it and credit them. If I vote no, I will publicly explain why. I can hold strong convictions without treating opponents as enemies.

Name a specific issue on which you are willing to work across party lines?

Gruber: Addressing rising costs for working families and funding Knowles-Nelson stewardship. These are issues I hear about from Republicans and Democrats as I knock doors.

Novak: Water quality is probably the clearest example.

I chaired the bipartisan Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality and worked closely with Democratic Rep. Katrina Shankland. We held hearings around Wisconsin, listened to farmers, local governments, environmental groups and other stakeholders, and developed 13 legislative proposals. All 13 passed the Assembly with overwhelming bipartisan support. The work included investments in county conservation staff, producer-led watershed groups, well compensation, PFAS and nitrate contamination.

I believe that experience demonstrates that Democrats and Republicans can disagree politically while still accomplishing important things together.

Tataje: Rural ambulance service. When you call 911, nobody asks your party. Many rural ambulance services depend on aging volunteers and tight budgets. I would work with anyone on a $10 million, two-year readiness program for staffing, training, and equipment, with priority for the greatest coverage gaps. It would reward neighboring services that share costs while letting communities keep their own identity. Grants would require public reporting of staffed hours and response times so we know the money works.

What's an important issue you feel is not talked about enough? Perhaps something that is vital to the state's well-being but not glamorous enough to garner a lot of headlines or clicks?

Gruber: State cuts to shared revenue. The state has cut so much funding to communities to give tax breaks to corporations and the ultra-wealthy, and the blame is often incorrectly attributed to local governments. Politicians in Madison have been sticking local property taxpayers with a larger share of the bill for essential services like police, fire, and EMS. We deserve new leadership that will work to restore state government support for our local communities.

Novak: Local government and the basic infrastructure that makes communities work.

People notice when a road is closed or a bridge fails, but they don't always think about the systems behind it: water and sewer infrastructure, county conservation staff, emergency services, local government employees and the ability of municipalities to provide basic

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PERSPECTIVE

GEIGER Counter



by Matt Geiger, Editor

The Death of Daniel Woodrell

"Pine trees with low limbs spread over fresh snow made a stronger vault for the spirit than pews and pulpits ever could," wrote Daniel Woodrell.

Woodrell died of pancreatic cancer last year. I didn't even hear about it for several months. He was probably America's greatest living writer until he drew that final breath the day after Thanksgiving.

I discovered him by accident many years ago. His prose left me breathless with awe and jealously. How could someone say such beautiful and honest things in such an ugly and deceitful world?

He wrote stories of exploding meth labs and violent Ozark bootleggers and poachers, and every line sang with poetry that would turn Shakespeare as green as Washington on the one-dollar bill. He could write a more beautiful story about a murderous outlaw than anyone else could write about a saint or an angel.

He could have been very rich and famous because one of his books, "Winter's Bone," was turned into an Oscar-winning movie. But he was deaf to the siren call of fame and fortune, living out his days in the tiny, impoverished, rural town of West Table, Missouri.

Every line in every book he wrote is exquisite.

Take this opening to his most famous book: "Ree Dolly stood at break of day on her cold front steps and smelled coming flurries and saw meat. Meat hung from trees across the creek. The carcasses hung pale of flesh with a fatty gleam from low limbs of saplings in the side yards. Three halt haggard houses formed a kneeling rank on the far creekside and each had two or more skinned torsos dangling by rope from sagged limbs, venison left to the weather for two nights and three days so the early blossoming of decay might round the flavor, sweeten that meat to the bone."

Or this line from one of his crime novels: "The old man had been tanned by the light of too many beer signs, and it just goes to show that you can't live on three packs of Chesterfields and a fifth of bourbon a day without starting to drift far too … wide in the turns."

Or this: "Nobody here wants to be awful," he said. He hopped a little as he zipped up. "It's just nobody here knows all the rules yet, and that makes a rocky time."

Or this, the beginning of what would be his final book: "She frightened me at every dawn the summer I stayed with her. She'd sit on the edge of her bed, long hair down, down to the floor and shaking as she brushed and brushed, shadows ebbing from the room and early light owing in through both windows. Her hair was as long as her story and she couldn't walk when her hair was not woven into dense braids and pinned around and atop her head. Otherwise her hair dragged the floor like the train of a medieval gown and she had to gather it into a sheaf and coil it about her forearm several times to walk the floor without stepping on herself."

So why didn't anyone, except for perhaps a few unctuous literary critics, talk about our nation's greatest writer more? Why did it take several months for me to learn of his death, which I read about only after Googling him to find out if he had a new book coming out anytime soon? Yet every day I am bombarded with news about insignificant oligarchs and celebrities and gossip; ugly things conveyed in ugly sentences. Woodrell had no social media presence at all, which of course is a sign of wisdom and virtue, because to use Facebook and AI is to be complicit in their ongoing crimes against humanity. (That's not hyperbole; Facebook recently reached a settlement in which it must pay $18 billion for the harm is has caused to children, and AI has stolen literally all of human knowledge without consent.)

But that was not the primary reason.

Woodrell answered that question himself, at least twice, while he was still alive.

"I learned my values," he told one person. "It's better to be poor than to be beholden. Wealth is not the object of life. You should be polite as long as possible, and when you can't be polite anymore, don't run."

"I realized there might be monetary or financial reasons to jump in and write a 'Winter's Bone Retriumphs' or something, and nobody would object to me doing that in publishing. But it would be a waste of my time, and they always take a little longer than you thought they would take," he told another.

Woodrell saw the violent anguish of life and did not run from it.

In one of his books, a character mused: "I, myself, often wished to be spared the expectation of better days ahead or such."

Of course, he is now, ever since the day after Thanksgiving, spared the weight of such expectations. What is truly remarkable is how many living, breathing, soaring stories he left behind. People and places so alive you can practically smell them when they sweat.

And he wrote of the dead plenty when he was alive.

"Every window we had opened onto a vista of tombstones," he wrote in "The Death of Sweet Mister." "Which included the window by my bed."

"Trees grew in the cemetery too, great hulking oaks and sentinel pines, plus squirrels jigged freely about the grounds, but it's those ranks of tombstones that spook the big lasting impression into a person's mind. When you look there, that's what you see: the dead, long dead and fresh dead and in between."

When Daniel Woodrell wrote, he made the poor and wretched beautiful. He made stories a soul could live on for a long time. In his hands, everything and everyone was imbued with a certain delicious beauty, no matter how ugly it was.

Not even the dead, in whose ranks he now rests, were excluded from it. Woodrell now rests in what he called the "blossoming of decay."

The world is being consumed every day. Developers bulldoze every inch of fields and forests to erect houses, businesses and AI data centers. Even the internet is being devoured, and soon AI will have scrubbed all of human history from it, and a handful of oligarchs will own all of digital human history and they will sell their edited version of it back to civilizations like some god-forsaken utility. AI companies are actively buying and shredding every paper book they can get their hands on right this second.

So get your hands on a few Daniel Woodrell books and wait them out. This too, shall pass. And when what Woodrell called "the constant screeching, squalling hubbub" of regular life gets to be too much, seek out the few remaining pine trees, in cemeteries or wherever you can find them. See their low limbs spread over fresh snow and feel your spirit exhale. Give thanks, in November or any day of the year.

"The heart makes dreams seem like ideas," Woodrell wrote. Ideas are fun but ultimately they are irrelevant. Only dreams matter. The kind people have for the short time they walk the Earth. Businesses cannot dream, nor can AI, nor can houses or bank accounts or political parties.

And what else do we call death, but sleep, which is our natural dreaming state. It is because of the beauty of art that we can sleep so well, our primordial spirits snug in their snow-covered vaults.

Sweet dreams, Mr. Woodrell. Sweet dreams.

Letters to the Editor

Stanfield says Vote 'No' Nov. 3

Vote NO on all 3 Referendums on November 3

If you concerned about protecting our existing Wisconsin Constitution and care about equal opportunity and fair access to the vulnerable in our society, here are some important reasons to consider:

Vote No if you support Health and Environmental Programs that reduce higher rates for chronic illness and disease and mortality, Maternal and infant mortality for minority populations.

Vote No if you support Educational Programs that fund K-12 curriculum, UW admissions, scholarships, grants, courses and textbooks.

Vote No if you support Community Action Programs such as Head Start, Food Banks, Homeless Shelters and Domestic Violence Shelters.

Beware of the way the wording for voting in the affirmative is misleading. Wisconsin and Federal law already make discrimination illegal. There is no basis that justifies altering the Wisconsin Constitution and negate 60 years of progress. If the referendum pass and are not defeated, it will take decades of work to fix inequality at taxpayers expense.

Sandra Stanfield
Blue Mounds

No, no, no

Be prepared to find three constitutional amendments on the backside of your ballot for the November election. One amendment entitled "Governmental entity discrimination prohibited" prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin. Such discrimination is already illegal in Wisconsin, so voting NO will not change that. The amendment goes on to prohibit "preferential treatment" to any individual or group on those same bases. Ignoring disparities in health, education and economic opportunities tied to a person's race, sex, ethnicity or country of origin, this part of the amendment would ban government programs and policies to address those disparities. This amendment confuses equality and equity. Equality means treating everyone the same. Equity means insuring everyone has a fair opportunity to succeed in life, recognizing that not everyone starts from the same place - in other words, leveling the playing field. Helping disadvantaged groups does not constitute discrimination against everyone else. This is an anti-equity amendment, not an anti-discrimination amendment.

Another amendment entitled "Freedom to gather in places of worship during an emergency" would forbid the government from closing places of worship in response to a public health emergency. This amendment would seriously curtail the ability of health officials to contain a possible future highly contagious and deadly pandemic, putting at risk the lives of thousands of Wisconsinites. The temporary closure of places of worship during a health emergency is not an infringement on freedom of religion. It doesn't prevent people from worshiping God at home nor with others through Zoom-like technology.

The third amendment is entitled "Partial veto." This amendment would prohibit the governor from using his or her partial veto power to create or increase any tax or fee. It would make it harder for any future governor to right the wrongs of a legislature that fails to provide sufficient revenues for education related or other priorities of the people of Wisconsin.

When it's time to cast your vote on the amendments, just remember NO, NO, NO.

Allen Pincus
Barneveld

The problem with the village's public comment process

First of all, I like to thank our administration for allowing the public to speak at village committee and board meetings. There is a major problem with the three-minute public comment process when there are controversial topics, for example the Jeff Grundahl building proposal on the DMU (Downtown Mixed Use) on Main Street, being discussed during committee and board meetings!

The problem is the pre-

continued on page 5

Gleanings

By Barb Johnson
Mount Horeb Mail

140 Years Ago- Oct. 24, 1886

Fred Riphan is on the improve having been confined to his sick bed for a long time.

Mrs. Michael Bilsey is lying in a critical condition at this writing and hopes for her recovery are faint.

The time of the year is now approaching when the poor brakemen upon the freight trains will run the risk of being run over by the cars.

We will grind feed every Tuesday and Friday hereafter until further notice. If necessary we will grind oftener.

Mr. Kelley, living near the Mounds, deserves a notice for the manner in which he laid out a full-grown wolf, last week. With bare hands he seized hold of the wolf's tail, while his dog attacked his wolfship's front quarters until life was extinct.

The News is one day late this week, owing to the railway wreck. A portion of our copy on the way to the printer was burned, necessitating the rewriting of a greater portion. Such as did escape the flames was eighteen hours late in reaching the printer.

130 Years Ago- Oct. 29, 1896

Now that the bicycle has been used by the robbers of the Sherburne, Minn. bank to facilitate their escape, will some enemy of the wheel come forward with a proposition to prohibit the use of the bicycle.

An exchange of remarks that more young men are learning trades inside of the penitentiary than outside of it, because we are trying to make lawyers, doctors and clerks out of material intended for blacksmiths, carpenters and other trades of mechanics.

Corn huskers are getting plentiful. Bennet Barton and Ole Jelley have gangs at work in their cornfields.

The German Valley schoolhouse is nearly completed and makes it look like a good old German settlement now.

Our townsman, A.O. Grinde, is making a thorough canvass of the county and is making a gentlemanly effort to win the victory.

Blue Valley is waking up at present. Bills are out announcing dances every Saturday night at the blacksmiths hall. Boys, wake up for the good old time coming.

Sol Levitan was greatly surprised Tuesday evening on returning home from his store in finding many of his friends gathered to celebrate his 34th birthday at his home in New Glarus. A handsome present consisting of a tea set of Haviland's china was given him. Mr. Levitan in a few well chosen words welcomed his guests. At 12 o'clock a beautiful supper was spread, after which all went home feeling one of the most pleasant evenings of their life had been spent.

120 Years Ago- Oct. 25, 1906

A.O. Bakken is receiving many orders for the R.F.D. cabinet.

Ole Olson and Lawrence Bergh took in the sights of Black Earth Tuesday.

Paul Kittleson is getting onto the keys at central, fitting himself for night operator.

Prof. Parsley likes to drive a horse with good knee action. Lee's bay and Dahle's sorrel suits him to perfection.

An immigrant from Norway arrived here Monday. His name is Gustav Anderson and he came from Ness, Romereke, is 19 years of age and a painter by trade. They crossed the big pond in eight days on one of the White Star Swift boats.

Miss Gena Thompson, instructor in elocution and now a resident of Mt. Horeb, has her card in the Times. The day is meeting with very good success, having several classes to instruct, making regular trips to neighboring towns each week. We wish her success.

110 Years Ago- Oct. 27, 1916

Leo Jacobson the new junk dealer is this week in the country out of town but next week will be at home, he wishes to add the farmers not to bring iron junk at this time as the market is off at present.

Halvor Kellisvig of Perry came up Monday to bring Mrs. home who was an over Sunday visitor taking in the big mission fest and visited friends. The lady is a cousin of professor Hegland and she was especially interested in seeing and hearing him at this time.

John Stensby of Perry is among the first in his neighborhood who has erected a cement stave silo.

The big tubular pump was this week put in the village well and some difficulty was experienced in lowering the pipes.

The Hauges church at Perry had their annual "Afholdsfest" last Sunday Dr. Killand and Rev. Green were the speakers. A basket dinner was had and an afternoon program was also rendered.

100 Years Ago- Oct. 21, 1926

The three-year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Inman Iverson, Daleyville, sustained cuts about the face and head when she fell from the back seat of the car while her mother was driving from Daleyville to Mount Horeb. She was treated by Dr. A.S. Thompson.

A daughter was born to Mr. and Mrs. Paul Helgeson, town of Blue Mounds, Thursday, Oct. 14.

Prof. Hector Gunderson, a graduate of St. Olaf College. and son of S. Gunderson, Mount Horeb, has accepted the position as athletic director of Wartburg College.

Miss Clara Jordee went to Red Wing, Minn., Saturday to attend the foundation meeting at the Red Wing College.

Born to Mr. and Mrs. Helmer Grinder, Perry, a son, Friday, Oct. 15.

60 Years Ago- Oct. 27, 1966

Dr. Don Ege, Mt. Horeb, piloted his plane Friday to Norfolk, Neb., in company with Ed Carr, Mt. Horeb, and Russell Martin, Blue Mounds, and participated in the pheasant hunting there.

A meeting to organize Friends of the Mt. Horeb Public Library was held Monday, Oct. 19. The 38 members present elected: president, Mrs. John Anderson; vice-president, Rev. Ruben Mostrom; treasurer, John Ellestad; secretary, Ms. Donald Julson.

Mt. Horeb High School's football team put their hearts and souls into a 48-minute struggle Friday night and came up with an upset of the year before a jam-packed Hill Field crowd of Platteville homecoming fans. They turned in a 13-7 triumph over Platteville's previously unbeaten Hillmen.

50 Years Ago- Oct. 21, 1976

Roy Tvedt of Mount Horeb was recognized by the Mount Horeb School District recently for his 25 years of service. He began as bus driver and later served as mechanic and transportation planner.

Craig Hulbert is the new assistant to the clerk for the Village of Mount Horeb. He will be working with Village Clerk Dorothy Williams.

Blanchardville Lutheran church was the setting for the wedding of Eileen Swiggum and Dennis Knudtson in a 2 p.m. ceremony on Saturday, Oct. 2.

Reigning over the 1976 Viking homecoming activities last week were Queen Deb Helms and King Paul Dybdahl.

40 Years Ago- Oct. 23, 1986

Ruby Hoffmaster, Mount Horeb, died on Thursday, Oct. 16, 1986, in a Madison hospital at the age of 81 years.

The Vermont Town Board appointed Sharon Gaskill Monday night as interim treasurer to fill a vacancy incumbent Majorie King created by moving out of the town.

30 Years Ago- Oct. 24, 1996

Mount Horeb's first AFS student, Monserrat del Castillo, died on Friday, Oct. 18, after a brief illness in her home city of Riobamba, Ecuador. She came to Mount Horeb for the 1964-65 school year.

Springdale Lutheran Church announces Matthew Dollhausen as their newly ordained pastor. Pastor Dollhausen, wife Rhonda and their three sons will reside in Mount Horeb.

Rebecca Knudtson and Matt Schneider were married on Aug. 3 at Grace Lutheran Church, Eau Claire.

20 Years Ago- Oct. 26, 2006

Michael Anderson is the new investment representative of Edward Jones' Mount Horeb's branch office located at 106 East Main Street.

Elizabeth "Bette" Hall, 84, of Mount Horeb, passed away on Saturday, Oct. 21, 2006 at St. Mary's Hospital, Madison.

Every retail business in the Hoff Mall will close its doors by 12:00 noon on Dec. 31, 2006. The Gallina property Companies of Middleton will continue to own the mall, along with new partner Joen Meylor of Mount Horeb. The company is actively seeking new tenants to fill the vacancies.

Woman allegedly robbed 92-year-old minutes after being released from DC jail

A suspect is in custody after she robbed a woman just minutes after being released from the Dane County Jail. Andrea R. Smith, 25, of Madison, was back in the Dane County Jail last week on tentative charges of Strong-Armed Robbery, Battery, and Resisting an Officer. The Strong-Armed Robbery and Battery charges carry an Elder Person enhancer because of the victim's age.

The robbery occurred just before 3:30 pm on Tuesday, October 13th, in the women's restroom on the first floor of the Public Safety Building. The victim, a 92-year-old woman who volunteers at the jail as a tutor in the math and literacy program, sustained minor injuries.

Approximately 2 hours after the robbery was reported, the Sheriff's deputy who took the victim's report located Smith on W. Mifflin Street. Smith resisted the deputy, prompting the use of a TASER. A bystander, Kerry J. Schell, age 45, of Madison, attempted to physically intervene in the arrest and struck the deputy with a metal shopping cart. Schell failed to follow multiple commands to step back and was pepper-sprayed. Smith and Schell were both treated at a local hospital. Schell was released and will receive a county ordinance citation for resisting. Smith was booked into the Dane County Jail on the felony charges. City of Madison Police Officers assisted in detaining Smith and Schell.

LETTERS

continued from page 4

senter (in this case the developer) is included in the meeting agenda which allows the presenter(s) to present their topic/change/project to the committee or board so everybody has a clear understanding and take as much time as needed. This can also include questions and answers between the presenter and the committee members and trustees. This is a two-way conversation.

Per the "Public Comment Policy" the public only has three minutes per person to voice their thoughts & questions, while the committee members or board members listen only and take notes. There is no feedback or interaction between the person speaking during their three minutes and the board or committee. This is a one-way conversation.

When questions are asked during the three-minute public comments, they are mostly ignored and not discussed by the committee members during the current meeting after the three-minute public comment process is done. You have to remember that Mount Horeb has a diverse population of residence with various professional knowledge who could contribute on the topic being discussed, but because of this format, that knowledge is rarely utilized.

Also, if any questions are asked during the three-minute public comment, the answers to these questions aren't published so the Mount Horeb residence can review them at a later date. These controversial topics can require large amount of time because of many people taking three minutes to voice their opinion.

The solution to this problem is to add representatives of the community that have a counter position to the controversial proposal so that they have the same amount of time and opportunity to clarify their position to the committee or board members. This solution would decrease meeting time, increase communication transparency between the residents and the village, immediate answers to questions presented during the discussion, and increase understanding between the presenters and the village.

I propose this solution be added to the village public comment or meeting processes and on October 28, 2026 at the Plan Commission meeting the opposition to the Jeff Grundahl building proposal on the DMU on Main Street is added to the meeting agenda!

Stephen Sopcak
Mount Horeb

We the People demand Change

Mount Horeb Friends and Neighbors,
before you vote imagine a Wisconsin
where we...

★ **Lower Property Taxes**
★ **Fund Schools, Emergency Services, Local Government**
★ **Restore healthcare**
★ **Protect Family Farms & Natural Resources**
★ **Defend Wisconsin from Federal Overreach**

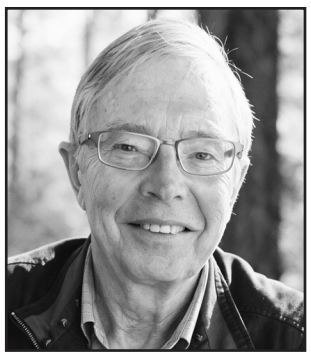
Let's vote for fresh ideas and elect
Ben Gruber & ***Bill Oemichen*** to Assembly,
Jenna Jacobson to State Senate,
David Crowley for Governor!

Paid for by the Democratic Party of Iowa County

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Obituaries

Dr. Warren D. Wilson



May 16, 1944 – October 7, 2026

MOUNT HOREB – Dr. Warren D. Wilson, age 82, of Mount Horeb, Wis., passed away on Wednesday, October 7, 2026, at Agrace Hospice Care, after living with cancer for the past three years.

A memorial service will be held at EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH OF MOUNT HOREB, 315 E. Main St., Mount Horeb, at 11 a.m. on Friday, October 30, 2026, with Interim Pastor Karen Hofstad presiding. Visitation will be held at the church from 9 a.m. until the time of the service Friday. Burial will be at Spring Green Cemetery the following day at 10 a.m.

For more information and online condolences, please visit www.gundersonfh.com.

Gunderson Camacho
Mount Horeb
Funeral & Cremation Care
500 N. Eighth St.
(608) 437-5077

Dr. William Alexander Cox



March 19, 1929 – October 12, 2026

MOUNT HOREB – It is with profound sadness that we announce the passing of Dr. William Alexander Cox, fondly known as Alex, who was born into eternal life on October 12, 2026.

Born on March 19, 1929, in the serene town of Raton, New Mexico, Alex lived a life full of purpose, dedication, and kindness that touched the hearts of many. Alex was the cherished son of the late William Wilton and Margaret Mckenzie Storrie Cox.

Growing up in Raton, he graduated from Raton High School in 1947 and began his journey in the automobile industry to support his family. Having worked at the local Chevrolet dealership in Raton since he was 12 years old, Alex headed for Flint, Michigan and earned a degree from the General Motors Institute of Technology in 1951. His path to manage and ultimately own a General Motors dealership took a significant turn when he proudly served his country in the U.S. Army from 1951 to 1953 during the Korean War.

Returning home from the service in late 1953 he sold a car to a young lady named Julia Colleen Messick. In 1954 Colleen and Alex were married. However, inspired by his mother's two brothers who had become chiropractors years before, his true calling emerged when he changed careers in 1961 and embraced a career in chiropractic. Alex graduated as the valedictorian of his class from Palmer College of Chiropractic in 1964.

Dr. Alex's professional journey was marked by dedication and excellence. After a brief tenure of private practice in Lake Geneva, Wisconsin, Dr. Alex was invited by the esteemed Dr. Clarence Gonstead to join the Gonstead Clinic of Chiropractic staff in Mount Horeb, Wisconsin. In 1974, Alex and his brother Doug took ownership from Dr. Gonstead of the Clinic, Inc., the Karakahl Inn, Inc., and the Gonstead Seminar, Inc.

During his career at the clinic, Dr. Alex provided exceptional care for his patients. His reputation became legendary throughout the chiropractic profession as he devoted over 55 years to teaching the intricacies of the Gonstead system to the profession he loved and influenced countless doctors and students worldwide. Dr. Alex was an avid Green Bay Packer fan even before he moved to Wisconsin. In 1967 a Packer and future Hall of Famer named Henry Jordan was referred to Dr. Alex. Henry then referred many of his teammates to Dr. Alex and other Packer greats like Bart Starr, Ray Nitschke, Willy Wood, Jerry Kramer, Jim Weatherwax just to name a few, became regular patients. Before the days when pro football teams had team chiropractors, after every Green Bay home game, Dr. Alex and family would leave the game, go to Henry Jordan's residence in Green Bay, and 20 to 30 players would stop by for post-game refreshments and wait their turn to see Dr. Alex. As a result, Dr. Alex became season ticket holder and dear friends of the Jordan family. When his Sundays were not occupied with going to Green Bay, Dr. Alex loved to take day trips in the car with the family, some local and some two to three hours away. In the summer months, if not going for a car ride, he found great joy, relaxation and self-satisfaction in sitting on his John Deere mower and spending several hours mowing his four-acre lawn to perfection.

Alex was predeceased by his beloved wife of 42 years, Julia Colleen Cox. He is survived by his son, William John (Patti) Cox, and his daughter, Alexis Ann Cox. His legacy lives on through his grandchildren, Tricia Lynn (Eric) Rector and Jonathan Storrie (Katie) Cox, Lexa Colleen Miller and Cassondra Jordanne Miller, and his great-grandchildren, Justin Wade and Luke William Rector, Cohen Alexander and Collins Mary Cox, Aleigah Ann and Levi Allan Buening. Alex is also survived by his dear brother, Douglas and wife, Sherill, his sister, Margaret Jean Evans, and his close friend and companion for the last 30 years, Carol Miller.

Dr. Alex's life was a testament to the power of kindness, wisdom, and empathy. He had a unique ability to forge genuine friendships, not through words alone but through his unyielding actions. His friends, family, colleagues, and patients trusted him deeply, and his compassionate nature brought laughter and comfort to many.

In his final years, Alex was cared for by the devoted staff at Vita Care and staff from Hospice. The family extends their heartfelt gratitude to the staff for their unwavering care and support.

In honor of Alex's memory, the family kindly requests that donations be made to the "Dr. Alex Cox Gonstead Legacy Foundation" which will then present the annual "Dr. Alex Cox Gonstead Legacy Award" (gonsteadseminar.com/legacy-foundation/). This fund is governed by a board of directors to support students and doctors toward education from the Gonstead Seminars, Inc., Doctors of Chiropractic just starting out in practice or if a doctor or student faces some type of personal need in a time of crisis.

A man of deep wisdom and vast compassion, Dr. Alex's legacy will forever remain in the hearts of those he touched. As he rests peacefully, we remember him not only for his professional achievements but for the love and friendship he bestowed upon us all.

A funeral service will be held at MOUNT HOREB EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, 315 E. Main St., Mount Horeb, at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, October 24, 2026. Burial will take place at Mount Horeb Union Cemetery, followed by a luncheon at the church. Visitation will be held at GUNDERSON CAMACHO MOUNT HOREB FUNERAL AND CREMATION CARE, 500 N. Eighth St., Mount Horeb, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. on Friday, October 23, 2026, and also at the church from 10 a.m. until the time of the service on Saturday.

Online condolences may be made at www.gundersonfh.com.

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Senior Center News

October Events

Thursday, October 22nd, Internet Safety Class, 1:00pm, led by Tech Professional, Zeke. The internet is an incredible tool, but it's also a place for scammers. Come and walk through core habits you need to keep your personal information safe and secure.

Friday, October 23rd, BINGO at 12:30pm. $1 a card to play. Two card maximum. Lunch is provided. Sponsor is TBD.

Monday, October 26th, Ear Wax Removal at 12:30. Amy is here to assess and gently remove ear wax if needed. Call 608-437-6902 to schedule an appointment.

Monday, October 26th, Historical Presentation with Bob Block, 2:00pm. Bob will be here to share the Best of Unheard, Untold, & Unusual WWII Stories. "Discover fascinating and lesserknown stories of WWII including the daring Night Witches, the remarkable survival of the Ovitz family at Auschwitz, the only WWII battle fought on U.S. soil, and Calvin Graham, the youngest American to serve in the war. These extraordinary accounts reveal surprising stories of courage, sacrifice, survival, and resilience that are as captivating as they are unforgettable." There is no cost for this activity. Prior sign up is preferred, but not required.

Case Manager's Note: October 15th through December 7th is Medicare's annual Open Enrollment Period (OEP), also known as the Annual Election Period (AEP), is the time of year when you can make changes to your Medicare coverage. Any changes you make will take effect on January 1st. You can make as many changes as you want during this period, but only your last coverage choice will take effect on January 1st. The changes you can make include: joining a new Medicare Advantage Plan or Part D, switching from Original Medicare to a Medicare Advantage Plan, and switching from a Medicare Advantage Plan to Original Medicare. To make changes please CALL1-800-MEDICARE or visit Medicare.gov to compare options and enroll.

Nutrition:

October 27th: Harvest salad with chicken, kale, spinach, Brussels sprouts, carrot, dried cranberries, croutons, and balsamic vinaigrette

Sugar River Euchre

October 15 Results

By Stan Hook

Halloween came a little early this year. The witches were out in full force last Thursday night in Mt. Horeb, be it without their brooms, as the Brewers used them to sweep the Dodgers out of the NLCS! As for the Sugar River Euchre League race to the 2026/2027 championship title, two teams remain winless and seven teams are two and one. Also, Pepé Le Pew returned for the second and third time this season. His first visit was to Kleeman's in New Glarus where Hay Shakers Jarrod Judd and Fred Ryser were skunked by Cowboys Don Field and Steve Dower in the second frame. With Pepé Le Pew irritating their senses, Hay Shakers Jarrod Judd and Fred Ryser managed only 70 points for the league's low score this week. That's the second Hay Shaker couple to be skunked already this season.

After stinking up Kleeman's, Pepé made a quick dash to Kurniki's in Pine Bluff to spray Bruce Milestone and RoseAnn Meier with some love. With the assistance of engineers Steve Hoffmaster and Opie Taylor opening the door for Pepé, Bruce Milestone and RoseAnn Meier succumbed to Pepé's strong presence in the fourth frame.

Roger Olstad and Randy Schmid hogtied 117 cattle for the Cowboys, while Don Field and Steve Dower added another 113 head. Not to be out done, Cowboys Ferdie Schmitz and Dean Disch rounded up another 111 steers. In doing so, the Cowboys secured a 93 point win over the Hay Shakers.

With 118 points, Kurniki's Express engineers Karen Miller and Charlie Steinhauer had the League's high score this week. With that, the Express outscored the Red Mouse Uff-das by 20 points. Even with the skunk, Bruce Milestone and RoseAnn Meier still managed to score 90 points for the team Uff-da.

The Red Mouse Shufflers found themselves trailing the Viking Trolls in each of the first five frames. At one point they were down by as many as 21 points. But, in the sixth frame, the Shufflers took the lead by 3 points and never looked back. John Nechkash and Randy Skogen's 110 points helped secure the 34 point win for the Shufflers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Gov. Evers Appoints Pope to Wisconsin Technical College System Board

Gov. Tony Evers on October 15 announced his appointment of former Wisconsin State Assembly Representative and local resident Sondy Pope to the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS) Board. Pope will replace Dr. Quincey L. Daniels Jr., who resigned from the board on July 15, 2026. Pope will serve for the remainder of Dr. Daniels' term, which expires May 1, 2029.

"Sondy has been a champion for Wisconsin public education for decades, and I'm looking forward to seeing her continue her advocacy for our technical colleges. The board's work



Pope

is critical to ensuring our technical colleges maintain their leading status as premier higher education institutions that prepare our kids to join our state's workforce. Sondy's wide breadth of experience and dedicated commitment to public education will make her an exceptional addition to the board," said Gov. Evers. "It's important to me that board members are committed to upholding the mission of our technical colleges by ensuring that we can support our students and build a 21st-century workforce Wisconsin needs to support a 21st-century economy, and I know Sondy will work hard to do what's best for our students, faculty, and staff."

First elected in 2002, Pope served in the Wisconsin State Legislature for 20 years. Pope represented the 79th Assembly District and later the 80th Assembly District. As a legislator, she served on the Assembly Committee on Education in every session, including serving as chair and as ranking member. Pope also served in several other committee assignments, including Corrections and the Courts, Aging and Long-Term Care, and Consumer Protection.

"I am sincerely grateful to Gov. Evers for this appointment to the Wisconsin Technical College System Board and welcome this opportunity as a continuation of my decades-long commitment to education," said Pope. "The WTCS Board mission of education that is student-centered reflects my beliefs and philosophy perfectly. I have been a witness and participant in the many shifts of education in Wisconsin and look forward to an involvement at this level. As the world economy and ever-changing technologies evolve and shift, it is vitally important that Wisconsin is prepared to provide high-quality, relevant opportunities for the future of our workforce."

During her years in the Legislature, she served on a broad range of task forces and study committees, including the Wisconsin Blue Ribbon Commission on School Funding, the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Rural Education, the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Urban Education, and the Assembly Speaker's Task Force on Water Quality. Throughout her career as a lawmaker, she maintained a passion for education and for education funding in particular. Pope was also a commissioner of the Midwestern Higher Education Compact and a Bowhay Institute Center for Policy Alternatives fellow. Upon retiring from the Legislature, she was appointed to the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics Authority Board and the Wisconsin State Historical Society Board of Curators.

'We can finally eliminate a disease that has caused so much suffering and death'

Rotary Club aims to end polio in Pakistan, Afghanistan

Thanks to the worldwide efforts of Rotary, polio has been eliminated in 99.9 percent of the world, and hard work is underway to finally eradicate the disease from remote areas of Pakistan and Afghanistan.

To draw attention to this effort, Mount Horeb Rotary Club invites the community to join with them in the local version of the World's Largest Polio Walk, which will leave from the Middle School parking lot at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, Oct. 24, and walk along the sidewalk in downtown Mount Horeb.

Elizabeth Grabe, president of the Mount Horeb club, said members will be walking at the same time as Rotary clubs from near the Mexican border in Texas to northern Minnesota. Clubs in Wisconsin's Rotary District 6250 are also raising money to help the End Polio Now effort.

"Rotary is known worldwide for its efforts to eliminate polio, and we in Mount Horeb are proud to be part of that effort," Grabe said.

A local Rotary club in the Philippines took on the challenge of eliminating the virus from its island in 1979, an effort that was so successful that Rotary clubs went on to eliminate polio from all the Philippine islands. In 1985, Rotary International adopted the cause of eliminating polio worldwide.

Today, few people in Wisconsin remember what it was like when the fear of polio shut down swimming pools and movie theaters. The last major polio epidemic hit Wisconsin in the summer of 1955. That year there were 114 cases of polio in Madison by the end of August and another 90 cases in Dane County outside of Madison.

Dr. Ralph Olson, who earned his medical degree from the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health the previous year, was chief pediatric resident during the epidemic.

In an essay published in the school's Quarterly magazine, Olson recalled the "tragic summer of 1955" when two floors of the State Orthopedic Hospital on the UW-Madison campus were filled with polio patients. The virus can infect the brain stem, interfering with breathing, so many of the patients needed tracheostomies so they could breathe. Others would spend years in "iron lungs" because they lost their ability to breathe on their own.

Olson remembered working seven days a week in the unairconditioned hospital, with some of the staff contracting polio as they worked to save the patients. In August alone, 30 children died there, Olson recalled, including three from one family. Sometimes patients would seem to recover but die in their sleep weeks or months later because they stopped breathing. Others suffered crippling orthopedic issues that left them paralyzed.

"I recall an 11-year-old patient who lost almost all of her muscles," Olson wrote. "She remained at the State Orthopedic Hospital for years."

The Salk vaccine arrived that year, too late to prevent the last Wisconsin epidemic, but since then, the state has been largely free of polio. Since Rotary has teamed up with global partners on the PolioPlus effort, more than 2.5 billion children have received the polio vaccine.

"Rotary is dedicated to making sure every child is vaccinated so that we can finally eliminate a disease that has caused so much suffering and death," Grabe said.

Fifth grader Crosby Williams earns Student Spotlight

Crosby Williams, a fifth grader in Melissa Gervasi's class, is the Mount Horeb Area School District's latest Student Spotlight recipient! Crosby was recognized as the Board of Education's October recipient for embodying the Intermediate Center's mission of outstanding leadership, kindness, and inclusion.

Staff describe Crosby as a kind, curious, energetic, and hard-working student who consistently leads in a positive way. He approaches daily activities with enthusiasm, demonstrating that you can have fun while remaining respectful and responsible. His teachers note that what truly sets him apart is his natural empathy and his instinct to step up without being asked—whether asking a peer to join his group, helping with an activity, or sharing a laugh to make someone's day brighter.



Pictured from left to right: Superintendent Dr. Steve Salerno, Intermediate Center Principal Katie Hauge, Mr. Matthew and Mrs. Katie Williams, Crosby, older brothers Simon and Mason, family friend Julia Straka, and Intermediate Center Board Liaison Jessica Arrigoni.

Beyond his positive attitude and hard work, Crosby is a remarkable friend and a unifying presence in the classroom. From his early days in third grade through his music classes and present fifth-grade year, educators highlight his humble nature and magnetic energy. Whether encouraging a classmate in need or helping everyone feel included, his contagious acts of kindness ensure that all students feel like they belong. Kevin McGivern, Jacque. Fredrickson, Brenna Siebold, and Fae Curtis all emphasize that Crosby exemplifies what it means to be a proud Mount Horeb Viking.

The District is honored to recognize Crosby Williams for his dedication, empathy, leadership, and commitment to making school a welcoming place for everyone.

COMMUNITY

A Partnership That Keeps Giving Back: O'Reilly Auto Parts Supports Mount Horeb's Technical Education Programs



O'Reilly Auto Parts District Manager Ken Shaw, a 1997 Mount Horeb Area School District graduate, recently returned to his former school alongside David Lanzhammer.

What happens when a Mount Horeb graduate returns to the classroom—not as a student, but as a professional helping prepare the next generation?

For students in Bart Leibfried and Tim Killinger's Small Engines program at Mount Horeb High School, it means having the opportunity to learn with professional-grade tools while connecting with people who understand where those skills can lead.

O'Reilly Auto Parts District Manager Ken Shaw, a 1997 Mount Horeb Area School District graduate, recently returned to his former school alongside David Lanzhammer to continue O'Reilly's support of the District's technical education programs. Their visit included a donation of tools and equipment, including clip-on wheel weights, tool kits, bottle jacks, and other resources students can put to work in the shop.

For Shaw, the visit offered a look at just how much the program has grown since his own time at Mount Horeb High School, when the auto and wood shops shared a single room.

But the most meaningful part of the visit is always the conversations with students. More than 20 students shared their interests and future plans, including aspirations to work on engines in the military and dreams of opening their own repair shops.

Those conversations—and the tools now available to students—help connect classroom learning to the world beyond high school.

"Our students take pride in their work, and having professional-quality tools puts them one step closer to the industry standards they'll encounter in the real world," Leibfried said. "It means so much to see our community invest directly in our kids' futures."

Killinger added, "When students have access to the right tools, their confidence skyrockets. They're able to problem-solve, practice new skills safely, and really immerse themselves in the work."

O'Reilly Auto Parts' continued investment is more than a donation. It is a reminder to students that the skills they are building today matter—and that their community is willing to invest in where those skills can take them.

The Mount Horeb Area School District extends its sincere appreciation to O'Reilly Auto Parts District Manager of Southwest Wisconsin District 448, Ken Shaw; O'Reilly Auto Parts Regional Sales Manager David Lanzhammer; and Senior Regional Director of Operations in Wisconsin Region 25, Jim Belschner, for continuing to support Mount Horeb students.

Recreation Notes

Join the Mount Horeb Recreation Department for their 22nd annual Creepy Crawl haunted hike on October 29th, sponsored by MHTC. Take a haunted hike through part of the Military Ridge Trail lit by carved pumpkins and lined with spooks and scares of all kinds. The hike begins at the 4th Street entrance to the trail and ends near 2nd street. After the hike, there will be fun for all ages including hay wagon rides, Haven's Petting Zoo, a bounce house, food trucks, and more! The Less Scary Experience is from 6:00 - 7:00 PM and the Scarier Experience is from 7:15 - 8:15 PM; $2 per person admission is required on site. See the Rec Dept website for more details.

Join our basketball program! **3rd Grade Rec Basketball:** This league runs in collaboration with Verona Recreation. Each practice and/or game will run for 1 hour. Each week there will be one weeknight practice (day & times TBD) and one Saturday morning practice (times TBD) until games begin. Games will be held on Saturday mornings (times TBD) either in Mount Horeb or Verona. Season begins the week of November 16 and runs for approx. 11 weeks. The program fee is $60 for residents and $70 for non-residents. Register before 10/28!

Does your child enjoy LEGOS? Sign them up for **Extreme STEM: Copters & Spy Planes!** Students in K-3rd grade will build a helicopter, eggbeater, paddle boat, and spy plane with LEGO bricks and challenge themselves to problem-solve and innovate. This class runs Wednesdays from 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm, November 4 – December 16 (no class 11/25) at the Rec Department. The registration deadline is October 28 and the fee is $90 for residents and $100 for nonresidents.

Learn to Line Dance! No experience needed, a complete beginner class! Just bring a bottle of water, yourself, and friends for a fun night of country line dancing! Participants will learn the popular classics to the very latest favorites, and discover why people everywhere love line dancing! This program is designed for those 18 years and older. The program takes place on Tuesdays, November 11 through December 1, in the Senior Center from 6 to 7 PM; and the session fee is $55 for residents and $35 for non-residents. Register by 10/27.

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:

10/22: Fall Painting Class

10/26: Adult Indoor Pickleball

10/27: Grandmasters of Chess Sess. 2

10/28: 3rd Grade Recreation Basketball

10/28: Extreme STEM - Copters & Spy Planes

11/3: Learn to Line Dance



Local Government

Blue Mounds moves forward with grease ordinance

Shanna Amble replaced Jeff Lange on village board

By Abigail Karbusicky
Mount Horeb Mail

The Blue Mounds village board voted to end the suspension of the grease trap ordinance.

The village board passed an ordinance earlier this year requiring businesses to have a grease trap.

Village President Paul Baum said this summer a business asked for an exemption due to issues with their building that prevented them from complying.

But Baum said at the Oct. 14 meeting the business hadn't made any progress on following the ordinance. So he asked the board if the village should continue suspending enforcement or enforce it with this business.

When the village passed the ordinance, they asked businesses to comply within 90 days or face daily fines. Baum clarified that they could give the business 90 days to comply from when they suspend enforcement.

The board agreed to start the 90-day period on Nov. 1, and then require the business to have the grease trap.

Also at the meeting, the village board approved a new trustee to fill the vacant seat left by Jeff Lange, and swore in Shanna Amble, who started immediately.

Amble will fill the seat until the term ends in the spring, in which case she'd have to run for election to continue any longer.

Baum said Amble was the only applicant the village received after the board put out a call for candidates last month.

In other village business, the village approved using Adobe Acrobat for village forms.

Baum said this would help the village create forms and make them more secure.

Baum said the work group that's been working on updating the building permit process agreed this was something worth pursuing to help with that process.

And the board decided to work with Johnson Block for assistance with the 2027 budget.

The village used Johnson Block for audits, and Baum said it would be helpful to have a firm that is already familiar with village finances help them with the budget.

Mount Horeb Area School District

Superintendent unveils vision for former school site

By Dr. Steve Salerno
Superintendent

As educators, our deepest responsibility is to cultivate environments where our children can grow, thrive, and eventually stretch their branches into the wider world. Change is a natural part of that growth—not just for our students, but for the school district that serves them. We continue preparing to embark on a transformative new chapter for our youngest learners by bringing our kindergarten and primary classrooms together under one unified roof.

Beginning next school year, the Early Learning Center will be taken offline, and its classrooms will merge with the current Primary Center. To reflect this unified community of educators, families, and students, both environments will be renamed Mount Horeb Elementary School.

Consolidating these spaces is an incredible opportunity to deepen the continuity of our early childhood education. By bringing our kindergarten and early elementary cohorts together, we can foster stronger collaboration among our staff and create a smoother, more familiar transition for our students during their most foundational formative years.



When the Early Learning Center building is removed, Salerno wants to transform the land into a vibrant prairie restoration project.

Yet, as we look to the future, we must also honor our history. The Early Learning Center has held a special place in the hearts of Mount Horeb families for generations. When the physical building is removed, I do not want that space to become a vacant memory. Instead, my vision is to transform that footprint into a vibrant prairie restoration project.

There is a profound beauty in replacing a school building with a living, breathing ecosystem. Just like the native wildflowers and deep-rooted grasses of the Wisconsin prairie, our kindergarteners come to us as fragile seeds. Over time, with patience, care, and the right environment, they establish deep roots, grow resilient against the elements, and bloom beautifully.

It is my hope this prairie restoration will serve as a permanent, living monument to the growth of Mount Horeb's children. It will be an outdoor classroom where future generations can study ecology, a peaceful community space, and a daily visual reminder of what it means to nurture something from its very beginnings.

In fact, the groundwork for this transformation has already begun. Two incredible groups of student leaders—the Green Team and the Interact Club—have already stepped up, actively harvesting native seeds in anticipation of this new landscape. They are proving that you are never too young to root yourself in community progress.

I must admit that this is a brand-new opportunity for me as I have never been a part of a project quite like this before (I am a city boy, born and raised in Chicago). I do know that planting seeds is just the beginning, and we cannot tend this landscape alone. I am warmly inviting interested families, local businesses, and community organizations to join us in bringing this vision to life. Whether it is helping with long-term care and upkeep, tending to the pathways, installing benches, or designing educational signage, there are meaningful roles for everyone to play. Please drop me a line at salernosteve@mounthorebschools.org if you want to be a part of our planning or lead the charge.

Change requires us to let go of old structures so we can plant the seeds for something greater. As we transition into Mount Horeb Elementary School, we are not just changing names or moving classrooms—we are cultivating a sustainable, deeply rooted future for our schools and our environment alike. I look forward to walking this path of learning and growth together with our wonderful community.

I am proud to be a Viking, and I hope you are too!

County board recognizes breast cancer awareness month

On Thursday, Oct. 15 the Dane County Board of Supervisors officially recognized October 2026 as Breast Cancer Awareness Month. The board passed 2026 RES-179 to mark the observance and to encourage residents to learn about breast cancer prevention, screening, and the support available to patients and families across Dane County.

The American Cancer Society estimates that 321,910 people in the United States will be affected by breast cancer in 2026. In Wisconsin, an estimated 6,000 women will be diagnosed this year.

"Breast cancer touches nearly every family in some way, and anyone who has been close to it knows that early detection and the right support change everything," said Supervisor Amy Larson (District 15), who read the resolution. "Gail's Law is a meaningful step toward catching this disease earlier, and organizations like Gilda's Club make sure patients and their families have somewhere to turn once the diagnosis comes."

The resolution recognizes Gail's Law, enacted this year as 2025 Wisconsin Act 103 and signed into law on March 19, 2026, which expands insurance coverage for medically necessary supplemental breast screening and diagnostic breast examinations for individuals with dense breast tissue or an increased risk of breast cancer. The law honors Gail Zeamer, a Wisconsin breast cancer advocate who died in 2024 following a late-stage diagnosis after cancer went undetected in dense breast tissue.

The Board of Supervisors reaffirms its commitment to supporting organizations like Gilda's Club, raising awareness about breast cancer prevention, and advocating for policies that expand access to resources and protections for all.

Springdale 4-H club beautifies downtown





On Sunday, September 27th, Springdale 4-H members gathered in Mount Horeb to decorate the street posts with corn stalks and autumnal ribbons. This was completed in preparation for the Fall Festival, which was held the following weekend. Over a dozen members and their parents helped at this annual tradition for the club. Here, the Springdale 4-H Club is shown after decorating Main St. Liam Crolla ties a bundle of corn to a street lamp. Photos by Jody Retzer Crolla.

Local citizens gather as part of nationwide 'pro democracy' event







On October 17, Mount Horeb was represented in a nationwide "pro democracy No Kings" event. The program featured a Progressive Polka Party, local musicians and a guest speaker, John Nichols. The event took place at Liberty Park shelter. After the program, citizens lined Springdale Street with political signs. Emphasis was made on the importance of casting a vote November 3.









Madison Reading Project gives free books to local teachers

The Madison Reading Project's Big Red Bus made a stop at the Mount Horeb Intermediate Center on Monday, Oct. 12. Teachers were able to shop for 20 free books for their classrooms over the course of an hour. Above left, teacher Brenna Siebold with some of her selection. Above right, educators scan the shelves.



Johnson and Becker visit Rotary to talk about World Affairs Seminar

On Wednesday, Oct. 14 students Aria Johnson, left in pink, and Maddie Becker talked to the Mount Horeb Rotary Club about what they learned interacting with students from dozens of other countries at the Rotary World Affairs Seminar held at Carroll University this past summer.

Winter Parking

In the Village of Blue Mounds, Halloween trick-or-treating hours will be 5-7 p.m.

Also winter parking unless a snow emergency is declared on the Blue Mounds website the rules are as follows:

No person shall park any vehicle on the streets of the Village during the months commencing November 15 through April 15, except as follows:

[Amended 7-12-2023 by Ord. No. A-247]

(a)

On even-numbered days of the month between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 8:00 a.m. vehicles may be properly parked during such time and hours on the even-house-numbered sides of the street;

(b)

On odd-numbered days of the month between the hours of 12:00 midnight and 8:00 a.m. vehicles may be properly parked during such time and hours on the odd-house-numbered sides of the street.

TRUNK OR TREAT
Sunday, October 25th 4:00-6:00 PM
New Hope Evangelical Free Church
639 S. 8th Street, Mt. Horeb
A FREE, FUN, FAMILY-FRIENDLY EVENT!
Decorated Trunks • Games & Activities • Petting Zoo
Hot Dog Dinner • LOTS of Candy!
For more information, visit our website:
www.newhopeefc.org/trunk-or-treat
Or Scan The QR Code

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Department of Natural Resources

DNR Lead Service Line Replacement Outreach Grant Program 'Finishes Strong'

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources recently concluded the final application cycle for the Lead Service Line Community Outreach Grant. This grant provided funds to municipal water systems to conduct community outreach and education in support of lead service line replacement projects.

With funding from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the DNR established this grant in 2024 to bolster outreach and education efforts for lead service line replacement. Over the course of two application cycles, the grant program awarded over $3.5 million to 21 communities throughout the state. Although the BIL ends later this year, the outreach work funded by this grant will continue through 2028.

Education and outreach are vital to the success of lead service line replacement projects. There is no safe level of lead in drinking water. When people ingest lead through drinking water, it accumulates in their bodies over time, resulting in damage to the brain, nervous system, red blood cells and kidneys. Lead service line replacement is one of the best ways to minimize the risk of lead exposure through drinking water, but many residents are not aware of the potential dangers and adverse health effects. Gaining homeowner permission and cooperation can be a time-consuming process but a necessary step to move forward with replacements. Delays, legal disputes and public misunderstanding or resistance can cost additional time and money for both utilities and communities.

The scope of lead service line replacement projects in Wisconsin communities can vary widely. Many communities recognize the importance of outreach and education but lack the staff capacity to plan and carry out these efforts in addition to the replacements themselves. Even though the BIL funding is ending, lead service line replacement projects across the state will continue to advance with the support of outreach efforts funded by these beneficial grant dollars. Grant recipients are using awarded funding to directly reach property owners via phone calls, letters, door-to-door outreach, community events, social media campaigns, online resources, partnerships with community-based organizations and more.

One of the grant recipients, Cudahy Water Utility, used the grant funds to partner with their local health department on their outreach initiative.

"We are grateful to work alongside the Cudahy Water Utility on this important initiative," said Kayla Lane, the Cudahy Health Department public health community liaison. "We value the opportunities we have had to connect with residents, listen to their questions and concerns and share important information about the Lead Service Line Replacement Project. This partnership allows us to bring a public health perspective to the project and work together to make sure residents have the information and resources they need to make informed decisions about their homes and health."

This work is not just about informing and protecting residents – it is a matter of building trust, meeting regulatory obligations, ensuring equity and controlling project costs.

Learn more about the Lead Service Line Replacement Community Outreach Grant on the DNR website.

Note: The current Lead Service Line Replacement Program, which is a subprogram of the Safe Drinking Water Loan Program and is funded by the BIL, also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, provides funding to municipalities for both public and private lead service line replacements and related lead service line inventory work to protect public health.

Fiscal Facts

Amid State Aid Influx, Wisconsin Municipal Spending Growth Outpaces Inflation

Net operating spending for all Wisconsin cities and villages rose 4.4% on a per capita basis in 2024, outpacing the rate of inflation due in part to an influx of state aid to municipalities.

This came after passage of 2023 Wisconsin Act 12 delivered the largest increase in decades for shared revenue, the state's largest form of general aid to cities and villages, as well as towns and counties.

The subsequent increase in municipal operating spending the following year occurred across its four largest categories: general government rose by 12.4%, street maintenance by 5.3%, fire and EMS by 7.1%, and net police by 5.6%. All outpaced the 2.9% rate of inflation in 2024.

These are among the findings from the Forum's annual update to our Municipal DataTool. The tool provides interactive data on municipal government spending and services for all 607 cities and villages in Wisconsin – from the village of Yuba (population 52) to the city of Milwaukee.

The four largest categories of municipal net operating spending – general government, street maintenance, fire and EMS, and police - are identified collectively as basic spending. (General government spending includes legislative, legal, general or financial administration, and general building or plant spending.) Net basic spending grew 7.0% in 2024, to $797 per capita. This outpaced inflation and marked the largest annual increase in the last decade.

Notwithstanding the large increase in 2024, net basic spending growth throughout Wisconsin has lagged the rate of inflation over the long term. Since 2015, net basic spending has risen 25.1%, while inflation during that same period was 29.6%.

From 2015 to 2024, fire and EMS spending grew by 31.1%, which may be an indicator of the financial and staffing pressures on the state's EMS and fire service providers, as analyzed in recent Forum work. General government spending netted a 36.6% over that same time period,

The remaining two categories of basic spending, street maintenance and police, grew but at more modest rates – 22.0% and 20.2%, respectively.

Following passage of 2023 Wisconsin Act 12, shared revenue aid to cities and villages rose 19.3% to $901.5 million in 2024, an increase of $146 million. This followed many years with relatively little change in shared revenue. The average per capita shared revenue amount increased 18.3% to $204.

General obligation debt grew 5.0% in 2024 to $9.24 billion, the largest proportional increase since 2020. However, debt as a share of the state limit fell again to 31.6%, reflecting a larger rise in property values, which are used to calculate the state cap. This continues a progression of decline from 42.5% in 2016, the high point in our dataset.

This information is a service of the Wisconsin Policy Forum, the state's leading resource for nonpartisan state and local government research and civic education. Learn more at wispolicyforum.org.

WisPolitics-State Affairs

Billionaire money fuels campaigns

By WisPolitics-State Affairs

Money in politics is nothing new.

Big money in Wisconsin politics, a perennial swing state, is nothing new.

But this midterm cycle, with the governor's office a legislative control at stake, there's a new wrinkle.

Three billionaires with Wisconsin ties are fueling GOP campaigns on a massive scale.

Billionaires Diane Hendricks, Dick Uihlein and Liz Uihlein have combined to donate more than $73 million to GOP campaigns and committees since Jan. 1 in an apparent effort to stave off a building blue wave.

A WisPolitics review of campaign finance reports found no comparable donor to the Dem committees or campaigns in 2026. In fact, no individual Dem donor has contributed as much over the past 17 years as each of the three GOP billionaires have donated in 2026 alone.

The biggest beneficiary of the donations from Hendricks and the Uihlein has been the state GOP, which has received $27.6 million from the trio and then transferred $24.2 million to Republican gubernatorial nominee Tom Tiffany.

Dem gubernatorial nominee David Crowley slammed the transfers during a news conference in Madison. He charged the only reason someone would make donations that size is if they know if they "buy Congressman Tom Tiffany this election, he will sell Wisconsin out to them."

"These are billionaires who have unlimited resources and know that if the choice is between them and working families, that Congressman Tom Tiffany will choose them every single time," Crowley said.

Tiffany's campaign responded by knocking Crowley for fundraisers in California and Washington, D.C., in recent weeks and taking thousands from AI interests and defund-the-police advocates, as well as "millions from the billionaire-backed Democrat Party of Wisconsin."

Tiffany's campaign pointed to donations such as the $20,000 that Crowley took from San Francisco-based AI researcher Todor Markov.

"He is fully embracing an agenda of higher taxes, soft-on-crime policies, and massive data centers all over Wisconsin," Tiffany's campaign said. "Tom Tiffany is focused on giving paychecks back to working families by returning the $3 billion surplus, lowering property

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Your Right to Know

Kaul: More money is needed for records access

By Jonathan Anderson

Requesting public records in Wisconsin can sometimes mean waiting weeks, months and even longer for government officials and agencies to respond. What could help speed things along?

At the state Department of Justice, which has recently come under scrutiny for its own delays in releasing records, Attorney General Josh Kaul says the agency he leads needs more money.

"Additional resources could help the DOJ reduce response times to public records requests," Kaul told the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council, in advance of the Nov. 3 election for attorney general. The Council sent questionnaires about government transparency to Kaul, the Democratic incumbent seeking a third term, and his Republican challenger, Fond du Lac County District Attorney Eric Toney, who narrowly lost his previous bid to unseat Kaul in 2022.

Kaul answered our questions; Toney did not, despite multiple emails and a call to his campaign.

In addition to responding to requests for its own records, the DOJ is empowered to interpret and enforce the public records and open meetings laws. Both Kaul and Toney said in 2022 that one of the biggest challenges to enforcing these laws was a lack of funding. This time around, we asked both candidates what has been done to close this gap and what more needs to be done.

Kaul, in his reply, said his administration sought 2.6 positions in the 2025-27 state budget for DOJ public records staffing, but these positions were ultimately cut from that budget. "The addition of those positions would have resulted in more DOJ staff time being available to promote and obtain compliance with the public records and open meetings laws," Kaul said.

He added that his administration has made the same funding request for the 2027-29 state budget.

Toney told the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel earlier this year that he would prioritize staffing in the DOJ.

We further asked the candidates whether the DOJ should take a more active role in enforcement of the public records and open meetings law.

Kaul said the DOJ should address enforcement on a case-by-case basis to balance compliance efforts with the agency's limited resources. He said the DOJ should continue to offer guidance and training and to seek volunteer compliance for unintentional violations. "In a case involving an egregious, intentional violation, an enforcement action should be considered," Kaul wrote.

Although Toney did not respond to the Council's questionnaire this year, he said in 2022 that he would, as attorney general, "apply sufficient resources and prioritize the proper administration and enforcement" of the public records and open meetings laws. Toney added that because the laws also allow for private enforcement, he would emphasize the DOJ's role in issuing legal opinions, informal guidance and training.

"When elected, openness and transparency will be a priority for my office," Toney said in 2022.

Asked what changes should be made to the state's sunshine laws, Kaul said they "should be modernized to account for technological developments that have occurred since the laws were enacted." He also said members of the state Legislature should no longer be exempt from record retention rules. (The removal of this exception has also drawn support from the two candidates for governor, Democrat David Crowley and Republican Tom Tiffany. That race will be the subject of an upcoming Your Right to Know column.)

Finally, Kaul said agencies should follow the DOJ's practice of proactively releasing information about public records responses. The DOJ posts on its website a "snapshot" of pending records requests and reports detailing response times and other activities by the Office of Open Government.

The election is Nov. 3.

To read Kaul's full response to WISFOIC's questionnaire, see this column at wisfoic.org.

Your Right to Know is a monthly column distributed by the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council (wisfoic.org), a group dedicated to open government. Jonathan Anderson is the organization's treasurer.

Contenders for governor weigh in on open government

By Jonathan Anderson

Whoever wins the Nov. 3 election to become Wisconsin's next governor — whether it be Republican Tom Tiffany or Democrat David Crowley — will inherit a state whose long tradition of open government is replete with opportunities for improvement.

With that in mind, the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council last month sent questionnaires about government transparency to both candidates. Crowley answered our questions, while Tiffany did not.

Here's a round-up of where the candidates stand when it comes to your right to know, drawn from Crowley's responses and from what he and Tiffany have said on the campaign trail.

Let's begin with common ground. Both Crowley and Tiffany say they support ending a legal loophole that exempts state legislators from record retention rules that are in place for all other state and local government officials. This loophole presently allows elected members of the state Assembly and Senate to delete emails and other files at will to prevent their release, absent a pending records request.

Crowley and Tiffany also say they oppose nondisclosure agreements between data center developers and local governments.

In his response to our questionnaire, Crowley said his administration would post commonly requested information online, monitor records processes across agencies and review records request procedures at least annually. He would also require that appointees receive training on the public records and open meetings laws and "make sure the agencies responsible for public records and open meetings compliance have the funding and staffing they need to do that work well."

Asked about potential changes to the public records and open meetings laws, Crowley said he supports increasing the location fee threshold — a provision in the law allowing custodians to charge location fees only when they are $50 or more — which has not been updated since 1981.

Although Tiffany did not respond to the Council's questionnaire, he has made several campaign promises related to government transparency. Tiffany said he would improve a state data portal to "make it easier for taxpayers to search and understand state spending." He promised to create agency dashboards that would show "taxpayers where their money is going, what services agencies are providing, and the results taxpayers are receiving." Tiffany's spokesperson also said that Tiffany, if elected, would "set clear response-time standards for open records requests."

As a state senator, Tiffany in 2015 voted for a proposal that would have made it easier for lawmakers, the governor and other agencies to withhold records from the public. The measure was rescinded after intense public outcry. (Tiffany later apologized for his vote, saying "Quite honestly, I am embarrassed by the event.")

Beyond the public records and open meetings laws, Crowley supports legislation targeting strategic lawsuits against public participation (SLAPPs), used to retaliate against individuals and news outlets for engaging in protected activities. The state Assembly in February passed an anti-SLAPP bill, but it died in the Senate. Wisconsin is one of just 10 states without such protection.

Crowley also supports spending taxpayer dollars on WisconsinEye, a public affairs network like C-SPAN, as it works to find a sustainable funding model. "Having served in the State Legislature and now as County Executive, I've seen firsthand how important it is for Wisconsinites to have direct access to their government — it strengthens both transparency and public participation," Crowley said.

Tiffany did not answer our questions on these topics.

Like government transparency, the values of press freedom and free expression are pillars of the broader project of representative democracy. On Sept. 24, Tiffany's staff blocked two Milwaukee Journal Sentinel reporters from a campaign event alleging bias in coverage. Afterward, he insisted, "I've always had an open policy in regards to the media."

To read Crowley's full response to WISFOIC's questionnaire, see this column at wisfoic.org. Also posted is the Council's recent column on transparency regarding the contenders for state attorney general — incumbent Democrat Josh Kaul and Republican Eric Toney.

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Billionaire

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taxes, and cutting income taxes by 10 percent," said the Tiffany campaign.

A check of the state's campaign finance database found Dick Uihlein had donated $28.5 million to committees in 2026. That includes a $10 million donation in August to Restoration PAC, which spent $9.7 million over the two-month September reporting period. The bulk of that $9.7 million went to ads opposing Crowley in the governor's race.

Dick Uihlein has also given $15.5 million to the state GOP in 2026.

Liz Uihlein has donated $24.7 million to state campaigns in committees in 2026, including $15.6 million to the state GOP. She's also given $7 million to the Republican Assembly Campaign Committee and $2 million to the Committee to Elect a Republican Senate.

Meanwhile, Diane Hendricks has donated more than $19.9 million. That includes $8.1 million to the state GOP, $8 million to RAC and $3.75 million to CERS. She's also donated directly to 35 legislative campaigns.

By comparison, the largest Dem donor in 2026 has been Sarah O'Neill, of New York. She's donated $4.3 million to the Dem Party, the Assembly Democratic Campaign Committee, the State Senate Democratic Committee and several campaigns. She had donated $388,527 from 2018-25.

The biggest individual Dem donor listed in the state's database, which goes back to 2008, is LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman, who has contributed $16.1 million since 2019. Of that $15.9 million has gone to the state Dem Party. But he's only made one $750,000 donation in 2026.

Illinois Gov. JB Pritzer, meanwhile, has donated $9.1 million since 2020. He gave $1 million to the state Dem Party in August, his only donation in the database for 2026.

Some Dems are worried that the billionaire money could mean they lose the governor's office and the chance to win back control of the Legislature. Will national Dem money fill the gap even though Wisconsin doesn't have a U.S. Senate race this year?

It's a key question about a month out from Election Day.

For more go to www.wispolitics.com



A Bird in the Driftless Bush

Of Atlatls, Presidents, and the Ties That Feed Us

By William Robichaud
Bird in the Bush

I recently returned home from a western US road trip: 17 days, 4,200 miles, nine states, eight trout streams, three national monuments, two national parks, one national memorial, one fender-bender and one site on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

In this long and varied journey, the most inspirational stops came near the beginning and the end, on my home ground of the Midwest. First was the extraordinary Jeffers Petroglyphs (the NRHP site), amidst the plains of southwestern Minnesota. As you approach the site, driving though gently rolling grassland, little shows on the horizon but a small visitor center. For miles there have been few signs of human habitation, and it feels like the middle of nowhere; a quiet, forgotten landscape. Yet for Native Americans it was definitely somewhere. Here there is an opening, a pause, in the prairie - a hard quartzite pan about 200 yards by 50 yards, carved with more than 5,000 images, some that may date back 7,000 years: bison, turtles, life-size human hands, atlatls, and a long, sinuous line that may be a map of the Mississippi with villages along its banks. The quartzite pan is an art gallery, and it is extraordinary.

Some of the images are arranged in ways that tell stories known from Native American oral traditions. As a tour guide explained, in addition to art gallery, for native peoples the site was probably, in current terms, "part library, part church". Taking it in amidst the horizon-to-horizon grassland, in contrast to nowhere, it feels like the center of the world.

The morning after my visit to Jeffers, I was further west, in the Black Hills of South Dakota, standing, for the first time in my life, before Mount Rushmore. It is large and grand, but the huddle of Washington, Jefferson, Roosevelt and Lincoln is impressive pretty much only for its size. There is little nuance or story here, little to learn and no layers of meaning to unpack. After a minute or two of gazing at its immensity, what else is there?

It took fewer than fifteen years to hurriedly blast and carve Mount Rushmore from its rock. In contrast, thousands of years of storytelling are carved into the rock at Jeffers.

Mount Rushmore is also something of a myopic, insensitive slap - to carve up, of all places, the Black Hills with, of all things, the images of four U.S. presidents. The Black Hills were and are a spiritual center of the Lakota people, and consequently a treaty in 1868 recognized Lakota sovereignty over the area. Alas, soon afterwards gold was discovered in them thar Hills, and the U.S. government abrogated the treaty. Consequences of this included the 1876 Battle of the Little Bighorn and the Wounded Knee Massacre of 1890 (sites I also visited on this trip).

I've now seen Mount Rushmore, ticked that box. I also learned more about it in the process, and henceforth I'll engage in a quiet boycott of the place. I feel no need to return. But I'll probably continue to visit Jeffers for the rest of my life. Its art better feeds my soul, and much more remains to ponder and absorb there.

The last stop on my arc toward home after more than two weeks on the road was Black River Falls, Wisconsin, for a pow-wow of the Ho-Chunk, the people on whose ancestral land I live. It was my first time to attend such an event, and I stayed for two days. I felt very welcomed, even though I was one of few Anglos amongst the hundreds of Ho-Chunk and members of other tribes gathered there. The focus of the pow-wow was dance, communal dance supported by communal drumming and singing. This was not an AI generated or mediated event, and Ho-Chunk from age three to 23 to 83 were deeply engaged, together. *Community, celebration, pride* felt like the essential resonance of the gathering, and I found it deeply inspirational. Here are some resilient people, still together and putting beauty into the world, despite all they've been through.

Many years ago, after I'd started living in Laos and working with villages there on biodiversity conservation projects, one of my older brothers asked, "What are you running away from, spending so much time over there?" A fair enough question, and I thought about it a lot. I eventually concluded it wasn't something I was running *from*, but running toward. And that something was community. Community is infused in the villages of Laos. As one villager put it, *ban bin pathet* - 'our village is our country'. The village you are from, or for the Hmong in particular, the clan you belong to, are paramount. When two members of the Akha tribe of northern Laos meet who don't know one another, they recite back and forth the names of their ancestors, to learn how they are related. Each Akha man is expected to know and memorize the names of his ancestors back *sixty* generations.

In the villages of Laos, and in Native American communities, the main cultural through-line is kinship and community. I'm not sure what the through-line is in modern American culture, but it often seems to be fear; a fear of scarcity, often of money. The NPR five minute newscast of news from around the world ends with a stock market report. The *raison d'etre* of Facebook isn't to foster community, but to make money. Same with AI. Granted, in some indigenous communities, such as Native Americans of the northwest, wealth was sought and accumulated by individuals, but for one purpose - to give it all away at a potlatch, and thereby deepen the host's connection within the community. I don't quite see our tech oligarchs doing the same with their wealth.

For a kid like me who grew up in an isolated house in the woods, physically distant from the homes of my classmates or, by a thousand miles, from my grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, and isolated further by the family disease and craziness of alcoholism, a search for community and family has been a through-line of my life. Community is not something I was raised in, and I can at least touch it, be exposed to it, even as an outsider, in the villages of Laos, at the Ho-chunk pow-wow and among the petroglyphs at Jeffers. I also find it in other ways, even at my small local bar for a Packers or Brewers game. And I suppose pickleball teams and churches fill that role for others. Wherever and whatever works, because the vague fear and anxiety many of us often feel won't be solved by the phantom security of more money or one more thing ordered from Amazon, but by more community.

Almost twenty-five hundred years ago a fellow named Gautama Buddha observed, "Poverty is not lack of money; it is having nothing to offer that your community values." The Buddha knew a thing or two. And one of my main communities is you, dear readers, and so may you find some value in this small offering.

Be well, and be connected.

Bill ("Bird") Robichaud is an award-winning conservation biologist who lives from the land north of Barneveld, on ancestral Ho-Chunk territory. He doesn't spend much time in grocery stores, and chronicles the experience on Substack at "A Bird in the Driftless Bush".

Dane County Public Health

Flu Season Off to Early Start in Dane County: Health Officials Encourage Flu Vaccination

Flu activity is increasing earlier than expected in Dane County, and Public Health is encouraging everyone ages six months and older to get their annual flu shot sooner than later. The latest update of the Respiratory Illness Dashboard shows flu cases in area emergency departments are increasing earlier in the season across most age groups. Flu has also been detected in wastewater and school air samples earlier than in recent years.

"While overall rates are still low, we don't usually see these kinds of increases in activity for at least another month. We know it can be easy to put off vaccination, but you don't want to wait until flu is widespread in the community. Getting vaccinated now gives your body time to build protection before you're exposed," said Janel Heinrich, Director of Public Health Madison & Dane County.

Public Health works closely with the Lungfish program. The UW-Madison researchers who lead the grant-funded school air monitoring program are reporting flu in school air samples before October this year. In September, they found flu in air samples in three of 27 schools, compared to zero in the same schools last year at this time.

Public Health offers free flu and COVID vaccines to eligible children and uninsured adults in Dane County. Appointments are available now both in regular clinic locations and at upcoming school vaccination clinics at the Holtzman Center (333 Holtzman Rd., Madison, WI).

Families who have insurance that covers vaccinations should reach out to their healthcare provider or a local pharmacy to schedule an appointment.

Getting the flu and COVID vaccines at the same appointment ensures you're fully protected, heading into another respiratory virus season.

"Respiratory illnesses can be especially hard on older adults, young children, people who are pregnant and people with certain chronic health conditions. Staying up to date on all recommended vaccines, including your flu shot, is one of the best ways to lower your risk of getting seriously sick," said Heinrich.

Stay informed with up-to-date respiratory illness data all season long through the Respiratory Illness Dashboard. The dashboard, including key takeaways, is updated on Thursdays.

HALLOWEEN

continued from page 1

TREATS

· Parents should examine all candy before eating.

· Throw away anything that is unwrapped, has torn packaging or looks questionable.

· Wash and cut all fruit before eating.

· Don't eat anything homemade unless you know the cook very well.

· Call the police regarding any suspicious treats.

TRICK-OR-TREATING

· Have a responsible adult or older responsible child accompany young children.

· Carry a flashlight with fresh batteries to see and be seen.

· Don't forget your cell phone to call 911 in case of an emergency or to report suspicious/unlawful activities.

· Don't run between parked cars or across lawns. Use sidewalks.

· If no sidewalks, walk on the left side of the street facing traffic.

· Only go to houses that have outside lights on in your own neighborhood.

· Do not enter homes or apartments unless accompanied by a responsible adult.

· Stay together. Older kids trick-or-treating without a parent should walk in groups.

YOUR OWN HOUSE SAFETY

· Turn your porch light on so children know it's okay to visit your home.

· Remove obstacles from lawns, steps and porches. Keep jack-o'-lanterns away from landings and doorsteps and away from costumes.

· Inside, keep lit pumpkins away from curtains, decorations and furnishings.

· Never leave candlelit pumpkins unattended.

· Let young children use markers on pumpkins. Or invest in a pumpkin cutter equipped with safety bars.

· Control your pets. Keep them in a safe place during Trick-or-Treat hours to prevent lost pets or children getting jumped on or bitten at the door.

HAVE FUN AND BE SAFE!

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 the 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.

MONEY

continued from page 1

in the Christian tradition and "the primacy of religion in each person's life," according to its website.

In the 99-seat Wisconsin Assembly, Republicans currently outnumber Democrats 54 to 45. Democrats will need a net gain of five seats to take control of the chamber for the first time since 2010.

In his closest election in years, Novak won by three points in November 2024. It was his first time running for reelection in the more competitive district maps that had been signed into law earlier that same year.

A rash of retirements and strong dissatisfaction with the GOP statewide and nationally has Democrats feeling better about their chance at winning back the state Legislature for the first time since 2010.

So far, the incumbent in this race is winning the money battle, thanks mainly to the Republican Party of Wisconsin and its billionaire donors.

The state GOP has given Novak about $500,000 since January, according to his campaign finance reports filed with the state. Additional donations, from individuals and political action committees, total more than $70,000.

The Democratic Party has given Gruber about $270,000 in the same time period, and his campaign has raised another $170,000 from individuals and political action committees.

Tataje has reported raising $675 from four individuals.

In Wisconsin, individual people and political action committees are only allowed to give candidates for the state Assembly a maximum of $1,000 per election cycle.

Donors who have given Novak that maximum include billionaire and conservative megadonor Diane Hendricks, the co-founder of ABC Supply, several groups representing the interests of realtors, alcohol distributors and taverns, and the political action committee for Koch Industries.

Gruber's received the maximum from Climate Cabinet PAC, which supports pro-climate candidates, Lynde Uihlein, a frequent Democratic megadonor in Wisconsin and cousin of the GOP megadonor Richard Uihlein, and several PACs representing organized labor.

But most of the campaign cash in this race has come from the parties, as Wisconsin does not currently limit what political parties can raise and spend. State Democrats in the minority have proposed adding caps to parties, but the Republican-controlled state Legislature has ignored those attempts.

That loophole in state campaign finance law has led to the flooding of little legislative races like this one with more cash to buy more ads flashed on screens and stuffed in mailboxes than they've ever seen.

That's mostly thanks to a trio of conservative billionaire megadonors who regularly give piles of cash to the state's GOP. They are giving more this year than ever before, some of which is then routed to races like this one.

So far this year, conservative billionaire megadonor Elizabeth Uihlein has given the Wisconsin Republican Party nearly $25 million, while her husband Richard Uihlein has given the party nearly $16 million. Hendricks, the richest self-made woman in the world, according to Forbes, has given the party about $20 million in the same time period.

By comparison, the top donors to the state Democratic Party so far this year are Sarah O'Neill, the daughter-in-law of deceased billionaire investor Charlie Munger, who has given $4.3 million and Lynde Uihlein, who has given about $2.3 million to the Democratic Party of Wisconsin.

The candidates have all made funding public schools a focus of their campaigns.

Novak has touted his support for the last state budget that increased per-pupil spending by $604.

Gruber's website says he's seen how "state neglect" has disrupted schools and rural communities. He says he will "fight for fair school funding."

Tataje says on his website that he'll support permanent property tax relief through a rural school endowment, funded by the state's current surplus.

Gruber said he is also eyeing the rising costs for families, including housing and healthcare.

"Every day when I knock on doors across the district I hear from folks who are struggling to make ends meet or I hear concerns about how our communities are starved for resources. My opponent is funded by three billionaires and special interests who are making our lives more expensive," Gruber wrote in an emailed statement to The Badger Project. "When I'm in the Assembly, I'll work for our neighbors and communities, not billionaires."

Novak's campaign did not respond to requests for comment, but his website points to his work in the state Legislature to lower insurance premiums, ensure those with preexisting conditions receive coverage, and his vote to support new mothers with postpartum healthcare.

Wisconsin Conservation Voters, an advocacy group that tracks legislators' support of environmental causes, rated Novak's "lifetime" score at 37 percent. Gruber received the group's endorsement in August.

Novak's campaign website notes his work to oppose mining and support Wisconsin's wetlands.

Tataje says he will steward natural resources and prioritize local property values above constructing hyperscale data centers.

Wisconsin Manufactures and Commerce, the state's Chamber of Commerce, has given Novak, and many other Republican legislators, the "Working for Wisconsin" award, based on their pro-business efforts during the recent Legislative Session.

Novak has also championed a bill to protect people and news organizations from meritless lawsuits seeking to punish them for their speech. Wisconsin is one of the only states without such a law.

Novak's bill would have allowed defendants to get quick dismissals against these lawsuits, called Strategic Lawsuits Against Public Participation, or SLAAPs, rather than have to wage an expensive fight in court. In states without anti-SLAAP laws, wealthy individuals have kept individuals who said or wrote things they don't like fighting endless motions in court to try and stick them with huge legal bills and even bankrupt them. The Wausau Pilot news organization had to spend nearly $200,000 fighting a SLAPP lawsuit it eventually defeated.

The bill got close to passage but ultimately died in the state Senate in March.

This story was funded by a grant from the Mount Horeb Community Foundation.

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SPORTS

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MOUNT HOREB-BARNEVELD 48, MCFARLAND 15

SEVENTH HEAVEN

Maier scores seven touchdowns in MH-B's rout of McFarland; Vikings now host Baldwin-Woodville in playoff opener

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

They are red hot.

And they're hoping to stay that way now that the postseason has arrived.

Mount Horeb-Barneveld's football team rolled past McFarland, 48-15, last Friday for its fifth straight win. MH-B finished the regular season 6-3 overall and alone in third place in the Badger Small Conference at 5-2.

The Vikings then received a No. 4 seed in the WIAA Division 3 playoffs and will host fifth-seeded Baldwin Woodville in a Level 1 game Friday at 7 p.m. If the Vikings win there, they'd likely travel to top-seeded La Crosse Logan for a Level 2 playoff game.

The Vikings raced to leads of 21-0 and 42-7 against McFarland in their final regular season game and never looked back.

Senior Eli Maier added to one of the finest seasons in school history by an MH-B running back. Maier finished his huge night with a remarkable seven rushing touchdowns and had a whopping 256 rushing yards on 25 carries (10.4 average).

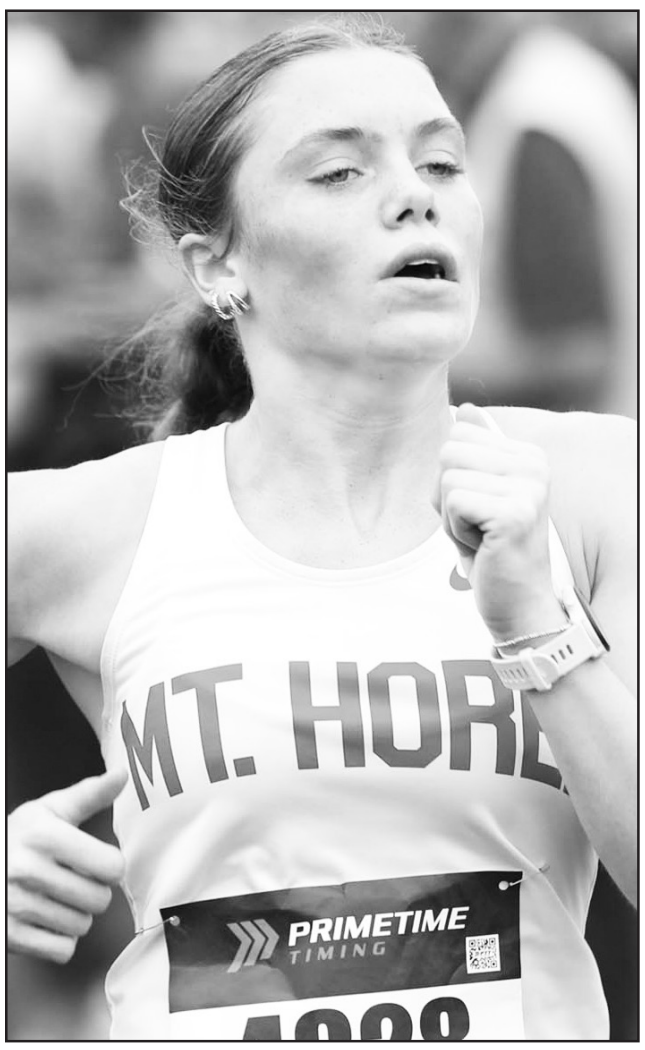
Maier had all seven of MH-B's touchdowns, rushing for scores of 5, 48, 50, 21, 4, 2 and 4 yards.

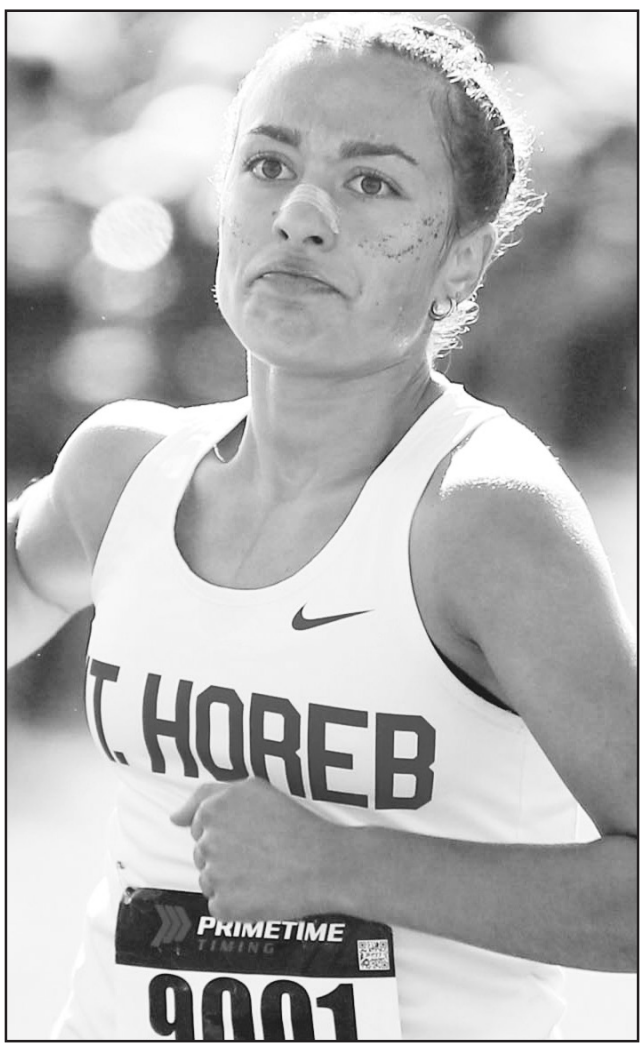
Maier now heads to the postseason with 1,628 rushing yards on 187 carries (8.7) and has 19 rushing TDs on the year. Maier currently ranks fifth in the state in rushing yards and, fourth in all-purpose yards (2,025) and tied for 16th in rushing touchdowns.

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Eli Maier had seven touchdowns in Mount Horeb-Barneveld's win over McFarland last Friday. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld





Isla Odgers (left) and Mia Caygill helped power Mount Horeb's girls cross country team to a fourth straight Badger Small Conference title. Photos courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Speed demons

Mount Horeb's girls cross country team wins their fourth straight Badger Small Conference title

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

Life in the fast lane.

It's the only way Mount Horeb's girls cross country team operates, and that was evident once again at the Badger Small Conference title on Oct. 17.

The Vikings had five of the top seven finishers and won the eight-team conference meet with 28 points. McFarland was second with 62 points, while Sauk Prairie was third with 94.

It was Mount Horeb's fourth straight conference title.

Mount Horeb's Isla Odgers was first overall, finishing the 5,000-meter run in 18 minutes, 19.0 seconds. Senior Willa Vigliotta was third in 19:04.0, junior Mia Caygill was fourth (19:13.50), senior Julia Straka was fifth (19:47.40) and senior Maeve True was seventh (20:06.00).

Mount Horeb's boys were third out of eight teams.

Fort Atkinson won the boys race with 44 points, while McFarland (62) and Mount Horeb (90) rounded out the top three.

Mount Horeb junior Sam Wyse was Mount Horeb's top finisher, completing the race in 16:50.70 and finishing fourth overall.

Sophomore Liam Crolla was 13th (17:37.20), sophomore Jackson Bellew was 20th (17:57.30), senior Nathaniel Sherven was 25th (18:19.10) and senior Jaxon Hughes was 28th (18:26.0).

Mount Horeb spikers land No. 7 seed

Vikings begin the postseason against 10th-seeded Platteville

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor



Olivia Turk and Mount Horeb's girls volleyball team received the No. 7 seed in their sectional. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Bring on the second season.

Mount Horeb's girls volleyball team received the No. 7 seed in its half of the WIAA Division 2 sectional. The Vikings began postseason play when they hosted 10th-seeded Beloit Turner in a regional quarterfinal on Tuesday.

If Mount Horeb won there, it would travel to second-seeded Platteville for a regional semifinal on Thursday at 7 p.m.

The regional finals are Saturday at 7 p.m., and if seeds hold, the Vikings would travel to third-seeded Edgerton.

The sectional semifinals are Oct. 29 and the sectional finals are Oct. 31.

The Vikings enter the postseason with a 19-13 record.

Mount Horeb also dropped its regular season finale to DeForest, 25-14, 20-25, 25-19, 25-14 on Oct. 15.

Elaina Imbus led Mount Horeb with 10 kills and six digs, while Lily Paquette had seven kills.

Claire Casey had 13 assists, 10 digs and two aces, while Quinn Johnston had 12 assists. Harper Hendrickson had seven digs, while Courtney Monroe had six digs.

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Community Forester / Arborist

The Village of Mount Horeb is hiring a full-time Community Forester / Arborist. This position is responsible for tree care, park and facility maintenance, snow removal, and operating heavy equipment. Must be comfortable working outdoors in all conditions and performing physical tasks.

Requirements: Valid Wisconsin CDL with air brake endorsement. Arborist certification preferred. **Minimum Pay $28.00/hr, DOQ.**

VILLAGE OF MOUNT HOREB

For more information, contact Jeff Gorman at 608-437-3351 or jeff.gorman@mounthorebwi.info.
Apply online: www.mounthorebwi.info
Position is open until filled.

EOE

ASSEMBLY

continued from page 3

services.

As a former mayor and chairman of the Assembly Local Government Committee, I have seen firsthand how state decisions affect local governments.

We need to make sure we are not simply pushing responsibilities down to municipalities and counties without providing the resources necessary to accomplish them.

Tataje: What happens when the owner of a hardware store, machine shop, or family farm retires. Too often the business closes or is sold to an outside buyer with no stake in the town. I propose a $20 million revolving loan fund, plus $2 million for business advice and loan review, to help employees and local buyers make offers. Owners who accept a state succession incentive would give their employees 90 days to make a fair offer. No owner would be forced to sell, and loans would be carefully underwritten so workers do not risk their savings on a bad deal.

What is a misconception about you, perhaps one espoused by opponents of your campaign, that you would like to clear up?

Gruber: I've been a police officer, a deputy sheriff, a conservation warden, a Department of Justice instructor and a SWAT medic. I was one of the responders to the May 1, 2024 incident at the Mount Horeb School. Despite this, my opponent has run ads attempting to paint me as anti-law enforcement and it shows his lack of integrity.

Novak: One misconception is that I only vote with my party. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Wisconsin State Journal has named me the "Most Independent Member of the State Assembly" because I am so willing to work across the aisle.

When Foxconn was being debated, I voted against Foxconn and my own party. I authored the nonpartisan redistricting bill against my own party because it was the right thing to do.

I have voted against legislation and budgets when I believed they did not serve Wisconsin well, while also working with Democrats and Republicans to pass legislation.

My record includes bipartisan work on water quality and school safety, as well as legislation on issues ranging from healthcare to local government.

I don't believe being independent means being opposed to your party. It means being willing to think for yourself and represent your constituents.

Tataje: That a third-party candidate cannot get anything done. Legislation passes by building coalitions one issue at a time, and someone without a party leader to obey is free to work with anyone.

People also hear "local control" and assume I mean leaving towns to fend for themselves. I do not. Decisions should be made as close to home as possible, but the state should still protect clean water and safety, support communities with fewer resources, and step in when a problem crosses town lines.

Critics worry that Artificial Intelligent poses myriad threats to humanity, the arts, critical thinking, media literacy, the job market, and more, but A.I. data centers come with their own distinct concerns. Their critics worry they will pollute the environment, gobble up land, and raise utility rates. Their supporters tout them as the future. What's your stance on data centers?

Gruber: Data centers and AI need swift, responsible and strong regulation to protect our workers, our environment and our future. In the absence of a responsible federal government willing to do that work, our state legislature needs to step up. As with all development, there must be community benefits not just community costs and protections for ratepayers and our environment.

Novak: The approval of data centers remains a decision left up to each local government and our counties currently maintain moratoriums. If data centers were ever to come to this district, I believe my job is to protect our pocketbooks, our water supply and our farmland and our local say in the approval or denial of these projects. That is why I voted for an overarching data center bill that would require each data center in this state to have a closed loop water-cooling system to outlaw over pumping of our water supply; to bear all the utility costs and prohibit the bill from being passed on to local ratepayers; to always preserve local control; and to ensure that any renewable energy projects (like solar) built for exclusive data center use be limited to on-site placement.

Tataje: If a corporation wants to build here, it pays its own way, plays by open rules, and answers to the community. Wisconsin's peak electricity demand is projected to rise from 14.6 gigawatts in 2024 to 19.9 gigawatts by 2030, according to the Wisconsin Policy Forum (https://www.wpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/GroundingACh argedDebate_Full.pdf). The Legislative Fiscal Bureau estimates data center sales tax exemptions will cost $1.5 billion in construction-related revenue from 2024 to 2028, plus $369 million a year once the centers are running, according to Wisconsin Public Radio (https://www.wpr.org/news/report-wisconsin-tax-incentives-data-centers).

Regulators have made slight progress. We Energies' data-center tariff requires large customers to pay for dedicated generation and commit for at least 15 years. But those protections are not statewide, and transmission costs remain unresolved. My Data Center Sovereignty and Ratepayer Protection Act would:

Pause new approvals for one year while statewide rules are written.

Make data centers pay the full cost of the power plants and lines built for them, backed by a bond so families are not stuck with the bill if a project fails.

Require public disclosure of each project's water use, power demand, noise, and permanent jobs before local approval.

Ban secret development agreements and require local hearings on rezoning and tax breaks.

Require new clean power and reliability plans instead of paper credits.

For government's own use of AI, any decision denying a benefit or license must be reviewed by a human and open to appeal.

What, in your opinion, should government do (and not do)? What does good government look like to you?

Gruber: Government should work to protect and prioritize the rights of individuals and the health of our communities, not corporations and CEOs. Government should strive to ensure the American dream is an achievable opportunity for everyone willing to work for it.

Novak: Government should do the things individuals and communities cannot efficiently do on their own: provide public safety, maintain infrastructure, support education, protect our natural resources, administer a fair legal system and create an environment where people and businesses can succeed.

Government should not micromanage people's lives or spend money simply because it is available.

Good government is accountable, fiscally responsible, transparent and willing to listen. It means solving problems rather than creating them.

As a legislator, I try to remember that the people sitting in front of me are not statistics or political constituencies. They are my neighbors. Their ideas have directly led to legislation I have authored, including the state dairy product designation and other local initiatives.

Tataje: Government should protect human life and dignity, keep the playing field fair, and make sure no one goes without basic necessities because of bad luck. It should strengthen families, small businesses, churches, co-ops, and local governments, not replace them or pick favorites behind closed doors. This is the Catholic Social Teaching principle of subsidiarity: relegating responsibilities and authorities to the most local governing body possible, and only intervening when issues are beyond the ability of local authority to solve.

Good government tells you what a program costs, measures whether it works, and ends it when it does not. It treats every person fairly, regardless of party or faith.

Anything else?

Gruber: As a first responder, I've never asked if someone was a Republican or a Democrat. I just drove as fast as I could to get there and did my best to solve their problem. I'll work to do the same in the legislature.

Novak: I have genuinely enjoyed representing this district. While the communities in the 51st might look different, people generally want the same things: safe schools, clean water, affordable healthcare, lower costs, good jobs and communities where their families can thrive.

I am a constituent-oriented legislator. Some of the most meaningful legislation I have authored started with an idea from someone in the district. That is what I enjoy most about this job: listening to people, bringing their ideas to Madison and getting things done.

In the next session I am positioned to accomplish a lot as I have served with both candidates for governor and have a personal relationship with both Tom Tiffany and David Crowley.

Tataje: I believe in protecting life from conception to natural death, and in backing that belief with real help for mothers, children, workers, people with disabilities, and older neighbors. I am not asking anyone to join a party. I am asking for the chance to serve my neighbors honestly, show my math, and get things done.

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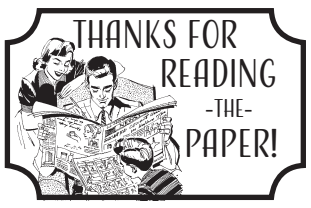
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CHURCH NOTES

Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church – ELCA
315 E. Main St. 608-437-5012
www.elcmthoreb.org
5 pm Saturday Worship
9 am Sunday Worship

Springdale Lutheran Church
2752 Town Hall Rd.
608-437-3493
Pastor Jim Ranney
Worship: 1st, 3rd & 5th Sundays of the month at 10am
twosteeples.org

West Blue Mounds Lutheran Church
2962 Church St., Blue Mounds
608-437-3493
Pastor Jim Ranney
Worship: Every 2nd & 4th Sunday of the month, 10 am
twosteeples.org

Immanuel Lutheran- ELCA
310 W. Main St. Mount Horeb
608-437-8733
10am Sunday Worship
www.immanuelmh.org/
1st Steps Childcare
608-218-4425

Good News Lutheran Church - WELS
9975 Pepper Dr, Mt Horeb
Pastor Jonathan Bauer
Thursday Worship: 6:30 pm
Sunday Worship: 9:00 am
Sunday School and Bible Study: 10:15 am
608-437-4646
GoodNewsLC.org

Mt Vernon United Church of Christ
1693 Washington St., Verona
608-832-6677
Sunday Worship, in-person and on Facebook Live, 10:15 am
We are an Open and Affirming Congregation~ Contact us at pastor@mtvernonucc.org or visit our website http://mountvernonucc.org

New Hope Evangelical Free Church
639 S. Eighth St., Mt. Horeb
Phone: 608-437-3273
www.newhopeefc.org
Sunday 10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Vermont Lutheran Church-ELCA
9886 Vermont Church Road
Black Earth, WI 53515
www.vermontlutheran.org
608-767-3312 (office)
Sunday Worship 9:30 a.m.
Sunday School 9:30 a.m.

Perry Lutheran Church ELCA
1057 Hwy 78 S, Mt. Horeb
608-437-5294
Sunday Worship 9:00 am
www.perrylutheranchurchelca.org

Mt. Horeb United Methodist
Corner of Hwy. S & Hwy. 78
Sunday Worship: 9am online and in person
umcmh.org
Celebrating God's Inclusive Love

St. Michael The Archangel Parish
~St. Ignatius Catholic Church
109 S. Sixth St., Mount Horeb
608-437-5348
Mass: Sunday 10:30 am
Tuesday, 5:30 pm,
Weds-Friday, 7:30 am;
Sat. 5:00 pm
~Holy Redeemer Catholic Church
10070 Spring Valley Dr., Mount Horeb
Mass: Sunday 8:00 am



TOWN OF PRIMROSE
PUBLIC TEST OF ELECTION EQUIPMENT

The Town of Primrose will hold a public test of the election equipment beginning at 9:00 am on Tuesday, October 27th, 2026 at the Primrose Town Hall, 8468 County Road A, Verona, WI 53593.

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

TOWN OF PERRY NOTICE
OF PUBLIC TEST
Voting Equipment
Perry Town Hall
10084 County Rd A
Monday, October 26, 2026
10:00 AM

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the test of the DS200 and ExpressVote voting equipment for the General Election on November 3, 2026, will take place on Monday, October 26, 2026, at 10:00 AM at the Perry Town Hall, 10084 County Rd A, in accordance with Wis. Stat. §5.84(1).

Stephanie Zwettler
Clerk/Treasurer

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

TOWN OF CROSS PLAINS LEGAL NOTICES

This is to give notice that the Office of Clerk for the Town of Cross Plains will conduct a public test of the electronic voting equipment 6:00 pm on October 29, 2026 at the Town Hall, 3734 County Rd P, Cross Plains WI. This is in accordance with Section 5.84(1) of the Wisconsin Statutes.

Notice is hereby given of a General Election for residents of the Town of Cross Plains. Said Election will be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026 at the Town Hall,

3734 County Rd P, Cross Plains WI. The polls will open at 7:00 am and will close at 8:00 pm. They are accessible to all. If you have questions concerning the polling place, contact the Town Clerk.

Jennifer Broberg, Town Clerk
608-798-0189
tcpclerk@townofcrossplains.wi.gov
Posted: 10/22/2026

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**



TOWN OF VERMONT NOTICE

Town of Vermont Plan Commission Meeting

Monday, October 26, 2026, at 6:00 p.m.

4017 County Hwy JJ, Black Earth, WI 53517

See townofvermontwi.gov for meeting agenda.

Please note: You can sign up for emailed meeting agendas at:
www.townofvermontwi.gov

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

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VILLAGE OF MOUNT HOREB
PUBLIC TESTING OF VOTING EQUIPMENT

Testing of the electronic voting equipment for the NOVEMBER 3RD, 2026 GENERAL ELECTION will be held on Wednesday, October 28th, 2026. The test will take place at 4:00pm at the Municipal Building in the 2nd Floor Conference Room. This test is open to the public.

Alyssa Gaffney
Village Clerk
Posted: October 14th, 2026

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

Shop Local



VILLAGE OF BLUE MOUNDS
LOCATION AND HOURS OF POLLING PLACE

At the General Election to be held on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, in the Village of Blue Mounds, the following polling place locations will be used for the wards indicated:

Location	Wards
Blue Mounds Village Hall 11011 Brigham Avenue	1

ALL POLLING PLACES WILL OPEN AT 7:00 A.M. AND WILL CLOSE AT 8:00 P.M.

If you have any questions concerning your polling place, contact the municipal clerk.

Beverly Petrolis, 608.437.5197 ext. 1
11011 Brigham Avenue, Blue Mounds, WI 53517
Monday – Thursday 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

All polling places are accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

Notice of Meeting of the Local Board of Canvassers

At the close of voting on Election Day, pursuant to the provisions of Wis. Stat. § 19.84, the Election Inspectors will convene as a joint meeting of the Local Board of for the purpose of conducting the local and municipal canvases pursuant to Wis. Stat. §7.51. This meeting will be open to the public pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 19.81-89.

Notice of Meeting of MBOC to Process Rehabilitated Provisional Ballots

If provisional ballots have been issued and are subsequently cured by the voter before 4:30 p.m. on the Friday after the election, the MBOC must meet no later than the following Monday at 9:00 a.m. to process the cured provisional ballots. This is a public meeting and requires applicable notice.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to the Village of Blue Mounds Residents, that the **Public Test** of the electronic voting equipment to be used at the Village of Blue Mounds General Election will be conducted on **October 28, 2026, at 11:00 a.m**. The testing will be held at the Village Office, located at 11011 Brigham Avenue, Blue Mounds, Wisconsin, 53517.

Beverly Petrolis
Posted October 22, 2026

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

TOWN OF BLUE MOUNDS
NOTICE
LOCATION AND HOURS OF POLLING PLACES

The **2026 General Election** will be held on **Tuesday, November 3, 2026**. The polling location for the Town of Blue Mounds is the Town Garage at 10566 Blue Vista Road, Blue Mounds, WI 53517. The **polling location will open at 7:00 am and will close at 8:00 pm**. If you have any questions concerning your polling place, contact the municipal clerk.

Amanda Burghy, 608-437-8722
townofbluemounds@gmail.com

The Town of Blue Mounds polling place is accessible to elderly and disabled voters.

Notice of Meeting of the Local Board of Canvassers

At the close of voting on Election Day, pursuant to the provisions of Wis. Stat. § 19.84, the Election Inspectors will convene as a joint meeting of the Local Board of for the purpose of conducting the local and municipal canvases pursuant to Wis. Stat. §7.51. This meeting will be open to the public pursuant to Wis. Stat. §§ 19.81-89.

IN-PERSON ABSENTEE VOTING FOR THE NOVEMBER 3, 2026, GENERAL ELECTION:

The Town Hall will be open, and the Clerk or Deputy Clerk will be available for absentee voting October 20th-22nd, and October 26th -30th from 9 a.m.-1 p.m. **or by appointment**.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Public Test of the Express Vote and Automatic Tabulating Equipment to be used for the General Election will be conducted at the Town of Blue Mounds Town Hall located at 10566 Blue Vista Rd, Blue Mounds, WI, 53517 at **10:00 a.m., Tuesday, October 27, 2026.** This test is open to the public.

Amanda Burghy-Clerk
October 22, 2026

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**

TOWN OF PERRY
NOTICE OF PUBLIC BUDGET HEARING AND SPECIAL MEETING OF THE ELECTORS

Notice is hereby given that a Public Hearing on the proposed 2027 budget of the Town of Perry will be held at ***7:30 PM on Thursday, November 5, 2026***, at the Perry Town Hall at 10084 County Rd A. (Teleconference - 425-585-6272, access - 394-722-206 #) The budget summary is posted pursuant to WI §65.90(3)(a)1 of Wis. Statutes.

Notice is further given that immediately following the Public Hearing on the proposed 2027 budget, a Special Meeting of the Electors of the Town of Black Earth will be called pursuant to WI §60.12(1)(c) by the Town Board for the following purpose:

1. To adopt the 2026 total Town tax levy* to be collected in 2027 pursuant to WI § 60.10(1)(a) of Wis. Statutes.

Summary of the proposed 2027 Town Budget**

	2026 Budget	2027 Budget
REVENUES		
Taxes/General Allowable Levy*	400,000	315,000
Intergovernmental Revenues	176,040	191,623
Licenses & Permits	2,150	2,150
Grants	1,925	
Miscellaneous	23,988	24,455
Borrowed Funds	300,000	75,000
Total Revenues	904,103	608,228
EXPENDITURES		
General Government	167,296	163,266
Public Works	259,740	272,340
Capital Outlay	228,526	21,250
Fire & EMS	100,000	116,765
Debt Service	153,519	127,850
Total Expenditures	909,081	701,471

* General Municipal Allowable Levy as determined by the WI Dept. of Revenue.

** The 2027 Budget is available on the Town's website, www.perry-wi.gov or from the Town Clerk.

Stephanie Zwettler, Clerk/Treasurer

Publish and Posted: October 22, 2026 – Town Hall, Town Garage, Daleyville sign post, Town website.

Publish: 10/22/26 **WNAXLP**





Above, Mount Horeb-Barneveld's Henry DeRosier recovers a fumble. At right, Bret St. Arnauld and the Vikings' football team are the No. 4 seed in their playoff pod. Photos courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

FOOTBALL

continued from page 13

Sophomore quarterback Preston Myers added 52 passing yards, completing 7-of-12 throws, while sophomore running back Olin Olson had 42 rushing yards on just two carries.

MH-B marched 80 yards in nine plays on its opening drive, and Maier capped that march with a 5-yard TD run. Cullen Olson's PAT gave the Vikings a 7-0 lead less than four minutes into the game.

Maier ripped off a 48-yard TD run midway through the first quarter, then had a 50-yard scoring run on MH-B's very next play to give the Vikings a 21-0 lead with 3:21 left in the first quarter.

McFarland answered with a 64-yard TD pass from Grayson Gauwitz to Joe Fortune and closed within 21-7 late in the first quarter. Then the Maier Show took back over.

First, the 5-foot-11, 190-pound battering ram capped a short two-play, 33-yard drive with a 21-yard TD run to make it 28-7.

Maier added second quarter touchdown runs of 4 and 2 yards as the Vikings' lead ballooned to 42-7 by halftime.

The second half was largely a formality, with McFarland scoring late in the third quarter, then Maier adding his remarkable seventh touchdown of the night with a 4 yard TD run early in the fourth quarter.

The Vikings now head to the postseason with a full head of steam.

Since beginning the year 1-3, MHB has outscored its last five foes, 218-65. The Vi-kings, who were hit hard by injury early in the season, have scored at least 42 points in four of those five games.

Next up is a Baldwin-Woodville team that is 7-2 overall and finished in second place in the Middle Border Conference at 6-1.

Senior quarterback Joe Jensen has completed 69-of-100 passes for 1,110 yards, 14 touchdowns and no interceptions. Jensen has also rushed for 211 yards and two touchdowns.

Sophomore Luke Janke leads the Blackhawks with 347 rushing yards and five touch-downs, and four players have at least 196 rushing yards this season.

Defensively, Baldwin-Woodville is allowing just 12.9 points per game and has pitched two shutouts. The Blackhawks have also forced 20 turnovers — 14 fumble recoveries and six interceptions.

The Blackhawks reached Level 4 of the playoffs last season, before falling to Winneconne in the state semifinals, 28-8.

For the Vikings, Maier's 1,628 rushing yards are the most by an MH-B running back since Malik Winston ran for 1,794 yards in 2017. With a playoff run, Maier could certainly eclipse Winston and perhaps even push 2,000 rushing yards on the season.

Sophomore quarterback Preston Myers, who took over midway through the year, completed 65-of-97 passes for 953 yards, 14 touchdowns and three interceptions.

Senior tight end Henry DeRosier has caught 24 passes for 325 yards and six touch-downs. Maier (18-346-3) and Cullen Olson (20-204-4) have also been integral in MH-B's passing game.

Senior defensive back Nolan Beadle leads the Vikings with 54 tackles, while sophomore linebacker Barrett Slaney has 50 tackles and four tackles for loss. DeRosier, who doubles as a linebacker, has 48 tackles and four tackles for loss, senior cornerback Aiden Aeschlimann has 47 tackles and senior defensive back Kaydn Schlimgen has 44 tackles and four TFLs.

Oct. 9
MH-B 48, McFarland 15
McFarland …… 7 0 8 0 — 15
MH-B ……..... 28 14 0 6 — 48
MHB: Eli Maier, 5, run (Cullen Olson kick
MHB: Maier, 48, run (Olson kick)
MHB: Maier, 50, run (Olson kick)
MCF: Grayson Gauwitz, 64, Pass from Joe Fortune (Mason Reddeman Kick)
MHB: Maier, 21, run (Olson kick)
MHB: Maier, 4, run (Olson kick)
MHB: Maier, 2, run (Olson kick)
MCF: Fortune, 18, pass from Garrett Crull (Patrick Fruits Two-Point Pass)
MHB: Maier, 4, run (Olson kick)

MHB STATISTICS

Rushing (Att.-Yds.) — MHB 30-313. Passing yards — MHB 88. Passing (Comp.-Att.-Int.) — MHB 8-15-0.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Rushing (Att.-Yds) — MHB: Eli Maier 25-256, Olin Olson 2-42, Preston Myers 2-16, Lucas High 1-(-1),

Passing (Att.-Comp.-Int.-Yds) — MHB: Preston Myers 7-12-0-52, Cullen Olson 1-10-36, Harvey Hellen 0-2-0-0.

Receiving (Att.-Yds) — MHB – Barrett Slaney 1-36, Maier 1-15, Cullen Olson 2-16, Henry DeRosier 3-7, Brady McCue 1-14.



Someone struggled for your right to vote. Use it.
- Susan B. Anthony

The decisions we make in this election will have direct implications for the health and wealth of households, community, nation and planet. There is no more important act an individual can perform than to cast a vote in this and every election.

VOTE NOVEMBER 3

EARLY IN-PERSON VOTING BEGINS ON OCTOBER 20. CHECK WITH YOUR MUNICIPAL CLERK FOR PLACE AND TIME.

QUESTIONS ABOUT VOTING?

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