

Indigenous dancers thrilled Mount Horeb audiences at the 2023 Native Art Marketplace. Photo by Ron Lutz II.

Obituary

Peter Donald Strube

May 21, 1971 –
Dec. 11, 2023

MOUNT HOREB - Peter Donald Strube, age 52, passed away on Monday, Dec. 11, 2023. He was born on May 21, 1971, in Milwaukee, the son of Donald Strube and Nancy Sommerfeld. He was united in marriage to Rebecca Church on Oct. 28, 1995, in Waukegan, Ill.



Peter earned his B.A. in Nursing from Luther College in 1994 and his Master's in Nurse Anesthesia from St. Mary's University in 2006. He went on to earn his Doctor of Nursing Prac-

tice degree from Rosalind Franklin University in 2017 and his MBA from Edgewood College in 2019. Peter retired from the U.S. Army Nurse Corps after 21 years of service, having achieved the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. He deployed four times, which included service in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He earned the War on Terrorism medal, the Enduring Freedom medal, the Mobilization Armed Forces Reserve medal, the Iraqi Freedom and Global War on Terror medal, and held numerous certificates of achievement, appreciation, and training from the United States Army.

Dr. Strube was an Assistant Professor at Newman University School of Nurse Anesthesia and was a developer of the pharmacology CPC Modules for multiple CRNA education programs. His teaching background included serving as an Assistant Program Director at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, an Associate Professor at Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, and an Assistant Professor at Rosalind Franklin University of Medicine and Science. Peter loved his family more than anything, he loved Christmas, Bill's Pizza, hockey, a good conversation, and never shied away

from what he believed. He lived by his favorite quote by Martin Luther King Jr., "If you can't fly, then run. If you can't run, then walk. If you can't walk, then crawl, but by all means, keep moving." Peter is survived by his wife, Rebecca; sons, Noah Strube and Alexander Strube; daughter, Sarah Strube; parents, Donald Strube and Nancy Sommerfeld; two sisters, Shannon Strube and Nicole (Troy) Cross; niece, Josie Cross; nephew, Chance Cross. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, Gordon and Betty Strube, and Robert and Marcella (Fosterling) Som-

merfeld. A memorial service will be held at EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH, 315 E. Main St., Mount Horeb, at 3 p.m. on Tuesday, Jan. 16, 2024. Visitation will be held at the church from 12 noon until the time of the service on Tuesday. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made in Peter's name to Wounded Warriors Project. Online condolences may be made at www.gundersonfh.com.

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

Gleanings

By **BARB JOHNSON**
Mount Horeb Mail

130 Years Ago- Jan. 4, 1894

Andrew Huset had a chopping bee last Saturday. For Sale: five acres of first class land with a new dwelling house on it, and half interest in a well and wind mill. Located about 50 rods from the Mount Horeb Academy grounds.

We have now fixed up our new mill and can grind corn with the cob to satisfaction. Bring your corn in and try this new method. Bohn Bros. Our esteemed young friend, Mr. A. G. Paulson, of this place, and Miss Josephine Schubert, of Madison, were joined in wedlock, Dec. 28, 1893, by Justice Mandt, at the home of the bride in the capital city. It was somewhat of a surprise to our citizens that this young couple had decided to take this most important step without being suspected of ringing their unsuspected intentions into immediate execution. They are now enjoying their wedding trip to the Garden City and expected back to our midst this week where we hope they will settle down. Their many friends wish them joy and happiness, and our wish is that their sorrows may be few and their troubles only little ones.

What Mount Horeb is in need of now is a good large opera hall. Oliver Grefsrud received a gash in his knee while sawing wood with a circle saw a couple of weeks ago, which has caused considerable trouble. He is, however, getting along fairly well at present. The sale of Rasmus Lund's carpenter tools was held last Tuesday as advertised, and figured up to something over seventy dollars. J. L. Malone was the auctioneer. Hans Haakenes and Halstine Knudson sold their last year's hail cut tobacco crop to Carl Tennert, of Stoughton, last week for 1 1/4 cents

a pound. Rumor is afloat that L. Sutter, Sr., will put up a fine and commodious residence next summer. Don't tobacco spit or smoke your life away is the truthful startling title of a little book that tells all about No-tobacco, the wonderful, harmless GUARANTEED tobacco habit cure. Sold by H.V. Bancroft.

120 Years Ago- Jan. 7, 1904

Christ Gesme came home New Year's Day for a short visit with the folks at home. He was accompanied by a handsome young lady whose name we learned to be Miss Anderson. A preliminary test was given the waterworks plant last Monday and was witnessed by many interested spectators and property owners. Only 90 lbs. pressure was put on and this threw two good-sized streams from one hydrant. The boys of the fire department will have reason to be confident that when they are given the full capacity of the machine, 200 lbs., they will be able to do effective work.

C.O. Ruste made a brief halt at the threshold of our sanctum Tuesday. W. Bilse sold a fine high stepping nag to ex-Sheriff Brown of Madison the other day, realizing the handsome price of \$130.

110 Years Ago- Jan. 2, 1914

O.P. Berg has been assisting Albert Ness in putting in his billiard and pool tables this week. We received a communication from our nephew, Talmer Dahlen at Front, Minn. that he had taken unto himself a wife on Dec. 23rd, having won the heart and hands of the best little girl in Fairbault county. We congratulate.

John and Harvey Fargo, Peter and Chas. Rue, took an auto trip to Monticello last Saturday. The latter acted as

Chauffeur and made the sixty mile trip in good time with his 1909 Buick machine.

The work of installing the new gas producer engine at the electric light plant was a big job and will soon be in position when day current will be furnished. Skating on the lake has been enjoyed by a great many during the holiday vacation. The ice was pronounced safe the 20th. The youngsters are getting quite proficient in the art of skating and are having much pleasure in the sport.

The new eugenic health marriage law that goes into effect Jan. 1 in Wisconsin will apparently stop marriage. Half of the marriages are now childless and there are not club footed, hunch-backed and idiotic persons born as much as 70 or 100 years ago. Dr. Albert Thomson is getting settled, has had his household goods shipped here and will soon start housekeeping with his sister Lena as housekeeper.

100 Years Ago- Jan. 1, 1924

WANTED TO TRADE: A good work horse for a good fat cow or steer to butcher. George Neuenschwander. Phone 2-95. Joe Mulcay, who for the past twelve years has taught music in this vicinity, died Saturday afternoon after a long illness. He was an accomplished musician and had a large class of students. The last few weeks of his life were spent at the Mt. Horeb House, where the Branman sisters gave him very wonderful care until the grim reaper called him. J.N. Dahlen is building a new house for P.C. Paulson this week - in which he will house a fine Russian Wolf Hound. From now on the Mt. Horeb Barber shops will close every Tuesday and Thursday at 6 o'clock. Also during the winter months they will close at 10 o'clock Saturday evenings. **80 Years Ago-
Jan. 6, 1944** Wonder where your now unobtainable nylon stockings

are, ladies? Our great manufacturers have taken them to the battlefronts where 1,920 pairs, enough for 3,840 legs, go to make a single "human escape" parachute. W. J. Olson was taken to the Veterans' Hospital, Wood with three blood clots in his leg. Oliver Lee, accompanied by Fritz Flatberg, brought Bill to the hospital. Give the hair a dry shampoo by sprinkling cornmeal or almond meal through it and then brushing it out thoroughly. Dance at the Parkway Ballroom with Don Chambers and His Orchestra. Mr. and Mrs. William Grimstad received a telegram on Wednesday of last week from the War Department that their son, Gordon, was missing in action in the African area. No late report has been received.

**70 Years Ago-
Jan. 7, 1954** At the National Hotel this week, ocean perch dinner is 60¢; shrimp dinner, 85¢. All dinners include French Fries and cabbage salad. Rev. Hector Gunderson, pastor of Vermont, Black Earth and East Blue Mounds Lutheran Churches, announced his resignation at the services in the churches last Sunday after serving the parish for 30 years. He has accepted the call to Lake Edge Lutheran Church in Madison. His resignation brings to an end a more than 65-year father and son ministry here.

Mrs. C.M. (Julia) Grimstad, pioneer Mount Horeb resident, will observe her 92nd birthday on Saturday, Jan. 9. William Marty took over the Sinclair Station on the corner of Springdale and Eighth Streets on Monday of this week.

**60 Years Ago-
Jan. 2, 1964** The first of three Sabin oral polio immunizations are scheduled for Jan. 12 in the Mount Horeb High School lunchroom. Enough vaccine will be provided to service a population of 5000 in Mount

Horeb. A donation of 25¢ per dose is requested to help defray the cost of the program. Vaccine will be furnished free to those unable to pay. Louise Brooks, Palmerston, New Zealand, who is paralyzed from the waist down as a result of a swimming accident, is here taking treatment from Dr. C. S. Gonstead. Mrs. Mabel Soper, age 64, Mount Horeb, died on Monday, Dec. 23, 1963 in her home. Marine Private Richard W. Fredrickson, Mount Horeb completed recruit training at the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, Parris Island, S. C.

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

FRIDAY, JANUARY 5
Neighbors Helping Neighbors - Food Pantry and Clothes Closet. New Hours: SENIORS ONLY - Fridays 9:00-10:30am; All shoppers 3:00-6:00pm.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6
Neighbors Helping Neighbors - Food Pantry and Clothes Closet - open 10:00-11:30am

SUNDAY, JANUARY 7
Mt. Horeb FFA Alumni Toy Show - Sunday, Jan. 7 8:30 am to 2:30 pm; Kiddy Tractor Pull at 11:00 am \$3.00 adults admission; kids 12 and under are free

MONDAY, JANUARY 8
PFLAG Mt. Horeb meeting, 6:00-8:00pm. Mt. Horeb Public Library meeting room (not a library sponsored event). Speakers: Sarah & Ian Hoffman, authors of "Jacob's New Dress".

TUESDAY, JANUARY 9
Tai Chi, Mt. Horeb Senior Center, 1:00pm. RSVP 608-437-6902

Ageless Grace, Mt. Horeb Senior Center, 2:00pm. RSVP 608-437-6902

Mound Vue Garden Club, virtual presentation via Zoom, 7:00pm, Contact slowell844@gmail.com on Jan. 8 for link

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 10
Mt. Horeb Seniors Blood Pressure Check, 10:00-11:00am, Senior Center

Lunch for Mt. Horeb Seniors at Fink's Cafe, 11:00am-1:00pm

Euchre - Mt. Horeb Senior Center, 12:30pm

Information for the Community Calendar must be emailed by noon on the Monday of the week of publication. Information should be emailed to mhclassies@fingerpub.com. We reserve the right to edit for length.

The stories of 2023

Here’s a chance to revisit some of the many articles that defined last year

An Afghan soldier’s story

One day in 2011, a young but vastly experienced military officer named Arman was shot through the leg as he rushed through a deluge of bullets to help a wounded soldier under his command. The officer wrapped a tourniquet around his thigh and battled on. He knew his men would succumb to despair if he stopped fighting.

It was not his first battle. It would certainly not be his last.

Prior to that particular firefight, Taliban forces learned American soldiers had temporarily left the area, where Arman and his fellow soldiers were working as peacekeepers in the Afghan National Army (ANA). They and the civilians they were protecting were in a deep, vulnerable valley, entombed by steep peaks. Taliban forces surrounded them and set up loudspeakers that boomed ominously from the mountaintops, like the voice of some malevolent deity, demanding that they turn over their weapons and leave, or be slaughtered.

Arman and his compatriots were able to hold them off until air support arrived, and they were able to escape.

A decade later, in August of 2021, after countless more missions and fire-fights, after suicide bombings and other assassination attempts, Arman was told to bring his men and equipment to a coalition outpost. When he arrived at the division, however, it was a ghost town. The American forces had left, seemingly overnight. And this time, they weren’t coming back. It was only a matter of days before most of the country fell to the Taliban.

In the blink of an eye, Arman went from being a coalition war hero to a fugitive. He began receiving letters saying he would be killed.

He knew he had to leave his country or die.

Arman, a captain in the ANA, fought with coalition forces against the Taliban from 2007 until 2021. With his extensive knowledge of military tactics and American weaponry, he is a high value target. If he fell into their hands, he would not merely be shot. He would be

tortured first. He knows this because of the letters he has received from the Taliban, written in their own hand, sometimes in blood-red ink.

Today, Arman is living and working in the United States. But his fight is far from over. While he waits and hopes to be granted asylum in America, he thinks of his wife and children, who must remain in hiding in Afghanistan, where they are currently stranded. They too could be tortured and killed if they were discovered by those who now run the country. They are like prisoners, moving from place to place, never venturing in public, lest they be captured and killed.

Enter Chet Isaacson, a senior litigation attorney for American Family Insurance. A rural Mount Horeb resident, Isaacson is affable and outdoorsy, a typical Wisconsinite. He coaches youth athletics, loves deer hunting, wood working, and his family and their four dogs. He is also playing an integral role in Arman’s story, working free of charge to help him

gain asylum.

It started one day, a year ago, when Isaacson opened his inbox and saw an email asking for lawyers to help refugees gain asylum in the United States. A few years earlier, he and his wife, Laura, had seen a news report about American families taking in refugees who had fled from war-torn countries. They thought they would like to do something like that, themselves, but life was hectic at the time, and it never materialized.

“When I saw the email, I figured this was my chance to help,” he explains, adding with a chuckle, “despite knowing absolutely nothing about immigration law. I immediately responded ‘yes.’ I didn’t even really think about it.” He would offer his time and expertise, pro bono.

What followed for Isaacson was a crash course in how the United States examines and admits refugees who are seeking asylum.

“Initially it was a lot of reading, just so I could learn to navigate the whole process,” he explains. “I would equate it to a heart surgeon being asked to do dentistry, or something. It’s just totally different. Oh, and it’s fed-

eral law, while most of what I do is civil defense.”

“From there it really was just a coalition of people,” he says. “Law firms, organizations, Catholic charities, Jewish charities.”

“It really was a team effort,” Isaacson continues. “I was only a small part of it. There were so many people and groups that helped. It makes you realize that most people are, really, pretty damned good people.”

“My involvement is really much less interesting than [Arman’s] story,” Isaacson adds.

Isaacson and fellow attorney Linda Schmit, along with Arman filed an I-589, the federal Application for Asylum and for Withholding of Removal. People may file for asylum if they are physically present in the United States and are not U.S. citizens.

“To establish asylum in the U.S. you need to show that you are at risk of persecution in your home country; that you can’t return,” explains Isaacson. “So, really what we are trying to prove is that he can’t return. That he’s at risk of persecution, in this instance because he fought with coalition forces against the Taliban.”

Nearly every American knows vaguely that Afghanistan has experienced more than four decades of bloody mayhem, starting with a coup and the subsequent Soviet invasion, and later the American invasion. But Isaacson got to see the violence and tragedy manifested in one man’s life.

“When he was a kid, it was the Russians,” he says. “Death is just a way of life for him. The only time I’ve seen him display any emotion about it is when he talks about his family.”

“His high school, and this is not uncommon, was a military academy,” Isaacson said. What followed was a

life almost exclusively dedicated to the armed forces.

“He’s a very smart guy, a very effective person,” Isaacson observes. “He’s all business, and he’s intense.”

“He had this great respect for the U.S. military, and in some ways, he almost thought they were all-powerful because of what they came in and did,” he says. But when they left in 2021, things quickly disintegrated. The Taliban, made up of ultraconservative Afghan student-warriors that originally sprang from mujahideen groups and religious seminaries in Pakistan and Afghanistan, roared back into power.

“It’s chilling,” Isaacson says. “It’s not just getting killed, it’s all of the horrible ways they are going to torture him.”

As a captain in the ANA, Arman was used to helping people. But when the United States left, he found himself being the one who needed help.

“So, in 2021, the U.S. leaves, and the way he describes it, they just disappeared,” says Isaacson. “People woke up one morning and they were gone.”

That’s when Arman was told to report back to a coalition base, only to arrive and find it, and his country, abandoned.

“Literally no one was there,” Isaacson says.

Arman contacted a close friend, who happened to be an American soldier.

“He developed a really close relationship with an officer in the U.S. Army who lives in Wisconsin,” Isaacson says. “[Arman] contacted him, he was on vacation at the time, actually, and he worked for 48 hours to get [Arman] and his family over here. He understood that staying was basically a death sentence.”

For a moment, it looked

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CHURCH NOTES

Good News Lutheran Church - WELS
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(in person and online)
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GoodNewsLC.org/location for details & directions

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Mt Horeb Evangelical Lutheran
315 E. Main St. 608-437-5012
www.elcmthoreb.org
Facebook: evangelical.lutheran church of mt. horeb
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Phone: 608-437-3273
www.newhopeefc.org
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1057 Hwy 78 S, Mt. Horeb
608-437-5294
Sunday Worship 9:00 am
www.perrylutheranchurchelca.org

Springdale Lutheran Church
2752 Town Hall Rd. 608-437-3493
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Sundays of the month at 10am
twosteeple.org

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

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

West Blue Mounds Lutheran Church
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like the story would have a happy ending. But the airport in Kabul is surrounded by a deep canal, and when Arman and his wife and young children attempted to reach the runway, they realized that crossing what was essentially a moat would likely end with their children being either drowned or trampled to death by the throngs of people trying to flee the country they called home. “It was literally thousands of people, as far as the eye could see, trying to get on an airplane,” says Isaacson.

Arman surged ahead, thinking the remaining U.S. forces at the airport would be able to get his family to the airplane if only he could reach them and tell them his plight. After all, he had fought with them for so many years. After boarding the plane, he was told that his family could not be reached; that they would be left behind.

That was the last time he saw them.

Shortly after the plane took off, Kabul International Airport fell to the Taliban.

Last summer, Arman’s American friend wrote a memorandum to the Chief of Mission laying out the reasons he and his family should be given visas to the United States. When Arman arrived in the United States, the American officer’s family paid for him to take a bus to Wisconsin, where he lived in the American officer’s home until he could save enough money to get his own apartment.

Arman currently works at a convenience store while he waits for the courts to decide whether he will live or die. He does not know what will become of his wife and children. He has not, at least not yet, succumbed to despair.

“The next time you go into a [convenience store], you may be speaking to a war hero,” Isaacson points out.

Arman’s story is one of millions. Since the passage of the Refugee Act in 1980 the United States has taken in an estimated 3.7 million refugees and asylees.

Under the United States Immigration and Nationality Act (INA), a refugee is an alien who “has experienced past persecution or has a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.” Individuals who meet this definition may be considered for either refugee status under Section 207 of the INA if they are outside the United States, or asylum status under Section 208 of the INA, if they are already in the United States.

When U.S. forces left Af-

ghanistan, the number of people seeking safe passage skyrocketed. Many have stories like Arman. Others could be potential terrorists.

“Needless to say, in 2021 there was an influx of refugee applicants, some of whom might actually have been members of the Taliban,” Isaacson explains. “So, I do understand that maybe the only right way to do this is to apply the same amount of scrutiny to everyone.”

Even so, Isaacson hoped Arman’s case would be decided by now.

“I went to Chicago with him and did his hearing in October,” he says. “We all thought it would be decided by now.”

So, when will the court decide? “The short answer is, we don’t know. I keep checking,” Isaacson replies.

Isaacson says working with Arman has opened his eyes to both the amount of suffering in the world, and the willingness of people, including strangers, to reach out and help those who are in trouble.

“It’s kind of similar to when you have kids,” he muses. “There are certain things in your life that just make you more considerate. Having kids is like that, where you start to think of others and hopefully become a better person. You look at someone and you think, ‘Hey, that’s someone’s kid.’ It softens you. And I think this experience, I hope this experience, does the same thing. Not just when talking to someone from the Middle East, but when dealing with anyone who is foreign or even just in any group you don’t immediately identify with.”

“How many people do you know who have fought multiple battles against terrorists?” he adds. “It makes you think twice. You don’t know what someone has been through.”

Editor’s note: Arman is not the real name of the man profiled in this story. It was changed to protect his family. He won the right to live in the U.S. later in 2023.

More than 200 lead water lines removed in Mount Horeb

The United States finally banned the use of leaded pipe and solder in new plumbing systems back in 1986, merely a couple thousand years after people first knew they were harmful to human health, but many remaining pipe networks around the country predate the policy. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) estimated last year that there were still 6 to 10 million lead service lines across the nation. But there are a lot less lead pipes in the Vil-

lage of Mount Horeb than there used to be, following a replacement campaign that took place in 2022 and will continue into the spring of this year.

The initiative in Mount Horeb replaced more than 200 lead service lines on the homeowners’ side (the portion that goes from the main line to the meter on the side of the house). The village had originally planned to have the lead lines replaced by 2025, but a \$1.56 million grant from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) last year meant the Troll Capital of the World was able to get well ahead of schedule. The village hoped to have the work wrapped up by October 28, 2022, around the time the blacktop plant closed for the year, but unrelated construction projects on Main and Eighth streets prevented some lead service lines from being replaced for homes with those addresses. Luckily, the village’s utility office applied for an extension on the DNR grant and now has until April 28 to complete the remaining lead service line replacements.

The grant money, which works out to \$6,000 per home, should cover the lead line replacement costs.

Olsons look back on lives dedicated to beauty

Bill and Muriel Olson met at a party in a cow pasture, in rural New Glarus. They fell in love, eventually got married, and spent their lives together adding beauty to the world around them.

When Muriel first laid eyes on Bill, he was already working as a florist. He started selling flowers out of his family home in Barneveld, in 1954.

“When we got married, he took care of everything,” Muriel remembers.

Eventually, Bill rented space in Barneveld. The shop moved to Mount Horeb in November of 1962, and it has been in the village ever since, currently at 214 East Main Street. But now, the people at Olson’s Flowers say they have decided it’s time to sell the business and say goodbye to a profession that defined them for so many years. Bill died in late 2020, and Heidi Wittwer, who has worked at Olson’s for 43 years, has decided to retire. Muriel, along with Bill’s sister, Judy Olson-Sutton, and Wittwer recently took the time to look back on all those special moments they were part of, over the years.

“Bill always said he was going to write a book on all the things we saw,” reflects Muriel. “That never happened, of course, but he had some good stories, I

tell ya. He was going to call the book, ‘There goes the bride.’”

She starts at the beginning, at that party in a field where they first laid eyes on one another. “It was good,” she says with a grin. “It was wild.”

“By October we decided to get married, but we waited a year because his dad had passed and you don’t do anything like that right after someone dies,” she explains.

Olson-Sutton, says her brother possessed “a natural talent” for flowers.

“It was innate,” she continues. “He was an artist. He was also a risk-taker. Where else, back then, would you find someone living on a farm out in Barneveld, who decided to make a life out of flowers?”

“He started without any training at all, but he had the creativity,” she says.

“He just knew exactly what do to,” agrees Muriel.

While Bill was initially self-taught, he spent his career learning how to better serve his customers, they said.

“He always went to the conventions and meetings to learn things for the customers. He was always looking at what he could do better,” Muriel says. “Bill made a lot of friends over the years. He loved people.”

For nearly 70 years, whenever there has been a major life event in the Mount Horeb area, from the joyous wedding to a wistful wake, Olson’s Flowers helped make it beautiful. Muriel puts it simply: “He was always there.”

And it wasn’t only paying customers, or even living ones, who benefitted. Muriel remembers driving together to cemeteries to deliver flower that had been ordered by loved ones. When she noticed Bill was bringing several extra arrangements with them, she inquired about the bevy of surplus bouquets.

“He said he just thought maybe there would be some graves that needed them,” Muriel remembers. “Not families that bought them; just some people who needed them.”

“He would say, ‘Mrs. So-and-So always loved geraniums. He always took care of people if their families didn’t, for no charge. He enjoyed that so much,” she adds.

“I remember another time, we did a wedding, and the cake was just melting in this hot, humid basement. It was just terrible. The bride was crying, and Bill told her to go get ready. He recreated the whole cake, with roses on it,” Muriel remembers. “How he made those roses is beyond me.”

“Flowers were important on many levels,” says Olson-Sutton. “He loved the flower business and he cared

so much. He wanted to make sure everything was right.”

“Hopefully, if people have been around for a while, when they hear the name Olson’s Flowers they think of quality. Fortunately, we have Heidi, who maintained that high standard.”

Heidi Wittwer started working at Olson’s in 1979. She’s been there ever since.

“Being a florist wasn’t really my first choice, although it turned out to be a good one,” she admits. “I was a little adrift back then. My sister, Ann, was the florist in our family. She worked for Jane Buffo of Buffo Floral back then, [and] she later went on to own it. Jane Buffo was John Ellestad’s, the funeral director here in town’s, niece. John and Bill were best friends. I made some aprons for Ann. Muriel got wind of it and asked me to make some for her. She liked the way I turned the corners on the aprons and thought because of that, and because of Ann’s talent, I might do alright in the shop.”

The rest, as they say, is history. Wittwer has worked there for the past 44 years.

“I enjoy the beauty of the flowers; their colors and shapes and varieties,” she says. “I like that everyday can be different. I like that I work in the town where I live and am only five minutes away from home. I’ve always liked that nobody here has a ‘set’ job, but [can be] called on to do pretty much anything. I like the creative aspect of it. I’m sorta artsy-fartsy. I like the family atmosphere.”

“I have learned so much from Bill,” Wittwer says. “He was a very talented designer. I learned a lot about color, he was a wiz with color and the mechanics and techniques of design.”

Bill Olson passed away on November 6, 2020.

Of course, the flowers at his memorial service were beautiful.

“I did the casket spray for Bill,” Wittwer says. “Muriel wanted all red roses as we consider those the ‘Cadillac’ flower. Bill was big on symbolism. For fire chief Chuck Himsel he put as many roses as years Chuck was alive in his spray. I put 86 red roses in Bill’s spray, one for each year of his life. It was quite impressive, as it should be for a florist. In the panel piece - that is the piece that sits inside of the casket - I used 51 miniature red roses, one for each year Bill and Muriel were married. We threw rose petals in the grave before the casket was lowered so Bill would be in a bed of roses.”

For Bill, Muriel, Heidi, Judy and countless other people, flowers are the embodiment of love. And like love, they grow anew, over and over again.

“You are never limited

with the amount of love you can give,” says Olson-Sutton. “People think it’s finite, but it’s not.”

Olson-Sutton says people today are “more interested in flowers than ever.”

They hope someone will buy the business and make it their own, but of course they know that once they sell, its fate will be up to someone else.

“It’s time to leave,” says Wittwer. “Life is short. I want to enjoy the fruits of my labor before I’m too old. I will miss the flowers and the arranging but not the stress!”

“We want to honor her wishes, and she would like to retire,” Olson-Sutton says. “We want to sell it to someone as a flower shop, and we want them to succeed. Of course, we don’t know what will happen but that’s what we’re hoping.”

They also plan to sell Olson’s Christmas House, a sister shop located next door at 220 East Main Street.

“You get to the point where you have really mixed emotions,” says Olson-Sutton. “Olson’s has been in Mount Horeb for so long, and this has been Muriel’s life. When I was a kid, it was my life.”

“The support from the people of Mount Horeb has been wonderful,” says Olson-Sutton. “And we’ve been so blessed with the employees.”

Kristen Dresen took over the business in August, taking the reins from the family that gave the store its name and continuing their dedication to the community.

Pets after the apocalypse

When the Unit 4 Reactor at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant in Ukraine exploded in the spring of 1986, it poisoned the Earth for thousands of years. Shortly after the meltdown, Soviet authorities evacuated an estimated 49,000 people from the city. They would not allow them to take their pets with them. They told them they would be gone for only three days, so they set out a little bit of food and water.

They were never allowed to return.

After the humans had been driven away, Soviet soldiers went from house to house, shooting as many dogs and cats as they could find, fearful they would escape and spread the massive dose of radiation they had absorbed to other regions. But dogs and cats, just like their human counterparts, are survivors. Some hid. Some fled to the Red Forest. Surely, some soldiers looked into their eyes and simply disobeyed orders. And while they lived in a poisoned land, these pets

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survived, feeding and breeding as the memory of their human masters faded from their minds.

More than three decades later, volunteers from the Clean Futures Fund, a non-profit that helps people recover from industrial disasters, began traveling to the town of Pripjat, located in the heart of the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone. What they found was shocking: a huge population of dogs, scavenging and scrounging around the post-apocalyptic cement sarcophagus that now covers the simmering nuclear reactor. These dogs are the descendants of those first pets whose owners left after the meltdown. The first generations of dogs fled to the forest. Eventually, they were driven back to the city by wild bears and rabid wolves. They were skinny and they did not live long, but they did live long enough to reproduce, again and again, leading to a massive population boom, a huge mob of dogs in the bones of what had once been a bustling Soviet city.

They do not have two heads, or three eyes. They do not glow in the dark. In fact, they tend not to live long enough to develop cancer from the radiation in which they live. All around them, the wilderness has been reclaiming the Exclusion zone. Wild plants and animals are taking over. The only exception is the plant itself, where people still live and work, to this day, monitoring the deadly core. Over many years, those workers formed bonds with the feral dogs that wandered the empty streets outside.

Dr. Jennifer Betz is a veterinarian who lives in Portland, Oregon but spends much of her time in the Exclusion Zone. There, she and other volunteers with the Clean Futures Fund’s Dogs of Chernobyl Program work to locate, feed, vaccinate and sterilize the dogs. They are then released to live out their lives in the only home they have ever known. Despite the catastrophe that shaped their lives, most of the dogs are free and happy, once they get a little help from these humans.

Betz has always loved dogs.

“As far as me, it’s always something I had a connection with,” she says. “Even as a kid. Other kids would go and find kids to play with. I would go find dogs to play with.”

“I think they provide some sort of comfort, some kind of responsiveness,” she continues. “They’re really remarkable. There really isn’t any other animal that gives you that connection.”

Betz’s account of why

she travels to the Exclusion Zone is simple.

“Basically, in 1986 the world’s worst nuclear disaster happened,” explains Betz. “Everyone was told they would be gone for three days. They left some food for their pets. This was Soviet times; they had no choice. They sent in the military to kill the dogs and cats and prevent contamination.”

But no matter how much they tried to shoot them, the dogs could not be eliminated, and the workers who stayed behind to monitor the plant often fed the dogs.

“Ever since the accident, there have been people working there,” explains Betz. “Those workers noticed the dogs. A lot of times they would eat leftovers from the canteen. The workers there would feed scraps to the dogs.”

“Years ago, when they hired people to come in and shoot them, that didn’t go over real well with the workers,” Betz says. “They boycotted. They loved the dogs.”

In 2016, volunteers with the Clean Futures Fund first saw the dogs, in person. They knew they wanted to help them.

A few of the dogs were adopted and taken outside of the zone, but those adoptions eventually ended due to increased rules and regulations.

“Back in 2018 we had two litters of puppies that their mother disappeared,” says Betz. “They were four weeks old and left to fend for themselves. They were going to die if we didn’t do something. We petitioned for a special circumstances approval, to remove them from zone, then we had to quarantine with the placement.”

Since then, United States and Canada both put a ban on the import of dogs from Ukraine and 111 other countries that are “rabies suspect.”

“Since then, they have really tightened up on their restrictions and have not even let us remove a dog from the zone for medical reasons,” Betz says.

“Because it’s illegal to remove anything from the exclusion zone, they began working on humane population control,” she continues. “We come in and capture the dogs, spay and neuter them, do full physical exams and DNA sequencing. They can’t leave so our goal is to help them be as happy and healthy as they can be while they are there.”

“They are pretty happy, actually,” she points out.

“When they did have tourists, the tourists loved the dogs,” she says.

While Chernobyl is obviously no stranger to strife, it was struck yet another blow in 2022, when the war between Russia and Ukraine

broke out.

“In the very beginning, the first thing [Russian forces] did when they captured Chernobyl was put every worker in a bunker for 30 days. They had no contact with the dogs,” says Betz. “The dogs had no food; they almost starved to death. That’s proof these dogs are reliant on people.”

If the world’s worst nuclear meltdown and raging warfare weren’t enough, volunteer efforts were also hampered by the global COVID-19 pandemic. The Clean Futures Fund’s Dogs of Chernobyl has worked in the area in 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2022, missing two years during the lockdown.

They continue to work there even now, as the war rages on. Chernobyl is, and always has been, a haunting – and strangely beautiful – reminder of what remains after an unthinkable tragedy. The rusting yellow Ferris wheel at the Pripjat Amusement Park, which was scheduled to open just days after the meltdown, has become one of the planet’s most powerful post-apocalyptic images. It is a reminder of our species’ greatest aspirations, and of how quickly people and their grand designs will crumble, in the end. Most importantly, it reminds us that the Earth and her many species, her lush vegetation and all the things that swim and slither and run across the ground, are resilient in ways we can hardly imagine. The land is poisoned, and yet life persists.

“It’s kind of like an abandoned ghost town,” says Betz. “You do have to be careful. Some areas are very hot. Some have almost no radiation. It’s like everything just stopped in time.”

“You can’t touch your eyes or mouth. You can’t sit down,” she adds. “You are walking through this crumbling society.”

It is an illustration of both the horrible and wonderful things human beings are capable of.

Board OK’s raise for teachers

The Mount Horeb Area School Board in early 2023 approved a pay increase for local teachers following a bargaining process that the local teachers’ union said was disappointing.

The average salary will increase by about 4.75 percent, from \$58,700 to \$61,488 annually.

Another increase would follow later in the year.

Community steps up to help people displaced by fire

The Mount Horeb community is stepping up to

help those left homeless by a local fire last week. Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the non-profit organization that offers food, clothing and an array of services to anyone in need, swung into action following the blaze and continues working to help many of the 16 residents who were staying, in some cases long-term, at the Karakahl Country Inn on Perimeter Road when the fire occurred.

It was Sunday, April 2 at approximately 2 p.m. when emergency personnel were first dispatched to the fire. After the flames were extinguished, officers from the Mount Horeb Police Department, the Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation Fire Marshall’s Office, the Mount Horeb Fire Department and the Mount Horeb Building Inspector worked together to investigate the fire. Everyone living at the inn, including people and several pets, was removed as a safety precaution.

The initial investigation was completed the following day. Mount Horeb chief of police Doug Vierck said there was “no evidence of criminal activity” but the building was not safe to live in.

“The building inspector found the property uninhabitable due to no water or power in accordance with municipal ordinance 10.05 (6) pending an inspection by an electrical inspector,” Vierck explained. “The occupants of the building were notified that no one was allowed to stay in the building due to the declaration of the building inspector. They were advised to work with the building owner to get access to their belongings.”

The building inspector conducted an electrical inspection on Tuesday, April 4, determining the electrical wiring was not safe to turn back on and the building was still uninhabitable.

“A licensed contractor would need to inspect the building and determine the extent of damage and time frame for repair,” said Vierck. “The owners informed us they are working with their insurance to start that process. At this time, there is no timetable for reopening. The rooms have all been secured and any damaged windows have been boarded up. We are working hard to support both the business and those affected by the fire through the American Red Cross and Neighbors Helping Neighbors. When incidents like this happen, it is important to partner with all areas of the community and come together to help those in need. There will be no further updates from the police department unless a change in status occurs such as evidence of criminal activity or a change in safety surrounding the property.”

Neighbors Helping Neighbors spokesperson Janna Hansen said the Red Cross provided gift cards for immediate needs, including temporary shelter, to those who were forced to leave the Karakahl. Neighbors Helping Neighbors connected with the Mount Horeb Clergy Association, Mount Horeb Area School District social workers, a Joining Forces for Families social worker, and Southwest Dane Outreach case workers to assess the immediate and long-term needs of the displaced people. Considering all the moving parts, the process moved swiftly and multiple people had already applied for housing at Landsby Ridge, Mount Horeb’s newest apartment building, this week.

As of early this week, Sheila Chamberlain, property manager for Landsby Ridge Apartments confirmed that one family was approved for an apartment pending a submittal of records, one was well into the application process, and another family had met with property management and expressed interest. Chamberlain said they have five units left and she urged displaced families to apply.

While people searched for long-term solutions, they were given free stays and discounted rates at area hotels and motels.

This effort is made possible through a collaboration between NHN, the Mount Horeb Clergy Association, the Mount Horeb Area School District social workers, Joining Forces for Families social worker, and the Southwest Dane Outreach case workers.

By Wednesday of last week, Neighbors Helping Neighbors decided to come up with \$23,000 to help the displaced families. Hansen called it a “starting point.”

“It all happened so fast,” said Hansen.

“I think, just the generosity of our community as a whole is just so incredible,” she added. “It’s incredible the generosity we have in our community. Sometimes it seems incomprehensively that so many people are willing give to help people.”

Around 30 percent of people in Mount Horeb struggle financially, qualifying as Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE). While most people know that Neighbors Helping Neighbors provides them, and others, with food and clothing, some are unaware of the level of services the non-profit also offers.

“People come here every week for tangible things that people see, but you don’t always see some of the other services that we provide, that are often needed by families to assist them with basic needs,” said Hansen. “Housing, fuel to get to a

doctor’s appointment or job interview, help with applications. We do all those things.”

Village board votes down permit for athletic fields

The Mount Horeb Village Board last week voted to deny a conditional use permit (CUP) for the two lots on Commerce Drive proposed by resident Terry Kurth for athletic fields.

A group of private donors led by Kurth have been asking the board to pay half for five lots on Commerce Drive since late last year, which he would give back to the village so that a large sports complex could be built there. Earlier this year, Kurth was able to put an offer on two of the lots with donor money to secure a spot for a youth football field.

The board cited the lot’s location in a tax increment financing (TIF) district as one of the reasons for denial. Trustees Cathy Scott, Jason Fendrick, Tim White and Brett Halverson voted to deny the permit. Randy Littel, Ryan Czyzewski and Nate Gauger voted to approve it.

“I’ve all along felt that this is the wrong place for this,” Scott said, “[and] that has nothing to do with how I feel about sports fields.”

Board Trustee Jason Fendrick agreed that location in an industrial area is not right for the youth football field. He said there are other spots that are better suited for the village’s parks. He thanked the donors for being willing to step up and help the community, but said there are other spots more suitable for parkland. Fendrick said this area has been designated industrial for a long time, although the lots have been vacant longer than anticipated.

“Has it developed exactly as anybody envisioned? No,” Fendrick said. “But if we turn the rest of the developable lots in this subdivision to recreation we’ve pretty much foreclosed any commercial growth in that area.”

A closer look at the 2023 Spring Election

Following last week’s high-turnout Spring Election, local and state officials turned their attention toward the multi-step process of certifying the election results in the weeks ahead. The Wisconsin Elections Commission reported that it “is not aware of any significant issues that affected the election, which is the last regular statewide contest of 2023.”

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a voting machine froze three times during testing leading up to the election and had to be rebooted on the morning of Election Day. However, Springdale town clerk and administrator Jackie Arthur reported that the malfunctions did not impact results. A shortage of inspectors did slow things down, however.

“Election day was very busy for us,” Arthur said. “When I made the schedule, I initially did not have the inspector availability to split the poll book. So, on Election Day we had pretty long lines and longer than desirable wait times. We were able to rally a few more inspectors mid-day to be able to have a split book, which cut down on wait times significantly.” In all, the town had 979 voters and all three town board incumbents were re-elected with no opposition.

In the Village of Blue Mounds, incumbent Phil Solchenberger (38 percent) and newcomer Sarah Vanrensselaer (26 percent) won seats on the village board. They defeated Jeff Lange (17 percent) and incumbent Paul Baum (18 percent) in a four-way race.

“I am excited about the election results, and I can’t wait to get started,” said Vanrensselaer. “I hope to help the community run efficiently and smoothly. I also look forward to finding ways for the board to communicate better with the community.”

In the Town of Blue Mounds, newcomer Mary Ann Bellazzini (63 percent) defeated Travis Gudgeon (37 percent) and won a seat on the town board. She replaces John Brixey.

“Thank you, fellow residents, for voting for me in this week’s election,” said Bellazzini. “I am honored to represent our town and look forward to working towards open communication, transparency and community in our area. I hope to encourage more resident input and collaboration and look forward to meeting and listening to more of my neighbors’ ideas and concerns.”

In the Town of Primrose, incumbents Martha Gibson (52 percent) and Alexander Elkins (54 percent) fended off their respective challengers to retain their seats. Gibson defeated Mike Jelle (48 percent) and Elkins beat Jeremy Duerst (46 percent).

Gibson thanked local voters following the tight race.

“There was record turnout for the election, and it is great that so many residents participated,” she said. “Going forward, I will continue to work to preserve our rural way of life in Primrose, by protecting farmland and our valuable natural re-

sources. Primrose can grow, as we have in the past, with slow, thoughtful development while at the same time protecting farmland for farmers to farm.”

“Going door-to-door in these last few months, I learned a lot about our residents’ values but also about questions and concerns that they have,” she continued. “Thank you for taking the time to talk. I will take what you said to heart. And I encourage your input and welcome your attendance and participation in our town meetings.”

According to unofficial results, approximately 39.34 percent of Wisconsin’s voting age-population turned out to vote, which is higher than any other Supreme Court contest not coinciding with a presidential preference primary since at least 2000. Recent elections featuring a Supreme Court contest and not coinciding with a presidential preference primary saw 27.06 percent turnout in 2019; 22.32 percent turnout in 2018; 15.86 percent turnout in 2017; 18.28 percent turnout in 2015; and 20.45 percent turnout in 2013.

Elections featuring both a Supreme Court contest and presidential preference primary saw 35.40 percent turnout in 2020; and 47.38 percent turnout in 2016.

“Despite the possibility of severe weather, Wisconsin’s election officials conducted another smooth election on Tuesday thanks to their diligence and preparation,” said Wisconsin Elections Commission (WEC) administrator Meagan Wolfe, Wisconsin’s chief election official. “While Election Day is over, election officials’ work is far from complete – we look forward to conducting the meticulous process of canvassing the results to ensure their accuracy.”

It is normal for unofficial election results to change slightly as election officials conduct canvasses to ensure an accurate vote total while completing the certification process.

Without an official statewide reporting process, the WEC initially relies upon unofficial figures from The Associated Press. Unofficial turnout can be calculated by adding together the unofficial votes cast in the highest-turnout statewide contest for which the AP collected data and dividing the total by the state’s estimated voting-age population.

Unofficial early results collected by the AP indicated there were at least 1,839,656 votes cast in the Supreme Court contest, which is 39.34 percent of the state’s estimated 2022 voting-age population of 4,676,183. Voting-age population is estimated by the Demographic Services Cen-

ter of the Wisconsin Department of Administration. But the unofficial turnout figure likely represents an undercount of voters, as some voters may have chosen not to vote in the Wisconsin Supreme Court contest but participate in other local contests.

The WEC publishes official results once they have been canvassed at the local level and certified by the Commission.

Counties were required to convene their boards of canvassers this week, by 9 a.m. on Tuesday, April 11 to begin certifying official results. The county board of canvassers is generally made up of the county clerk and two other people. County clerks are elected on a partisan basis, so one of the other two members must be from the opposite party of the county clerk. The deadline for counties to provide certified results to the WEC is this Friday, April 14.

In the third step of the certification process, WEC staff receive results from the counties, recheck all the counties’ numbers and combine them to arrive at totals. The statutory deadline for the Chair of the WEC to certify statewide results is Monday, May 15. Wisconsin doesn’t have automatic recounts, even if the unofficial results are extremely close.

Artemis keeps working toward opening

Downtown Mount Horeb hasn’t had a butcher shop in years. And it’s never had anything quite like this.

The Gobourne family is hard at work renovating multiple spaces on the 200 block of Main Street, planning to open twin businesses that will exist side-by-side. Once complete, the spaces will feature a meat and cheese shop (Artemis Provisions and Cheese) and a dining area (TASTE by Artemis) on the street level, along with a craft butchering operation below, where half and quartered animals will be broken down and used to create an array of cuts.

James Beard Award winning author Michael Twitty once called food “a way into an alternative history and a new vision of who we can become.” With this ambitious project, the owners will look to both the past and the present for inspiration, and look to help people engage with their food, and the stories it can tell, in new ways.

Walking through the space last week, Kingsley and Melissa Gobourne said they hope the business will open its doors to the public by late spring or early summer, although no date has been set. As they strolled through the space, pointing out the exact

spots where counters, tables, meat coolers and more will go, they said this is, and always has been, a family affair. Their two young sons, Thaiden and Wesley, were playfully wrestling nearby, talking proudly about their new family dog. Melissa gently admonished them to be careful around the construction, then smiled.

“They’re excited,” she said. “Obviously, we are going to be spending a lot of time here as a family.”

When Artemis and TASTE open, the twin businesses will be about family in more ways than one. While there is nothing more quintessentially Wisconsin than a meat and cheese shop, and there are few people who are more deeply Wisconsinite than Kingsley, the expansive culinary influences of the place will range far beyond the Midwest, to the Caribbean and beyond. Gobourne, now 41, was born to a single, 16-year-old mother in Jamaica. After emigrating from to the United States, he lived a rural, Midwestern life, working on farms and forging bonds with those around him. He attended the University of Wisconsin, won a Rose Bowl with the Badgers, and earned degrees from the UW Sociology Department and the Edgewood Master’s in Organizational Development program. He worked in banking, community development, outreach and more, eventually becoming the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Coordinator for UnityPoint Health Meriter, heading up an effort to improve “culture and climate” for 3,500 employees. Several years ago, he co-founded Artemis Provisions and Cheese, as an online food supplier, with his wife, Melissa. They currently raise livestock on rented land on Townhall Road, and they live in the heart of the community while they work toward their goal of opening their storefronts so the community can come in and see all they have to offer.

When asked what the first dish will be to come out of the kitchen at his new business, Kingsley said it will likely be a nod to the Jamaican food his mother made for him as a child.

“It will probably be some kind of fusion,” he said.

TASTE and Artemis will offer fusion in a variety of ways, blending recipes and flavors, but also ideas about how businesses and people can work together. They will also find new and innovative ways to use the animals they butcher, going beyond commonplace cuts.

“We want the focus to be on using the whole animal,” said Melissa. “Using some cuts that maybe aren’t available on a larger scale.”

If you walk into the emerging space right now, it looks like it was designed

for its upcoming uses. It boasts three distinct spaces, two upstairs and one below, where the butchering will take place. You could be forgiven for thinking the building was constructed just for this, but you would be incredibly wrong. Like nearly any American place, this is a story with many layers, with many stories, told over many times. As they demolished what had recently been a soda shop, a barber and more, the Gobournes discovered relics of the building’s past iterations. It’s a different kind of fusion. The building, which is more than a century old, has housed a laundromat, a car dealership, the local school district, a heating and cooling business, even a funeral home, and much, much more.

“Through the years, this building has had a lot of uses,” mused Kingsley. “It’s launched a lot of businesses.”

“When we first looked at the space, it was just perfect,” added Melissa. “Just perfect.”

While the project, which was profiled in our pages early in 2022, was delayed a bit last year, it now appears to be well on its way to fruition, well on its way to bringing food, all that comes with it, to tables across the community.

Editor’s note: Work is well underway at Artemis and, despite some additional delays, they expect to open soon in 2024.

Cancer survivor is a real rock star

Shakespeare wrote that “all the world’s a stage, and all the men and women merely players.” It could also be said that all the world is but a canvas, and all the men and women merely painters, finding the potential for beauty in the darkest and strangest places. Every person has the opportunity to make their mark, in one way or another, and Dawn Owens is making hers. On rocks.

Owens has been making the Village of Blue Mounds a more colorful, beautiful place, and she’s doing it in an unexpected way. If you visit Hooterville Inn, you will likely notice a display of hand-painted rocks on the window ledge. They are her creations, and they are available to anyone who wants one. They are cheerful and funny, featuring cartoon characters and animals, but they exist because of some challenging realities.

Owens, of Barneveld, was diagnosed with breast cancer and underwent a double mastectomy a couple years ago. She also has multiple sclerosis (MS). But she hasn’t let those things prevent her from spreading

beauty and joy in the world around her. She was once an avid quilter, but during five months of chemotherapy in 2020, she found it increasingly difficult to continue her hobby.

“Quilting wasn’t going so well during chemo,” Owens explains. “So I picked up some acrylic markers and started painting rocks.”

“It was just a whim,” she adds. “I needed something. A creative outlet.”

She says the endeavor was low risk with a high reward.

“If they turn out fine, great, if not I can throw them back in the rock pile,” she chuckles.

It started with a few she placed on Hooterville’s ledge. Passersby were intrigued, and it became something of a hot spot for visitors. She replenishes the rocks once a week.

Owens loves the smiles it brings to people of all ages when they find the perfect one.

“Oh it just makes me happy,” she says. “The best thing I can get out of it is when someone picks one up and smiles and slips it in their pocket.”

“I have actually been doing some requests, but I do a lot of cartoon characters, my interpretation of cartoon characters and animals, and just play around and see what comes out,” she continues. “It’s a total stress reliever.”

The painted rocks have become so popular that a donation jar was set up because people want her to continue painting and needed a way to help her pay for paint.

Visitors are encouraged to take one and pass it on. Some have asked for specific rocks. She loves the joy a simple stone can bring. She says paints are easy to come by but good, smooth rocks for painting are harder to find, so people have donated some so she can continue her love of painting.

It was also Shakespeare who said that each person has many parts to play in their life, and Owens is proof of that. No one person is merely one thing. Instead, each is one is many things. For Owens, the parts include artist, survivor, and neighbor.

Schellpfeffer fills village board seat

New Mount Horeb Village Board president Ryan Czyzewski is expected to appoint Marc Schellpfeffer to fill his former trustee seat when the board convenes early next month.

Schellpfeffer has extensive ties to the community, having lived in the village since 2003. He is an architect and serves as the chair of the Village of Mount Horeb Community Development Authority and as vice president and secretary

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of Friends of the Norsk. He grew up in Verona, graduating from Verona High School in 1993. He earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Urban and Regional Studies from the University of Wisconsin at Green Bay and a Master of Architecture degree from the University of Wisconsin at Milwaukee.

Czyzewski, the longest-serving member of the board, ran unopposed in April for the village president position being vacated by Randy Littel, leaving Czyzewski’s trustee seat vacant once he made the switch. The president’s appointments must be approved by the board before being final.

“What sparked my interest is that as a village we are at that point where growth is right in front of us, and we have an opportunity to move the village in a direction that allows for growth in a sensible manner while enhancing what makes Mount Horeb unique and attractive to visitors and potential residents,” said Schellpfeffer.

“I believe with careful planning and leadership we can address the needs for growing our commercial tax base to help take the load off just our residents and their property taxes, increase what is much-needed recreational/park space, and continue to develop selectively in our downtown to continue to enhance the wonderful sense of place and activity that draws so many to our village,” he continued. “I fully admit that growth can sometimes feel hard and uncomfortable, but I believe with open and productive conversation where all voices have a chance to be heard we will create an outcome that all parties can be proud of and support.”

Schellpfeffer and his wife, Becky, both grew up in the area before leaving to attend college. They returned when they married.

“As we started looking for our first house, we were drawn to Mount Horeb because of its unique sense of place; it stood on its own and wasn’t just a suburb of Madison,” Schellpfeffer said. “I believe this is a quality of our village that attracts many people to consider Mount Horeb home.”

Over their first seven years in Mount Horeb, Marc and Becky grew their family to five with the addition of children Tyler, Riley and Jady.

“Like most kids they were able to become involved in every activity under the sun, and as such Becky and I have become involved in numerous groups and organizations throughout Mount Horeb,” he said. “We have established lasting friend-

ships and truly established ‘roots’ in this community.”

“Four years ago, we built what we would like to think is our final house,” Schellpfeffer continued. “Our son Tyler is finishing his freshman year at the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, Riley is getting ready for his senior year and Jady will be starting her freshman year at Mount Horeb High School. As a family we have had the experience that I would hope every family can experience when considering the Village of Mount Horeb as a place to set roots. We have so much to offer as a village and I believe our days of true growth are not that far away as we look at how Dane County continues to grow and flourish. What I want to make sure is that we as a village are planning for the growth versus reacting to it. With careful planning we can ensure that the wonderful sense of place that attracted my family to Mount Horeb will continue to be offered to future families looking for a place to call home.”

“These are exciting times for the Village of Mount Horeb, and I look forward to bringing my skill set to a village board that is filled with dedicated individuals who I believe have a common underlying goal to continue to allow the Village of Mount Horeb to grow and prosper as a unique and vibrant community for all its citizens and businesses,” said Schellpfeffer.

He went on to say he works well in a team environment and believes the ability to do so will be a strength on the board.

Schellpfeffer was one of three people to formally apply for the vacant trustee seat, along with Kimberly Sailor and Peter Walton.

Sailor, a former member of the Mount Horeb Area Board of Education, said Czyzewski reached out to her and encouraged her to apply.

“Though I hadn’t considered a seat on the village board previously, I was genuinely interested about the possibility of serving my community in new ways,” said Sailor. “I was disappointed I did not receive an interview from the board or any follow-up questions about my application to gauge if I’d be the right fit.”

Walton said he was disappointed he was not selected, but he also gave a glowing endorsement to Schellpfeffer.

“I thought I was a strong candidate, and when Ryan called to inform me I wasn’t picked, I was disappointed,” said Walton. “So I asked who he thought was a better fit than me, and the moment he said he picked Marc, I was like, ‘I agree.’”

“I think he’s going to be a great fit for the village, and with his experience I think

he’ll be able to put the community first and help on the board,” Walton added.

The board will vote on his appointment at their next meeting.

Buck & Honey’s opens doors

“We love to throw a party,” said Tom Anderson, the founder of Buck and Honey’s Restaurants. The party is coming to Mount Horeb this summer.

“We’re in the middle of the process right now, and we hope to open sometime in July,” he explained.

The eatery will be located at 108 Second Street, in Martinson Hall.

“We straddle the line between family casual and fine dining,” said Anderson. “We want to bring a little bit of elevated dining and hospitality to the community.”

Anderson opened the first Buck and Honey’s in Sun Prairie in 2010.

“I was working in banking and real estate in Madison,” he recalled. “Then the market crashed in 2008, and I was looking to get out of that work; it wasn’t fun anymore.”

What *was* fun, and quite ambitious, was to push his chips to the center of the dining table and go all in on a restaurant named after a pair of farmers, the eponymous Buck and Honey Birkinbine.

Some of the Sun Prairie area’s best-known residents, the Birkinbines once owned and farmed the land where Anderson established his first restaurant. Using its namesakes as an inspiration for both philanthropy and good food and spirits, Buck and Honey’s was born in October of that year.

“Sun Prairie had never had a restaurant like Buck and Honey’s before,” he said.

The business was a hit, and Anderson eventually opened two more, one in Monona and the other in Waunakee. Now, he has his sights set on Mount Horeb.

They serve what Anderson called “contemporary American cuisine.”

“About 70 percent of the menu is pretty traditional, it covers all palates,” he explained. “With the other 30 percent we get pretty creative.”

The head chef, who oversees the menu for all Buck and Honey’s locations, is Sammy Millan. Born and raised in Ixtapa, Mexico, Millan struck out for San Francisco at the age of 17. From there, he made his way to Chicago, forging his skills in the fires of a high-volume restaurant while pursuing his culinary education. Anderson praises his ability to create a unique menu.

The director of operations is Aimee Anderson, who is also Tom’s sister.

“She’s a rock star,” he said. “She’s just awesome.”

Each Buck and Honey’s is slightly different, and the Mount Horeb location will be no exception. Martinson Hall, which in prior iterations was a veterinary clinic, a Ford and John Deere dealership, and more, is currently one of the community’s most popular event spaces, hosting everything from weddings and chamber of commerce gatherings to holiday church concerts.

Steve Grundahl, who owns the building, said he hoped Anderson would come to the village five years ago, when Grundahl was first remodeling Martinson Hall. But the stars didn’t immediately align... yet.

“We became really good friends in the interim, and he’s always loved Mount Horeb,” explained Grundahl.

“So now it’s happening,” he continued. “Buck and Honey’s will lease the entire building, they will have the restaurant on the first floor, the event space above, and they will keep the Martinson name as a tribute to the Martinson family in Mount Horeb.”

“We’re super excited,” said Anderson. “We’ll be taking over the event space and hosting special events, which is a big part of what we do. It will be a really good fit for us. It will be called Martinson Hall at Buck and Honey’s.

The restaurant will include extensive indoor and outdoor dining options, including a new, elevated patio on the side of the building facing the Military Ridge Bike Trail.

“We celebrate Wisconsin hospitality,” Anderson said. “I think what we do is really special.”

Martinson Hall at Buck and Honey’s will include not one, but two kitchens. Whether it’s hosting special events, or just hungry diners who are enjoying a night out, Anderson thinks it will be a good fit for the Troll Capital of the World.

“We’re super excited,” he said. “Everyone we’ve talked to in Mount Horeb has been so welcoming.”

While the business will obviously bring a new dining option to the village, it will also bring something else: jobs.

“We’re going to be hiring a lot of people. We’ll create about 75 jobs,” he said. “Hiring his a big thing. We have people who make a lot of money working for us, but there are also other things people get; important things like the ability to be part of something that values service to others.”

“Community is a big part of our mission,” he said. “We give back a lot. If there are any philanthropic organizations in Mount Horeb, any non-profits that need help, we want to know. Please don’t be shy about

asking.”

Grundahl said Anderson is committed to the community and to everyone who enters the restaurant.

“Tom has a real focus on culture,” he said. “He takes care of his workers and his customers.”

Grundahl said he’s thrilled.

“This is exactly what I envisioned when I started,” he said. “To have a quality restaurant on site as an event space gives it so many advantages. It’s a really, really highly regarded restaurant. This is exactly what I hoped for.”

There but for the grace of cod... A wonderful and weird tradition dies out

People often don’t realize they are experiencing something special for the last time. The final occasion when you embrace a parent or spouse. The last time you hear your toddler mispronounce a certain word in their own unique way. The terminal Christmas morning. The closing laugh. The last supper. People sometimes pine, as did Andy Bernard in *The Office*, “I wish there was a way to know you were in the good old days before you actually left them.”

But the nature of reality is this: All things end. Rich or poor, young or old, good or bad; for all people, life is full of first and lasts, and the lasts often arrive faster than expected. So it was when, unknown to most at the time, an old and treasured tradition in the Mount Horeb area died out, extinguished by time, the aging of those who kept it alive, and finally a global pandemic.

After thousands and thousands of meals served, lutefisk church dinners in this area have gone extinct.

No one knows exactly who took that last bite, but the final Lutheran Lutefisk dinner in this part of the world was served, a final note in a song that began half a world away, in another time, when peasants loaded up what few things they had and ventured forth to make lives in an unknown continent. As they made their way across the sea, they brought with them large slabs of dried cod, which were then soaked in lye, and then rinsed and cooked into a gelatinous, mushy, fishy – yet nutritious - meal. For the thousands of people who gathered in Lutheran church kitchens in the Mount Horeb area for the better part of a century, Lutefisk dinners were a pungent, slimy reminder of the things people endured to get here, and a convivial nod to the undeniably interesting flavors of life on Earth.

Lutefisk, whose prov-

enance is claimed by both Norwegians and Swedes, is usually served boiled with potatoes and lots and lots of butter. A traditional meal in modern times also includes an array of Nordic sides, including meatballs and gravy, green beans, *lefse*, relishes, cranberries, *rommegrot*, Norwegian cookies, piping hot coffee (sometimes brewed with eggs in it) and much more. It is believed that lutefisk was first invented by Vikings who had to find a creative way of preserving cod without the use of plentiful salt in the areas where they lived. Whatever its exact origins, it spent the past hundred years as both the butt of countless jokes but also a beloved culinary centerpiece that pulled people from all walks of life together to celebrate each other’s company. These church dinners were often covered in area newspapers, which chronicled their various menus, and published countless pictures of people who were always smiling as they cooked, served and enjoyed this strange food together.

On October 11 of 1952, the *Capital Times* reported that, in “a new wrinkle,” some women were breaking with tradition at Vermont Lutheran Church and making lefse ahead of time, freezing the potato flatbread and selling it at the annual lutefisk dinner.

The *Wisconsin State Journal* reported that in 1955, an estimated 900 people, all of whom where apparently not too turned off by the fact that the lefse had been made ahead of time, attended Vermont Lutheran’s lutefisk dinner. That number continued to grow for decades.

The *Capital Times* in 1958 referred to the autumn as “lutefisk season.”

Genie Campbell, writing in the *State Journal* in 1977, said that most people in Dane County eventually grew “curious enough” to try the iconic fish. Campbell noted that the dinners were not only enjoyed by people of Norwegian descent, but also by anyone, from anywhere, who married a Norwegian.

Speaking to a reporter for the *Capital Times* in 1985, Vermont dinner organizer Betty Rosenbaum mused on the event’s impact on the faith community: “[It] brings the whole congregation together, men, women and young people, to prepare and serve the dinner. That’s an important ingredient.”

While Madison newspapers usually covered the events with the sardonic awe of outsider, local newspapers chronicled these dinners, at Barneveld Lutheran Church, Vermont Lutheran Church and elsewhere, as members of the communi-

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ties that hosted them. Our own pages – and on many occasions our front pages – featured images of grinning diners and translucent whitefish. Our reporters and editors ate the stuff, too, just to see what all the fuss was about.

Then, in 2019 we reported the following: “[A]fter 69 years holding an annual Lutefisk and Meatball Dinner, one local church is calling it quits, citing declining attendance in recent years and the difficulties of competing with many other events and obligations.” The church in question was Barneveld Lutheran. The church’s women’s group, or *Kvindeforening*, has existed for more than a century, having been founded in 1909. They published a cookbook in 2004, titled “Feeding the Flock.” It contains a timeline of important events at the church. It notes that the first lutefisk supper there was served in 1949. In the entire, nine-page timeline of events, “First Lutefisk supper” are the only words printed in bold typeface. That first meal also included meatballs, mashed potatoes, vegetable salad, cranberry sauce, *lefse*, rolls, cake, coffee and assorted Norwegian Christmas cookies.

“After much prayer and discussion and looking at the declining numbers of guests coming for the dinner in recent years, the people of BLC have decided to end our Lutefisk dinner,” the church said in its official statement in 2019. “It has become increasingly difficult to staff the dinner for the full day with many more activities calling upon members’ time.”

They concluded: “We have made many wonderful memories throughout these seven decades and we are so grateful for all those living and now deceased who have contributed to this special feast. We thank those who have come to enjoy the dinner each November. We thank all the people of our faith family who have given of your time and talent over the years to carry on this tradition. You made it special. ‘That which is always loved is beautiful.’ The BLC Lutefisk dinner will always and forever be loved and thus be beautiful. Thank you for your support of our dinner.”

At the time, the Barneveld church’s pastor pointed out that Vermont Lutheran Church, located only a few miles away, still held a lutefisk dinner where people could get their fix each autumn.

Then, 2020 happened, and everything changed.

As we reported that year: “The holiday season will not be kicked off in quite

the same way, and for some, the canceling of a popular Norwegian tradition will be a big change. Vermont Lutheran Church has decided to take a break from its annual lutefisk dinner this year in response to COVID-19. Normally, around 1,000 people head to the church to enjoy fish and endless conversation. The event attracts both locals and those who come from far away and even from out-of-state.”

Pastor Barry Hoerz told the newspaper, “It’s like a mini-Badger homecoming. People from all over come back year after year.”

“The dinner, which takes place the third weekend of October, is a tradition that marks the beginning of the holiday season. For many, nothing is more quintessential than indulging in lutefisk and *lefse* surrounded by friends and those soon to be,” we wrote. “Some consider the dinner a holiday in itself.”

The church didn’t cite a decline in interest as its reason, saying that instead, they could not staff it during the early days of the pandemic.

“[Not having the dinner] this fall is going to be a big change for a lot of people,” Hoerz said, adding that he had always been impressed by the large and diverse crowd that attended the events.

When he became pastor there four years earlier, he was surprised by the large and diverse crowd.

But the meals took two to three months of work to prepare. And when COVID eased, the church’s congregation decided to diversify its fundraisers, selling meatball meals to take home in the fall, hosting a smaller men’s meatball dinner in February, and coming up with different ways to raise money for church efforts. While none of these events is as popular as the lutefisk dinner was, they are also easier to organize, more cost effective, and less labor intensive. Church leaders said the initial “pause” of the lutefisk meal morphed into a permanent end, with no return in sight.

Now, all that remain of these church dinners are memories. Fortunately, there are plenty of them.

Allen Watrud, president of the Mount Horeb Sons of Norway Lodge, said he remembers walking past trash barrels of soaking lutefisk in Blanchardville as a schoolboy.

“Oh, that stuff is nasty,” he recalls thinking.

But he grew to appreciate the meals at local churches, and to even (sort of) enjoy them.

“I got to the point where, I wouldn’t say I raved about it, but it was pretty good,” he says.

“It’s an acquired taste,” he adds with a laugh.

Harley Skjervem, second vice president of the Mount Horeb Sons of Norway, shared her own memories of the unique food, which is still sold at Miller & Sons Supermarket around Christmastime each year so that people can prepare it at home.

“You either love it or hate it,” said Skjervem. “I think I would be excommunicated from our Sons of Norway lodge if I stated that I can’t stomach Lutefisk, along with being disowned by my immediate and extended family for not loving lutefisk.”

Skjervem comes from a large Norwegian family from North Dakota, and they always had lutefisk for their Christmas dinner. But Skjervem actually doesn’t eat lutefisk.

“I have an older gentleman friend in Madison who is not Norwegian but married a Norwegian woman,” she said. “She taught him how to eat lutefisk, and even though his wife is now deceased, he still eats the stuff. He couldn’t believe that as a Norwegian, I won’t touch the dish.”

Village mulls the future of two local parks...

The Village of Mount Horeb is considering multiple park projects that range from minor improvements to major overhauls, with a public open house on the proposals scheduled for Monday, June 12 from 6-7:30 p.m. at the senior center, 107 North Grove Street.

The village’s parks, recreation and forestry commission recently reviewed a range of possibilities for both Grandma Foster and Grundahl parks, all of which were drawn up by the consultant, MSA. The more modest ideas would cost as little as \$157,000, while the most ambitious designs could cost just over \$12 million. Located downtown, Grandma Foster is the smaller of the two parks in question, and improvements there would be more limited in scale and scope. Changes at Grundahl Park could be more expansive, including a “multi-use event building” that would cost between \$5 million and \$10 million to build.

Brett Halverson, a village trustee who also serves on the parks, recreation and forestry commission, said input from the public will help “inform the final recommendation” before the issue heads to the full board of trustees.

Along with village government, the Mount Horeb Summer Frolic Committee is also playing a role in funding and guiding the possible improvements. Kurt Adler, a member of both the

Frolic committee and the parks, recreation and forestry commission, said there has been talk of helping with park plans for several years.

“When I joined the Frolic committee in 2018, it was something that was being talked about some, including a vision of some kind of building, but it didn’t gain a lot of traction at the time,” Adler explained. But in recent years, Frolic leaders joined with local government, including village administrator Nic Owen and public services director Jeff Gorman, to come up with ideas designed to benefit a wide range of park users.

“We went from looking at a few Band-Aids to looking at the whole thing,” Adler said. “It became an effort between the Frolic and village staff, and we brought in every group we could think of: pickleball, mountain biking, youth clubs, you name it.”

While the Frolic, the community’s largest annual festival, is held at Grundahl Park and the committee has a natural interest in that location, its members said they are also willing to consider funding changes at Grandma Foster Park.

“The Frolic will donate as much as we can,” Adler said. “Obviously, that depends on the weather and how many people come and how much we raise, but we’ll donate as much as we can.”

Everyone deserves to Frolic

By some estimates, 30 percent of the greater Mount Horeb community is struggling financially. So, while many families look forward to the Summer Frolic’s delightful midway with anticipation, awaiting the sweet smells of fried food, the squeals of delight as rides take off into the early summer sky at Grundahl Park, the ringing and buzzing and laughing fun of one of the community’s most treasured traditions, other families worry it’s a luxury they simply cannot afford. With inflation at its highest point in nearly 40 years, with the prices of land and rent and food and nearly everything else skyrocketing, many parents will have to choose between buying tickets so their kids can ride the carousel, and buying gas to get to work or basic food for the table.

At least, that *would* have been the case if not for a group of people that came together to make sure the Frolic can be enjoyed by as many people in the community as possible, even those who have fallen on hard times.

The Werndli Charitable Fund, a trust established by a pair of local farmers, has donated \$2,300 to cover the cost of Frolic midway tickets for lower-income fami-

lies. Pamela Lunder, a local attorney who helps run the fund, worked hand-in-hand with Frolic president Amy Mertz and Janna Hansen, of Neighbors Helping Neighbors, the community’s food pantry and clothing closet, to bring the plan to fruition. It means an estimated 200 families will have the opportunity take part in one of the best events around.

“We plan to give tickets to families who utilize our services, along with reaching out to the Mount Horeb Area School District social workers, Joining Forces for Families and Building Bridges case workers also, to ensure the families they work with receive tickets also,” explained Hansen.

“Every family should have the chance to experience the Summer Frolic without worrying or stressing about the costs,” said Mertz. “We’re so grateful to the Werndli Charitable Fund for offering this grant that will help all children create memories with their friends and families at our community’s signature summer kickoff.”

The fund is rooted in the lives of two bachelor farmers, Roger and Ralph Werndli. Roger died in 2016 at the age of 73, leaving behind his brother and a legacy of giving that has since benefited everything from Habitat to Humanity and Second Harvest Food Bank to the Mount Horeb Community Foundation and the Dane County Humane Society. In fact, the Werndli Charitable Fund was recently honored as the 2023 Dane County Humane Society Philanthropist of the Year.

But none of the giving has felt quite as good as this.

“When I found out we were doing this, I literally did a happy dance,” Lunder says. “We have given away tens of thousands of dollars, all to good causes, but this one made me the happiest.”

It started simply enough, with Lunder thinking about the fact that everyone deserves to Frolic from time to time.

“We always loved the Frolic. When our son was young, I remember taking him down there. It’s this wonderful community thing, and I kind of had this idea for a few years, but I could never really figure out the distribution side of it; I don’t know the needs,” Lunder explained. “Then, I found out Neighbors Helping Neighbors had been getting a few tickets for people who needed them, and I realized they could do distribution and get them to the people who need them.”

The rest, as they say, is history. The check was cut and the tickets will be available through Neighbors Helping Neighbors.

“In the past we did get some Frolic tickets in the

past; not many, like 10 or something,” Hansen said. That number is about to skyrocket.

“With what we do when we apply for funding, we don’t often get to think about doing things just to give people the opportunity to relax and have fun, because we’re just so focused on basic needs when we try to get grants,” Hansen said. “When Pam approached us, I was almost like, ‘We can do that?!’”

“It’s nice that we can just give them away and know that families will be able to go and relax and have fun,” she added.

The idea behind the donation is simple: People, all people, deserve more than the most basic help. Everyone deserves to Frolic.

“Food, rent, basic needs are always the focus,” Lunder said. “So, where does the fun come in? Just because a family is struggling with money, does that mean they can’t go down to the Frolic and have some fun?”

“You’ve got to have fun,” she added. “Otherwise, it’s just a drudge every day.”

This year’s donation will provide five complimentary tickets to an estimated 200 families. And it made the people behind it very happy, too.

“Every person who has been involved with this has been just kind of giddy with excitement,” said Lunder.

For families who get the tickets, Lunder has one piece of advice: “Go down there and make some memories.”

Gone but not forgotten: Remembering Olivia Zimmer

They were pretty hard to miss. Crowds of smiling people in bright yellow shirts, taking part in the Mount Horeb Summer Frolic’s Norsk Run. The attire had a simple motto on the front: “When you can’t find the sunshine, be the sunshine.” On the back were two more words: “Team LIV.”

“Liv” was Olivia Grace Zimmer, a local young woman who died on Sunday, January 16 of 2022 in a car accident. She was just 21 years old, but the warmth of the sunshine she generated in her life can still be felt in this community, where an annual run has become a tribute to Zimmer and all she stood for.

“She was just like a bright light,” recalls her mother, Kim. “She just had this smile that would light up a room.”

Olivia was born on February 2, 2000 in Madison to Joshua and Kim Zimmer. During her time here, she loved and took part in many things, from FFA and

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volleyball to soccer and animals, from fishing with family to interacting with the vast majority of people she met. Once, during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, someone commented that her smile was so bright they could see it even through her mask.

Olivia was a member of her school's Homecoming Court and graduated from Mount Horeb High School in 2018. She also worked at Schubert's and Miller and Sons Supermarket. She was a proud big sister and role model to Mandy, Julia, Emmett and Otto. When she died, she was in her fourth year studying at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

Last year, friends and family gathered at the Frolic's Norsk Run to honor her memory. It was a makeshift tribute, put together just a few months after her passing. "We wanted to do something to keep her memory alive. Olivia and I had done a couple runs together, the Turkey Trot, a half marathon five years ago; the little stinker didn't even train for it," says Kim, chuckling at the memory.

They sold "Team Liv" T-shirts last year, raising \$1,000 for the Girls Soccer team.

They did it again in 2023, and it was clear that Olivia's light has not been dimmed by the passage of another year. This time around, they raised money for the Iowa County Humane Society.

"Animals were just huge for her," recalls her mom. "Especially dogs."

Team Liv was so inspirational, in fact, that it prompted the Mount Horeb Summer Frolic Committee to step up and make a donation of its own. The Frolic on June 6 gave \$500 to the Mount Horeb Recreation Department on behalf of the Zimmer family in order to purchase new soccer nets.

Kurt Adler, a member of the Frolic committee, said it was a deserving cause.

"The Knights of Columbus has been organizing the

Norsk Run for many years, so we have a pretty good gauge of what to expect for participant levels each year, but in 2022 the pre-registration was going wild very early on; it took a beat for us to figure it out, but we realized it was thanks to an effort spearheaded by Kim Zimmer to honor the life of her daughter," he explained.

"We were extremely humbled that the family chose to recognize her through the Norsk Run," Adler continued. "Family and friends signed up and showed up in droves on the day of the event. It was such a touching way to honor this young lady! After the event, we brainstormed ... a way to recognize this large contribution that the Zimmer family made through their participation in this Frolic event and with some insight from Kim we decided to give back to another one of Olivia's passion's - soccer."

The village's recreation director, Jill Dudley, expressed appreciation for the gift and the sentiment behind it.

"We are so appreciative of the donation from the Zimmer family that was given to the Recreation Department, in Olivia's name, to use towards our youth soccer program," said Dudley.

"Soccer continues to grow in Mount Horeb, which means that our equipment needs [to] grow as well," Dudley added. "With our limited program budget, purchasing bigger ticket items sometimes doesn't happen unless we are given generous donations like this one."

"With the help of the Zimmer family, we are able to purchase a new soccer goal and a few nets that need to be replaced," she said. "Olivia had a passion for soccer, and with close to 300 youth in our soccer programs, we hope others will find that passion as well."

For Kim, it's all a reminder about how many people her daughter's life impacted, and the many ways her presence is still felt in Mount Horeb today. "I've been blown away," she said. "I can't believe how many

people she touched."

"It's unreal," she continued. "Obviously, it's bitter-sweet because I would like nothing more than to have her here."

Local leaders celebrate opening of apartments

Community and government leaders in Mount Horeb joined Gorman & Company last week to celebrate the completion of Landsby Ridge, a 51-unit mixed-income community located at 400 W. Garfield Street. The ribbon cutting, which was held Tuesday, June 20, was attended by Wisconsin Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez, Rep. Mike Bare (D-Verona), village president Ryan Czyzewski and more.

"Adding more housing options in the village is a priority of mine and the board, and it's great to have one piece of the puzzle come to fruition," said Czyzewski. "I believe that when people can afford to live in the community they work in, the community is stronger."

"When Gorman & Company proposed the project in 2019, they noted the recent work the village had done to identify the housing gaps and opportunities as a driving force for the proposal," Czyzewski continued. "Projects like this are not easy to finance, and it took a lot of effort by all parties to help get the project completed. As previously reported, the village board took advantage of an opportunity when closing TID 4 to use funds to help close the gap for affordable housing."

"I anticipate we will have that opportunity and board support again with TID 3 in several years, as the need still exists," he continued. "So we will be pursuing other projects. Something I heard from everyone I talked to at Gorman & Company was that our village staff was great to work with through the process, which helps our reputation as a forward looking community when it comes to housing."

Associated Bank purchased the affordable housing tax credits with the assistance of the Royal Bank of Canada, and also provided construction and

long-term financing. Essential gap funding is provided by the Dane County Affordable Housing Development Fund, Dane Workforce Housing Fund, LLC, and the Affordable Housing Program of the Federal Home Loan Bank of Chicago. Impact Seven provided predevelopment financing.

What's next for Karakahl?

One of the community's most architecturally unique buildings faces an uncertain future following a fire that broke out in April.

Fire and EMS responded to the structure fire at Karakahl Country Inn, located at 101 Perimeter Road on the afternoon of Sunday, April 2. Smoke and flames were billowing up through the roof of one of the rooms. Crews contained the fire in a few hours. A total of 16 people who were staying at the hotel were displaced, but they quickly found housing elsewhere thanks to Neighbors Helping Neighbors and other agencies. The building, however, was shut down indefinitely and has sat vacant ever since, its future opaque.

As of July, the Karakahl still has not taken out the building permit that would be required to repair the structure, as its proprietor wrangles with insurance.

When the Karakahl Motor Hotel first opened its doors in 1964, it was lauded as an architectural landmark and a boon to the local economy. Designed by architect John Steinmann, who also crafted the Wisconsin Pavilion for the New York World's Fair, the building featured a dramatic, swooping saw-tooth roofline, a swanky restaurant that looked like it had popped out of a Raymond Chandler novel, a sunken rock garden, a large pool, and walls covered in audacious colors. It was designed "with the Norse culture of the community" in mind, according to an article in the Capital Times that said it would "aid [the] Mt. Horeb economy." Behind the project was C.S. Gonstead, the famous chiropractor who worked out of the similarly Frank Lloyd-Wright-inspired clinic located just behind the inn. The newspaper

in 1964 said it was the only motel in the area to offer dining accommodations.

When Gonstead's widow, Elvira, died in a local house fire in 1991, her obituary noted that she had been the hostess at the Karakahl Inn, where she opened and managed her own dress shop.

Several people claimed the word "Karakahl" was inspired by the Bible and meant, "Leave your cares." A Kara Kahl is also a variety of Alpine goat.

The hotel that stands today is actually only a portion of the original structure, part of which was torn down and replaced by the Walgreen's currently located at 1401 Springdale Street. In recent years, the facility, which had a massive glass window smashed by a violent storm, fell increasingly into disrepair, while various people, from seasonal workers to ice cream truck drivers, called the Karakahl home for varying lengths of time. Customer reviews ranged from awe-struck - "I love this place!" - to ominous, "DO NOT BOOK THIS HOTEL." One reviewer claimed it was haunted. In one thing everyone was in agreement: There was no other place quite like it.

After the fire this spring was extinguished, officers from Mount Horeb Police Department, the Department of Justice Division of Criminal Investigation Fire Marshal's Office, the Mount Horeb Fire Department, and the Mount Horeb Building Inspector worked to investigate the incident. The initial investigation was completed in 24 hours, finding nothing criminal about the blaze. However, the building inspector found the property temporarily uninhabitable due to issues with both the water and power, in accordance with municipal ordinance 10.05 (6).

A building inspector assessed the structure on April 4, and the inspection determined the electrical wiring was not safe to turn back on and the building remained uninhabitable. Broken win-

dows were boarded up. Rooms were secured.

Three months later, the building's fate remains up in the air.

Owner Sanjay Patel said he is hoping insurance will eventually help him repair some of the fire damage, and he has struggled to find a general contractor to do the work. He said he hopes to re-open the business but would also be willing to sell if the right offer came along.

"I am hoping to get back on my feet," he said.

Patel, who took over in the fall, is the latest in a string of owners. He said the Karakahl has suffered from having "too many owners" over the years but he hopes to turn things around.

The Village of Mount Horeb's economic development specialist, Kristen Fish-Peterson, has held multiple conversations with Patel. She has acted as something of a liaison to a local body of government that is interested in the Karakahl's ultimate fate.

"I am only talking with him about the option of selling his property for redevelopment," said Fish-Peterson. "I offered to provide a broker opinion of value and bring buyers to him. He seems very interested in that."

There are myriad possibilities, and village president Ryan Czyzewski said local trustees will ponder them carefully when the time is right.

"I can say that I and the village board have indicated a strong desire in something different happening with the site, the fire unexpectedly pushed up the potential timeline and opportunity," Czyzewski said last week.

However, Czyzewski pointed out that the use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) for a potential project there won't be available until TIF District 3 closes in 2027.

"The village board [does] not have a current plan for direct investment or plan to redevelop the site, as we are

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waiting for more details on if the property is salvageable or tear-down required, the owner’s willingness for change, and the potential for private investment,” Czyzewski continued.

“Due to the amenities nearby - pharmacy, grocery store, library, park - I think the site is an excellent opportunity for workforce or senior housing,” he added.

County records show the land, totaling roughly two acres, and building are currently valued at \$616,300.

There and back again

When asked what she expected the United States to be like, Elvira Bergenser says, well, *different*.

“A place where everything is bigger and there are these bigger personalities, where everyone has so much fun and there is so much to go and see,” she explains. “A place that is so different than where I come from.”

Where she comes from is Marstal, a remote town in southern Denmark, located on the island of Ærø. Marstal has a population of 2,120 and was the municipal seat of the now abolished Marstal Municipality.

“It’s a big island with three really small towns, it has farms, beaches, no chain restaurants, it’s all community-built,” she explains.

“I grew up very laid back,” she adds. “You just had what you had.”

Bergenser came to Mount Horeb in August of 2022 through a partnership between Denmark’s Go High School program and International Experience here in

the United States. She leaves July 1 of 2023, and she says she loved her American experience.

“Of course, I was a little nervous, but I was confident that I could make it work,” she says. “The things is, I had such a big wish for it to go well.”

With a gregarious personality and an openness to new things, Bergenser was well suited to studying abroad. She arrived in awe of just how many differences there are between her hometown and the American Midwest. The way teens go to school, when they can get their licenses, how people address one another; even the M&M’s are different here (because the U.S. allows artificial colors that are illegal in many European nations).

“When I say everything is different, I mean *everything* is different,” Bergenser says. “How people talk. The respect that is given; I was shocked by the amount of respect that is given, how formal people are here. In Denmark we don’t say ‘Mr.’ or ‘Mrs.’ or ‘Dr.’ when we talk to someone.”

“That’s why I love to be here,” she said. “Being a teen is a so different. Back home, we have one classroom and the teachers come to us. We don’t get to pick our classes. And there’s not that much school spirit there, either. We don’t do sports through school in Denmark. There, you kind of go to school to go to school.”

Her initial homesickness was balanced by her perpetual interest in this new world.

Many of her interactions were with her host, Marny Skindrud, a Mount Horeb resident and retired Lieu-

tenant Colonel in the Army who saw a post about the need for local host families last year.

“They said a host’s responsibility is room and board,” Skindrud explained. “From there, I did the background checks and home checks and very quickly got to see who was wanting to come to the states.”

With her own Scandinavian heritage, Skindrud thought it would be fun to live with someone from that corner of the world. The coordinator told her a young woman from Denmark was just finishing her application.

“The only thing that made me pause was that she wrote she loved big cities, so I worried Mount Horeb wouldn’t be for her,” said Skindrud. “I was told the students wanted the ‘American experience’ and she would be happy here. Because I was a single parent, no-kids home, she did have to agree to placement, which she did. Her coordinator on her end said it was the quickest placement she’s ever had.”

“It’s been amazing. I think I must be the luckiest person in terms of placement,” said Bergenser. “We just matched so well. We are always laughing.”

Skindrud, who grew up in Mount Horeb and has lived in Iraq, Afghanistan, Norway and Oklahoma, taught Bergenser all about American life. She also introduced her to local teens before she even got on the airplane.

“A couple months before I came, I asked Marny if she knew any teenagers,” said Bergenser. “I connected with a couple of them on Facetime and Snapchat, so when I got to Mount Horeb I already had a couple friends.”

The two took trips to Washington, DC, and Nashville, and Oklahoma. They attended the Summer Frolic and celebrated holidays in Mount Horeb and beyond.

And they became friends, or, as Bergenser puts it, “family.”

“Sometimes I think the thing I’ll miss most is just sitting on the couch eating snacks and watching Netflix with Marny,” she said.

The list of things that are different here is a lengthy one. Bergenser went from rye bread with “toppings you don’t have words for here” to hamburgers and pizza. She immersed herself in Viking Spirit (the Wiscon-

sin kind) and went to school dances, another thing she hadn’t experienced in Denmark. Much was different here, and Bergenser heads home different, as well.

“What I missed most was just the feeling of comfort and knowing everything,” she said. “But I think I like living this way, constantly having new experiences and interactions.”

There was only one thing that puzzled Bergenser in Mount Horeb...

“The trolls, I never got,” she said with a laugh. “Maybe the Norwegians do trolls, but not in Denmark.”

Residents scammed out of more than half a million dollars

Numbers released by the Mount Horeb Police Department show that citizens in the village have lost \$503,202 to fraud since the start of 2021.

The victims fell prey to an array of scams, ranging from cryptocurrency and PayPal hacks to Facebook scams, gift card tricks, phishing and identity theft.

Podcast grapples with local murder

When asked if spending all their time talking about the details of horrible crimes might potentially damage their own mental health, James Pietragallo and Jimmie Whisman both shrug and laugh.

“We’re comedians, so we were ruined long before this,” Pietragallo replies. In fact, he knows all too well how it feels to be part of a family haunted by homicide. “My great-grandmother was murdered when I was 11,” he says. “Someone came in the house, tied her up and slit her throat.”

Whisman says he, too, isn’t exactly “normal.”

“My dad has been married nine times; there is nothing normal about me,” he states. He says most people aren’t ordinary, actually, even if they claim to be: “People act like they are completely normal when, in fact, everyone is bananas. Like being obsessed with trolls, for example.”

The popular Small Town Murder podcast, which is hosted by Pietragallo and Whisman, recently turned its sights to Mount Horeb, digging through the details of a tragic local homicide from more than 40 years ago.

With listeners all over the world, the show attempts to mine the comi-tragic out of bizarre and horrifying cases in quaint communities across the nation. In their 389th episode, the duo dug into the gritty details of the story of a local woman who was brutally stabbed to death with a blunt knife in her Mount Horeb home in 1981, allegedly by her cheesemaker husband.

The nearly three-hour podcast’s summary stated: “This week, in Mount Horeb, Wisconsin, a terribly, bloody and awful murder scene is found in a home’s finished basement. A very inefficient murder weapon is found under the body, and detectives believe everyone was home when it happened.”

Elmer (Curly) Wyss was charged with the murder of his wife in 1981, standing trial the following year. The 49-year-old man pleaded not guilty, saying someone else must have committed the crime. Their 17-year-old son, who found his mother’s body, said he was awakened by “screams of terror or rage coming from the basement” between 2 and 3 a.m., reported the *Capital Times*.

In a jury trial which commenced on July 20, 1982, Elmer Wyss was found guilty of the first-degree murder of his wife, whose name was spelled “Dorothy” in court documents but “Dorothy” in some newspaper accounts at the time. A series of appeals followed, with two finding there was cause for a retrial, but the state supreme court eventually ruled the conviction would stand.

While there was nothing funny about the killing itself, Pietragallo and Whisman say there is value in joking about the horrors that pervade society, and they say their large audience is due, in large part, to the fact that people want to be reminded that they aren’t entirely safe, even in the small towns where so many Americans live. Small Town Murder grew out of – and quickly surpassed – another podcast hosted by Pietragallo and Whisman.

“People think they’re safe, and they’re not,” Pietragallo said. “That’s it. That’s the appeal. They think murders only happen in big cities, but in reality they find out they are just as vulnerable.”

“Everyone is afraid of the boogeyman, but really you should be scared of your husband,” adds Whisman.

“Small town politics plays a huge part,” points out Pietragallo.

“Murder in a small town

is like throwing a huge rock into a small pond,” he says.

Are there lines Small Town Murder won’t cross? Are there ways they keep from crossing certain lines in the sand?

“There are a couple ways,” says Pietragallo. “One rule is to not make fun of the victims or their families.” They feel free, however, to make fun of the murderers they encounter along the way. And the small towns where they live.

“The town stuff; that’s what people get the most mad at us for,” he explains.

“God forbid we mispronounce the name of a town,” says Whisman.

“It’s just a roast,” Pietragallo reminds listeners. “We don’t hate your town.”

Both hosts say murder is a perfectly fine topic for comedians, because the entire purpose of comedy is to lead people safely into dark places they wouldn’t be able to go without the aid of a little humor.

“It was the jester’s job to deliver horrible news to the king, and if he wasn’t funny about it he was killed,” explains Whisman.

And while most of humanity’s weirdness is charming, or at least innocuous, the species does have a burning penchant for murder that has not dimmed with the passage of time or the coming of advanced technology.

“Unfortunately, there is no shortage of murder,” says Pietragallo.

“Every week someone sends us something that just happened,” says Whisman. “The aspect of greed and desperation is something that will never go away. Humans have emotions, and emotions fuel murders.”

The emotions in the Mount Horeb case were troubling to say the least. The entire family was home when Wyss was killed, and her body was found by one of her children. Her husband, who was eventually convicted of the crime, claimed not to hear her being stabbed to death early that morning. But while a court of law found him guilty, some of the podcast’s listeners 40 years later were vexed by the lack of physical evidence.

“What surprised us most about that one was, a lot of listeners didn’t think he should have been convicted,” said Pietragallo. “People love physical evidence.”

The episode starts with several jokes about Mount Horeb, and Wisconsin in general. The pair say they love the t-shirts that say,

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“Come and smell our dairy air.”
“A bit of a drinking culture around here, too. Really? In Wisconsin?” Pi-etragallo jokes.

“There are trolls everywhere,” Whisman adds. “Everyone is clearly drunk.”
When it came to the actual case, they didn’t shy away from the awful details contained in the court documents and newspaper clippings of the time. The case made headlines back in the early 1980s, and cable TV covered the trial “from gavel to gavel.”

“A big part of the research that gets done is newspaper archives, and it’s pretty much always the neighbor or the husband,” says Pi-etragallo.

While they are generally irreverent, the pair do, at times, feel the weight of their subject matter.

“I like to follow James, because he never flinches, and I do,” says Whisman.

In addition to the podcast, Small Town Murder is also a live, traveling show. It’s coming to The Panages in Minneapolis on Friday, August 11 and The Auditorium Theatre in Chicago on Saturday, August 12. Go to shutupandgivememurder.com to learn more.

“Those audiences in the Midwest are great,” said Whisman. “Those are our best audiences.”

And while the subject matter is death, they urge listeners to remember one important thing about their show: “It’s for the living.”

Schools limit phone use to help combat mental health crisis

According to a study published by the National Institutes of Health, evidence from a variety of cross-sectional, longitudinal and empirical studies “implicate smartphone and social media use in the increase in mental distress, self-injuri-

ous behavior and suicidal-ity among youth.” The more time young people spend pe-rusing social media on their phones, the worse the effects are. The impact appears to be greatest among girls, the same paper shows.

The effects of social media addiction range from loss of learning to loss of self. Many people worry it can even lead to the loss of life itself.

Just one of a litany of disturbing findings in the study was that “social media can negatively affect adolescents’ self-view and interpersonal relationships through social comparison and negative interactions, including cyberbullying; moreover, social media content often involves normal-ization and even promotion of self-harm and suicidality among youth.”

Last but not least, “high proportions of youth en-gage in heavy smartphone use and media multitasking, with resultant chronic sleep deprivation, and negative effects on cognitive control, academic performance and socioemotional function-ing.”

Taking into consider-ation this vast galaxy of red flags, along with the results of recent surveys in which parents and students alike asked the district to focus on mental health, the Mount Horeb Area School District is taking decisive action. In what will, for some, feel like a sweeping change, phones and other personal electronic devices will no longer be al-lowed during instructional time for pupils in grades six through 12. It’s a bold move that educators believe will immediately improve the quality of education students receive, and could, in theory, save lives in the long run.

School board president Jessica Arrigoni said the change is part of a multi-pronged effort to make sure students are “happy and en-gaged” when they are learn-ing.

“It’s not only academic,” she explained. “It’s for the students’ social and mental

health.”
“Our own, student-driven data shows anxiety and de-pression are through the roof, and our strategic plan survey told us people want us to do more to address mental health,” she contin-ued. “This is going to be very good for our students.”
“We’re hoping to create a culture around how we do things, and it’s going to be consistent [in both the middle school and the high school],” she said.

Arrigoni said districts that have adopted similar poli-cies have seen almost imme-diate increases in test scores.

She says she also suspects many students will actually feel “a sense of relief” when the constant trauma of social media is removed from the equation.

But Arrigoni was quick to point out that the move is not anti-technology or in-tended to stifle innovation and digital learning in local schools.

“Kids will still be doing all sorts of cool things with technology in the classroom, but it’s going to be with purpose rather than an ad-diction,” she said. She said students will still have ac-cess to their phones during lunch and outside of instruc-tional time.

In a statement sent out to the district, superintendent Dr. Steve Salerno called constant phone use in the classroom “an addiction” that educators have an ob-ligation to help break in the best interest of the commu-nity’s youth.

“There is significant em-pirical evidence to support learning loss and anxiety inducing behaviors when these devices are so readily available,” wrote Salerno. “Not to mention, imagine trying to teach 25-plus stu-dents while competing for their attention with an elec-tronic device.”

Multiple district officials admitted implementation may anger some students or parents. They said it’s a risk worth taking.

“Yes, many of our stu-dents are unhappy about

this new practice,” wrote Salerno. “We get it. Frankly, repeatedly checking our de-vices is a form of addiction. It is time that we responsibly wean them off.”

A teacher in the Mid-dleton-Cross Plains Area School District, where phones are allowed - and pervasive - in the classroom, spoke on the condition of anonymity about the impact they have on education.

“If you are an adult, it basically in no way resem-bles what school was like for you,” he said. “It’s an addictive psychology, the kids obviously don’t have the ability to self-regulate, and they are on their phones every moment of the day. It makes it impossible for them to engage in any meaningful discourse. They don’t even interact with each other.”

The teacher said students who struggle the most aca-demically are “almost all” addicted to their phones, perusing everything from Snapchat to pornography throughout the school day. They said social media use makes it impossible for teachers to reach many of the students who need help the most. “However bad you imagine it is, it is worse than that,” the teacher stated.

While many teachers greeted the news of Mount Horeb’s new policy with ap-please, district leaders here said they are prepared for some backlash from stu-dents and parents who feel unlimited social media ac-cess is a fundamental right.

But Mount Horeb Middle School principal Paul Chris-tiansen said educators are doing “what’s best for kids” rather than merely what is popular in the short-term.

“I think the biggest thing is just the constant disrup-tion,” he said, “which leads to less engagement.”

Christiansen said the COVID pandemic and all that came with it highlighted problems that already ex-isted.

“Let’s be honest,” he said. “Over the last few years, kids have not had a lot of opportunities for engage-

ment, for problem solving.” He went on to say that with their phones away, pupils will once again have the op-portunity to take part in the “productive struggle” at the root of true learning.

For thousands of years, people have learned through variations of the Socratic method; the ongoing pro-cess of dialogue between students and teachers. With students’ phones tempo-rarily off, local educators hope students and teachers in Mount Horeb will once again be able to engage in the messy, beautiful process of learning, together.

Christiansen said students themselves know how badly digital distractions are hin-dering their growth and de-velopment, but as with any addiction, the cycle can be difficult to break, especially if everyone else is doing it. That’s why leadership at the district office, the high school and the middle school all agreed to make the change universal in grades six through 12.

“Will it be easy? Not nec-essarily. When September comes, this will be a new expectation,” he said.

“It will be a change, but it won’t be a surprise,” he added.

Supporters of the change were quick to quash any comparisons to the radical followers of the mythical Ned Ludd, who smashed textile machines and gifted society with the enduring term for those who reject technology: “luddite.”

“The kids all still have Chromebooks, and they all have access to the internet,” Christiansen said. “A com-ponent of this is just teach-ing appropriate use.” He said phones can still be used as tools in the curriculum, in specified areas where they are a natural part of the learning process.

But while academics are important, district leaders returned again and again to the core fact that unfettered access to social media dur-ing instructional time needs to come to an end, and not merely to boost test scores.

“The research talks about increasing anxiety and de-pression, and the loss of self that comes with that,” Chris-tiansen said.

“We owe it to them to do what’s in their best interest,” he continued.

So, will this initiative help teachers teach? Will it help students learn? District lead-ers say they will have data points to help answer those questions soon enough.

Whether it will make people happier, healthier, and more engaged with the world around them – and whether it will allow them to develop unique selves that feel like they belong – will be harder to quantify, but not impossible.

“We will be able to look and see,” Christiansen said.

Power line battle continues

A decision by a Madison-based federal judge that would prevent construction of a Dubuque to Middleton transmission line through a wildlife refuge was over-turned last week as prema-ture.

Environmental groups challenged a permit issued by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in September 2020 to allow the Cardinal-Hick-ory Creek powerline to pass through Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. The agency concluded that the 345-kilo-watt line extending along an existing road and railroad would be “compatible” with its “major purposes” under the Refuge Act, according to the July 19 appeals decision.

The Driftless Area Land Conservancy was among the groups which alleged the environmental impact state-ment prepared by Rural Util-ities Service and adopted by the USF&WS and the Army Corps of Engineers was de-ficient. American Transmis-sion Co., ITC Midwest and Dairyland Power Coopera-tive, the line’s partners, con-tinue to construct the line as the lawsuit proceeded through the courts.

Continued Next Week

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Winning road trip

Vikings split two games and have a blast at WBV Shootout

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

MEQUON — Nine years ago, Mount Horeb’s boys basketball team went to the Wisconsin Basketball Yearbook Shootout, lost a pair of games and fell to 6-4 on the season. Three months later, the Vikings won the WIAA Division 2 state championship. So moments after Mount Horeb dropped a 74-48 decision to Franklin on

Dec. 29 — just 24 hours after it posted a 72-53 win over Racine St. Catherine’s — Vikings coach Todd Nesheim told his team the story of that 2015 squad. The three-day WBV Shootout — held at Concordia University — isn’t just about wins and losses. It’s about facing elite competition. It’s about team bonding. And it’s about learning things that can pay dividends later in the year.

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Mount Horeb boys basketball coach Todd Nesheim watched his team split a pair of games at the WBV Shootout. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Mount Horeb’s best of 2023

Vikings’ year had a bevy of highs



Conference championships. State tournament appearances. And memories to last the rest of their lives. Mount Horeb athletics had it all in the past year. And that meant one highlight after another. Last week we looked at stories No. 6-10. This week we look at stories No. 1-5.

1. Football team enjoys banner year

For the better part of two decades now, followers of the Mount Horeb-Barneveld football program have dreamed about advancing to the sport’s biggest stage. They’ve thought about capturing the imagination of the community as they competed for a WIAA state championship, and returning home amid a caravan of fire trucks and a

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Brooks Pernot (7) and Mount Horeb-Barneveld’s football team had a lot to celebrate in 2023. File photo

MOUNT HOREB’S BEST OF 2023



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gold ball to match the ones in the trophy case from gymnastics, boys basketball, boys soccer, boys golf, girls track and field and both cross country programs.

They also know how perfectly the stars have to align for that to happen.

In 2023, it almost happened as the Vikings took the community on a thrilling, three-month ride.

MH-B rolled to a third straight Badger Small Conference championship, won its first two playoff games and carried an 11-0 record into Level 3 of the postsea-son. But the Vikings’ dream season ended with a heartbreaking 26-21 loss to perennial powerhouse Green Bay Notre Dame in an epic WIAA Division 3 state quarterfinal.

“I fully believed that we would win this game, right down to the last play,” said senior two-way lineman Austin Leibfried, an Indiana University recruit. “It didn’t go our way. But we kept fighting. That’s the main thing — this group’s a bunch of fighters and a bunch of great guys and everyone’s going to do great in life.”

The Vikings did great things on the field all season long.

MH-B outscored its foes by an average score of 41.5-18.2 while rolling up an 11-0 record. Just one of the Vikings’ first 11 contests were decided by single digits.

And MH-B rolled past Seymour and Baraboo in the first two rounds of the playoffs.

But Notre Dame — which won two state titles and finished second twice since 2003 — was a different animal.

The Vikings rallied from a 12-point second-half deficit, producing a pivotal fourth-down stop deep in their own territory midway through the fourth quarter and marching 83 yards to take a 21-20 lead with 2 minutes, 58 seconds left on a 3-yard touchdown run by Trenton Owens and extra point by junior Zach Maguire.

But the Tritons put the game on the back of junior Christian Collins, one of the state’s most accomplished running backs, and again the workhorse delivered. After returning a squib kick to the Notre Dame 42-yard line, Collins took his 33rd carry of the night right into the teeth of the MH-B defense and dashed 40 yards before being brought down by senior L.J. Ellestad at the Vikings’ 17.

Four plays later, Col-

lins waltzed into the end zone for a 3-yard go-ahead score.

MH-B had just 51 seconds left, but drove to the Notre Dame 22-yard line with 5.1 seconds left.

On the game’s final play, MH-B split a trio of trusted receivers to the right, and sent them to the back corner of the end zone. Quarterback Kasey Helgeson loft-ed a ball that Notre Dame cornerback Charlie Hornacek was able to swat down before it got behind him to wideouts L.J. Ellestad and Chris Kiel.

Owen Preimesberger — trailing those two slightly — dove to catch the deflection, but it was just out of his reach.

“I don’t think we lost. I think we ran out of time,” Owens said. “Twenty more seconds and we’re playing next week with a shot to go to the championship. We left it all out there. I don’t regret anything.”

Ellestad agreed.

“I wouldn’t do it with anyone else. I love these dudes,” Ellestad said. “It was a hell of a season. We made history. We just couldn’t pull it off.”

MH-B gobbled up 18 spots on the all-Badger Small conference team, including seven first-team all-conference selections.

Helgeson was named the continued on page 14



Clockwise from top left, Mount Horeb-Barneveld football coach Bret St. Arnauld led the Vikings to one of the most successful seasons in school history. Trenton Owens (2) and Kasey Helgeson (8) both had huge years. And Landon Ellestad (12) and Drew Preimesberger (6) both enjoyed tremendous seasons. File photos

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league’s Offensive Player of the Year, Leibfried was named the Offensive Line-man of the Year and Bret St. Arnauld was named the league’s Coach of the Year.

Helgeson, Leibfried and Kiel all received some form of all-state honors, as well.

“We put so much time into this season, before the season, during the season,” Kiel said. “We were together at 5 a.m., 12 p.m., 12 a.m., working together all the time. So much heart. I’m so proud of everyone here.”

Owens agreed.

“This is the biggest family I’ve ever had, and the brotherhood is second to none,” Owens said. “I think everybody on the team would attest to that. I’m going to miss it so much. Everything about it. There’s just something about this team, about football. This is something I’ve never felt before, and I’m never going to feel again.”

2. Sensational Sadler

What a year it was for the incomparable Addy Sadler.

Mount Horeb’s sensational track/cross country star won the 800-meter dash at the WIAA Division 1 state meet in June. Sadler also placed third in the 1,600-meter run and led the Vikings’ 3,200-meter relay to a sixth-place finish.

Sadler’s big weekend helped the Vikings tie for 10th place in the Division 1 girls team standings with Bay Port with 20 points. DeForest won the meet with 46 points.

“It was amazing,” Sadler said of her three trips to the awards podium. “I was super excited to be up there. It’s really been my dream all winter.”

Sadler — who has committed to run collegiately at Harvard — then finished second at the WIAA Division 2 state cross country meet less than five months later.

Sadler’s exploits helped Mount Horeb finish fifth as a team at state.

“I kept pushing the entire race and am proud of what I accomplished,” Sadler said. “I left everything out there and that’s all that I could ask of myself.”

During the state track and field meet, Sadler won the 800 in 2:11.64, just ahead of Cedarburg’s

Charlize-Trinity McKenzie (2:13.56).

“My goal was to sit on (Trinity McKenzie) from the start and make a move whenever I felt good,” Sadler said. “About 350 meters in, I could hear her breathing harder than me. I could see her tiring, so I decided to take it. I passed her with about 400 (meters) to go and kicked for 400, and it worked out.”

Sadler, who lived outside Toronto, Canada, for the past three years before returning to her hometown last summer, was also third in the 1,600.

“My goal was to win it. I didn’t quite get there, but I went out at a really slow pace, a pedestrian pace,” Sadler said. “Just having that early kick really got me, but it was the best race I could have asked for.”

Sadler also teamed with senior Megan Van Orsdel, junior Emmy Bennin and sophomore Katherine Straka to finish sixth in the 3,200-meter relay.

“It was amazing,” Sadler said. “It was so much better being up on the podium with my team than by myself. The delight in that was 10 times. It was awesome.”

Sadler and her Vikings teammates qualified for the state cross country meet, as well, where they gave a memorable performance.

Mount Horeb finished fifth at the 16-team event, its best team finish since the 2008 group won the state title. Appleton Xavier finished first with 75 points, while Bloomer (116), Green Bay Notre Dame (126), Dodgeville/Mineral Point (129) and Mount Horeb (166) rounded out the top five.

“Simply put, our girls team had a fantastic race at Wisconsin Rapids,” Mount Horeb coach Dave Chancellor said. “We were ranked ninth in Division 2 going into the meet — our highest ranking of the season. While I wasn’t unhappy with that ranking, I also thought many of the teams ranked ahead of us were ones we could beat.”

“I thought that fifth was possible if everyone ran well and we were, of course, also hoping that Abby could get the individual win. That didn’t quite come to be, but her runner-up finish was huge for us in the team scoring.”

Sadler won every cross country race she competed in this season and hoped to continue that trend at state.

Sadler’s plan was to



Mount Horeb’s Addy Sadler won the 800-meter dash at the WIAA Division 1 state meet, then finished second at the WIAA Division 2 state cross country meet. File photos

hang with the leaders for the first two miles, then make her move on the straight away over the final mile. Unfortunately for Sadler, the best laid plans don’t always come to fruition.

Northland Pines senior Nora Gremban raced to the front from the start, completing the first mile in 5:35 — five seconds ahead of Sadler. Gremban increased her lead over Sadler to 16 seconds after two miles.

Gremban eventually won the race in 17 minutes, 46.7 seconds, while Sadler was second in 18:09.3.

“I feel proud of what I accomplished, however getting second has just fueled my fire for my next competition,” Sadler said. “Coming in first is nice, but losing is really what pushes me to train harder.”

Sadler’s teammates had a memorable day, as well. Freshman Willa Vigliotta finished 10th (19:16.5),

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freshman Julia Straka was 24th (20:15.2), junior Katherine Straka was 60th (21:41.0) and freshman Maeve True was 71st (21:59.3).

“There’s something magical about high school cross country when you’re part of a team that cares about one another and embraces the work,” Chancellor said. “To me, this season gives us something solid to build future years on and I’m excited about what comes next for this program.”

Thanks in large part to the foundation Sadler helped build.

3. Gymnasts

4th at state

When the 2022-23 girls gymnastics season started, few people expected great things from Mount Horeb.

The Vikings had graduated the majority of girls that helped them finish second at state in 2022. In fact, 17 of the 20 varsity positions were open.

By the end of the season, though, Mount Horeb was right back where it always seems to be — competing for greatness at state. And while the Vikings fell a tad short of that, they fully understood this was another terrific chapter in their sensational story.

Mount Horeb finished fourth at the WIAA Division 2 state meet. Nicolet won the state title with a 142.750 team score, while West Salem (138.0), Elkhorn (137.9167), Mount Horeb (136.050) and West Bend West (135.667) rounded out the top-five at the 10-team tournament.

“We are holding our heads high with our fourth place finish at state,” Vikings coach Martha Koller Faust said. “Of course it’s always the goal to bring home some hardware, but our girls didn’t give up the entire competition.”

Mount Horeb opened on the balance beam and was the first team to compete at that difficult station. The beam is typically a strength for the Vikings, but on this day they struggled.

Mount Horeb’s team score was 32.017, which was the lowest of the 10 teams at state. It also meant the Vikings were fighting an uphill battle the rest of the day.

“Even though our gymnasts were prepared and up to the challenge, we had several falls, missed



connections and missed bonus,” Koller Faust said. “Beam has been one of our strongest events all season, so being down three to four points right away made for an uphill battle for us.”

But the Vikings did yeoman’s work battling their way back from their early struggles.

Mount Horeb had the third-best score on the floor exercise (35.717) and the fourth-best on the vault (35.033).

On the floor exercise, senior Annelle Moyer posted a stellar 9.117 and sophomore Marley McIntyre shined with a 9.083. Sophomore Athena Ouradnik scored an 8.850 and senior Izzy Walker notched an 8.667.

On the vault, Moyer carded a 9.017, while the Vikings also counted scores from junior Edie Balster (8.817), Ouradnik (8.733) and McIntyre (8.467).

And on the uneven bars, Mount Horeb counted scores from freshman Sylvia Seeliger (8.417), Walker (8.350), Ouradnik (8.333) and McIntyre (8.133).

While the Vikings looked to be in deep trouble after their first event, they rallied for an impressive fourth place finish.

“A little pep talk after our beam rotation and a ‘don’t quit’ attitude from our girls were the key to our proud fourth place finish,” Koller Faust said.

One day later, several Vikings competed at the individual state tourna-



ment and gave terrific performances.

Ouradnik was Mount Horeb’s lone qualifier in the all-around competition and finished 20th overall (34.083).

Sophomore Reece Olinger was ninth on the balance beam (8.80), while Moyer was 21st (8.267) and Ouradnik was 25th (8.10). On the floor exercise, Ouradnik was 19th (8.767) and Moyer was 23rd (8.70).

Ouradnik was 17th on the uneven bars (8.450) and Seeliger was 20th (8.333). And on the vault, Moyer was 16th (9.033) and Balster was 20th (8.90).

“Every individual competitor — Annelle, Edie, Reece, Athena and Sylvia — had her first experience of the individual state championships on Saturday,” Koller Faust said. “That being said, how can

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Mount Horeb’s girls gymnastics team (top) finished fourth at the WIAA Division 2 state meet. Both Athena Ouradnik (middle) and Annelle Moyer (above) were key to the Vikings’ success. File photos

MOUNT HOREB’S BEST OF 2023



Clockwise from top, Jadyn Schellpfeffer, Ella Fager, Delaina Nicewander and Emma Olsen helped Mount Horeb’s girls golfers win the Badger Small Conference title. Photos courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

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any of us feel nothing but pride for them?

“It’s the best of the best at state and our girls did a fantastic job. This year’s state meet is also the first time since 2020 that the team competition was Friday and the individual competition was Saturday. It’s a long, exhausting couple of days both physically and mentally and I’m very pleased with their performances.”

Koller Faust was extremely pleased with what many believed would be a rebuilding year in Mount Horeb. Instead, the Vikings won another Badger Conference crown, captured a sectional title and finished fourth overall at team state. “I really think this 2022-2023 Vikings exceeded many people’s expectations,” Koller Faust said. “We knew we had big shoes to fill with 17 of the 20 varsity positions open from last year’s state meet competitors.

“Each member of our team, both varsity and junior varsity, worked hard and accomplished so much this entire season. Our girls’ resiliency and ‘never give up’ attitude has been evident since our first day of practice back in November. They believed in them-selves and in each other and as a coach, that’s a terrific feeling.”

4. Girls golfers share conference title

The trophy might read co-champs. But the key word was undoubtedly champs. Mount Horeb’s girls golf team finished in second place at the Badger Small Conference Tournament on Sept. 19 at Reedsburg Country Club. Madison Edgewood nipped the Vikings for the team title, 393-395.

When combined with Mount Horeb’s first place finish in the dual meet season, though, the Vikings and Crusaders tied for the Badger Small title. That

gave Mount Horeb its first conference championship in program history. “Our body of work throughout the entire conference season allowed us to earn a share of our first-ever conference championship, a remarkable accomplishment for our pro-gram,” Mount Horeb coach Nolan Krentz said. The Vikings, who went 6-0 during the dual meet season, entered the day atop the conference standings with six points. Madison Edgewood was second with five points and Baraboo had four points. Playing the back nine first, Edgewood got off to a fast start with a 186 at the turn, while Mount Horeb was second at 198 and Baraboo was third (217). Senior Ella Fager and sophomore Delaina Nicewander both shot 48s on their first nine to lead the Vikings. Fager parred the 15th hole while Nicewander recorded pars on holes No. 11 and 18. Junior Emma Olsen had

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MOUNT HOREB’S BEST OF 2023

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a 49, highlighted by a par on hole No. 16, while junior Lainy Hesseling added a 53 and freshman Jadyn Schellpfeffer carded a 57.

“It was an uneven performance for us on our first nine holes,” Krentz said. “Typically the back nine is a little easier at Reedsburg, but we struggled off the tee as well as on and around the greens.”

Playing the tougher front side for its second nine holes, Mount Horeb shot a 197 and finished with a team score of 395. Edgewood carded a 207 on its second nine, finished with a 393 and held on for first place.

The Crusaders notched seven points for winning the conference tournament, while Mount Horeb earned six points — giving both teams 12 points overall.

“We made a run at Edgewood down the stretch,” Krentz said. “We trailed by as many as 16 strokes on our second nine, but we were able to make things interesting the last few holes. We just dug ourselves too big of a hole and ended up running out of holes.”

Fager was sensational on her second nine, carding a 41 and finishing with an 89. Fager parred holes No. 3, 5, 8, and 9 on her back nine and finished in second place individually in the 33-player field.

Olsen and Nicewander both finished with 99s, which was good for a fifth place tie. Olsen shot a 50 on her second nine, including a par on hole No. 6, while Nicewander had a 51 with pars at No. 2 and 9.

Hesseling closed with a 55 on her second nine and posted a score of 108 to place 12th.

Afterwards, Fager and Nicewander were named first-team all-Badger Small Conference, while both Olsen and Schellpfeffer were recognized with second-team all-conference honors.

“This was the first time in our program’s history that we had more than one player earn all-conference honors during a season, so to have four players recognized in one season is quite an achievement,” Krentz said. “To have multiple players capable of shooting in the 40’s has made us much more formidable this season and allowed us to achieve our goal of winning a conference title. Hopefully we can keep the



momentum going as we begin postseason play.”

5. Stoddard caps terrific career in style

Senior Joe Stoddard is one of the top runners in school history.

And Stoddard wrapped up his high school career with a sixth-place finish in the 3,200-meter run at the WIAA Division 1 state meet.

Stoddard’s time of 9:11.64 was just more than a second ahead of Stevens Point junior Aloysius Franzen (9:12.68) for the final spot on the podium.

“This is such a story and such a race to go out on because it’s one we’ll never forget,” Stoddard said.

The evening Division 1 session, which included preliminaries and five finals events, was extended due to multiple weather-related delays. And then there was another half-hour delay when the stadium lights went dark at 11 p.m.

By the time Stoddard approached the starting line the weather had cleared.

“The time he raced wasn’t the most ideal,” Mount Horeb coach Brian McIntyre said. “But it was the same for everybody. Everybody had to deal with the same thing.”

“Joe is a pretty tactical racer. He knows the position to be in and when to move. He is a very instinctual racer. Once they shoot the gun, the runners have to do a lot of that themselves. It’s not really the coaches at that point.”

Stoddard, who won the Division 2 state cross country title in 2022, placed

eighth in the 3,200 at the Division 2 state meet as a sophomore. But Stoddard was determined to earn a top-six finish and a spot on the podium this time.

“By the eighth lap, I was pretty tired,” he said. “I didn’t have quite as much left in the tank. But I had just enough to get on that sixth-place spot on the podium.”

Stoddard said achieving that goal was the perfect ending to his high school career.

“It’s hard for me to finish a race and say I did everything completely right,” said Stoddard, who is now competing in cross country and track and field at Eastern Illinois. “It’s like there’s always the next thing you could have done.

“But really I think I executed as well as I could of. My fitness prepared me as well as I could have. It really was the perfect ending. My top goal was 9:10 and to get on the podium in Division 1 is pretty special. So I was super happy with it.”



Joseph Stoddard finished sixth at state in the 3,200 meter run. File photos

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Wrestlers 17th at Bi-State Classic

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

The Mount Horeb/Barneveld wrestlers finished in 17th place out of 26 teams at the Bi-State Classic last week.

Hastings (Minn.) won the team title with 205.0 points. The Vikings finished with 72 points.

Here’s a recap of MH-B’s performance:

120 — Nick Burreson (3-7) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Carter Jensen (Nekoosa/Assumption/Port Edwards) 12-4 won by fall over Burreson (Fall 0:46)

- Cons. Round 1 - Johnny Robinson (Mineral Point) 1-2 won by fall over Burreson (Fall 2:38)

126 — Timmy Kruse (5-9) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Turner Campbell (Holmen) 19-7 won by fall over Kruse (Fall 1:30)

- Cons. Round 1 - Max Kelley (Iowa-Grant/Highland) 8-7 won by fall over Kruse (Fall 1:40)

132 — Colton Bell (0-5) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Avery Femrite (Beaver Dam/Wayland Ac.) 22-3 won by fall over Bell (Fall 1:18)

- Cons. Round 1 - Jacob Bertling (Nekoosa/Assumption/Port Edwards) 7-6 won by fall over Bell (Fall 0:56)

138 — Marcus Sevilla (4-5) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Brice Buxton (Cuba City/Benton/Southwestern) 15-8 won by fall over Sevilla (Fall 4:14)

- Cons. Round 1 - Ethan Reekie (Verona) 3-8 won by fall over Marcus Sevilla (Mount Horeb/Barneveld) 4-5 (Fall 0:25)

144 — Finn Herman (0-5) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Brett Plomedahl (West Salem/Bangor) 22-5 won by fall

over Herman (Fall 0:30)

- Cons. Round 1 - Chaise McGuire (Riverdale) 9-10 won by fall over Herman (Fall 0:36)

150 — Ryan Errthum (6-5) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Carter Cady (Lewiston-Altura/Rushford-Peterson) 8-6 won by fall over Errthum (Fall 4:17)

- Cons. Round 1 - AJ Alesch (Holmen) 7-9 won by major decision over Errthum (MD 8-0)

157 — Eli Maier (11-3) placed 7th and scored 28.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Maier won by fall over Abraham Sanchez (Sparta) 14-6 (Fall 1:31)

- Champ. Round 2 - Maier won by fall over Braedyn Nally (Monroe) 14-7 (Fall 3:05)

- Champ. Round 3 - Jaxon Busse (Iowa-Grant/Highland) 22-1 won by decision over Maier (Dec 6-0)

- Cons. Round 4 - Maier

won by fall over Blaine Primmer (Viroqua) 19-8 (Fall 2:47)

- Cons. Round 5 - Maier won by fall over Colton Zipp (Bay Port) 3-2 (Fall 1:29)

- Cons. Round 6 - Maier won by decision over Bryce Lenzendorf (Prairie du Chien) 16-7 (Dec 11-4)

- Cons. Round 7 - Eyan Dessellier (Kiel) 21-4 won by decision over Maier (Dec 12-7)

- 7th Place Match - Maier won by major decision over Quinn Pfeiffer (Waunakee) 6-3 (MD 13-3)

165 — Eli Leonard (17-1) placed 3rd and scored 36.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Leonard won by fall over Lucas Freeberg (Cannon Falls/Randolph) 7-10 (Fall 0:53)

- Champ. Round 2 - Leonard won by tech fall over Zaender Schoenebeck (Luxemburg-Casco) 16-12 (TF-1.5 4:27 (16-1)

- Champ. Round 3 - Leonard won by fall over Colton

Clark (Kickapoo/La Farge/Youth Initiative) 13-6 (Fall 2:28)

- Quarterfinal - Leonard won by decision over Ayden Miner (Chatfield) 11-4 (Dec 3-0)

- Semifinal - Caleb Dennee (Marshfield) 26-0 won by decision over Leonard (Dec 8-2)

- Cons. Semi - Leonard won by tech fall over Luke Hoag (Hutchinson/BLHS) 20-2 (TF-1.5 3:51 (17-1)

- 3rd Place Match - Leonard won by decision over Ayden Miner (Chatfield) 11-4 (Dec 7-0)

175 — Niam Allen (0-4) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Alejandro Gonzalez (Wrightstown) 1-5 won by fall over Allen (Fall 0:46)

- Cons. Round 1 - Emerson Lau-Melby (Holmen) 9-12 won by fall over Allen (Fall 0:39)

215 — Levi Maier (12-6) place is unknown and scored 8.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 – Maier won by fall over Nathan Schipper (Monroe) 4-15 (Fall 2:19)

- Champ. Round 2 - Teige Perkins (Richland Center) 24-4 won by fall over Maier (Fall 2:36)

- Cons. Round 2 - Maier won by forfeit over Forfeit (Baraboo) 0-2

- Cons. Round 3 - Maier won by decision over Braxton Weissmiller (Medford) 14-10 (Dec 5-1)

- Cons. Round 4 - Noah Lucio (Stratford) 25-5 won by fall over Maier (Fall 2:37)

285 — Dylin Randle (0-6) place is unknown and scored 0.0 team points.

- Champ. Round 1 - Matt Aurit (Mineral Point) 13-6 won by fall over Randle (Fall 3:00)

- Cons. Round 1 – Randle received a bye

- Cons. Round 2 - Brayden Kleppe (Richland Center) 11-5 won by fall over Randle (Fall 3:46)

MOHO RECAP

Hockey co-op wins two of three

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

The Sauk Prairie co-op hockey team — which includes players from Mount Horeb, River Valley and Wisconsin Heights — won two of three games at the Culver’s Cup held at Hartmeyer Arena last week.

The Eagles defeated Monona Grove, 5-4, on Dec. 27, then fell to Madison Memorial, 6-1, on Dec. 28. Sauk Prairie then finished the tournament with a 5-3 win over Cedarburg on Dec. 29.

Here’s a recap of the Eagles’ week:

- **Sauk Prairie 5, Monona Grove 4 (OT)** — Colin Harrington scored just 14 seconds into overtime to give the Eagles a thrilling win.

Harrington and Gunnar Nachreiner both finished with two goals and an assist to power the Eagles.

Garret Mittelsteadt also had a goal, while Connor Grant added two assists. William Anderson had 37 saves and got the win in net.

Mittelsteadt had a first period goal, then both Harrington and Nachreiner had second period power play goals as Sauk Prairie jumped to a 3-1 lead. Monona Grove scored a pair of goals in the first 2 minutes of the third period, though, to tie the game, 3-3.

Nachreiner had an even strength goal midway through the third period to give the Eagles a 4-3 lead. MG answered

with the game-tying goal just 36 seconds later, though, to eventually force overtime.

That’s when Harrington played hero and gave the Eagles a big win.

- **Madison Memorial 6, Sauk Prairie 1** — Garret Mittelstaedt had a second period goal for the Eagles, but it wasn’t nearly enough.

William Anderson had 30 saves for the Eagles.

- **Sauk Prairie 5, Cedarburg 3** — Five different Eagles scored as Sauk Prairie posted an impres-sive win over the Bulldogs.

Michael Lamberty, Brock Hill, Colin Harrington, Connor Grant and Thor Peterson all scored for the Eagles.

Josh Mast, Steven Romaker and Carl Weiss had assists for Sauk Prairie, while Maddox Wood had 21 saves and earned the win in goal.

SWIMMING

Mount Horeb’s boys swimming team finished in eighth place at the Verona Invitational last Saturday.

Verona won the team title with 600 points. The Vikings finished with 41.50.

Angus Best was sixth in the 100-yard IM and sixth in the 100-yard freestyle. Carter Craven was 10th in the 100-yard IM and 12th in the 100-yard breaststroke.

John Malin was 16th in the 100-yard breaststroke and 18th in the 50-yard freestyle. Caden Sadkovich was 14th in the 100-yard backstroke and 26th in the 50-yard freestyle.



Maren Johnson and Mount Horeb’s girls basketball team fell to Mineral Point on Dec. 28. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Vikings fall to Mineral Point

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

Offense continues to be a problem.

And as Mount Horeb’s girls basketball team puts together its New Year’s Resolution, that will top the list.

The Vikings shot just 8.0% in the first half and 17% for the game and dropped a 54-34 decision to Mineral Point on Dec. 28. The Vikings fell to 4-7 overall and are 3-3 in the Badger Small Conference.

“We are really struggling right now to score and make shots,” Vikings coach Bart Leibfried said. “It’s hard to win and hard to play with energy on the defensive end when shots don’t go in.”

Nearly eight minutes into the game against Mineral Point, Mount Horeb was scoreless. And the Vikings shot just 2-of-25 (8.0%) in the first half while digging a 37-7 hole.

“We missed some really good shots, then we started to press by dribbling too

much on offense and turned over the ball and gave them easy scores on the other end,” Leibfried said.

Mount Horeb played much better in the second half, outscoring the Pointers, 27-17. But the 30-point halftime deficit was far too much to overcome.

Hallie Klein led the Vikings with eight points, while Courtney Monroe added six.

“We have to be more physical if we are going to win and the last 10 minutes of the first half they pushed

us around on both ends of the floor,” Leibfried said. “Our staff challenged the girls at half to be the more physical team and we were in the second half.

“We got some really quality minutes out of three freshmen in the second half — Courtney Monroe, Maren Johnson and Maddie Niemetscheck.”

- **On deck:** The Vikings are at Reedsburg (9-2, 4-2) Saturday at 2:15 p.m. Mount Horeb then travels to Barneveld on Jan. 9 at 7:30 p.m.

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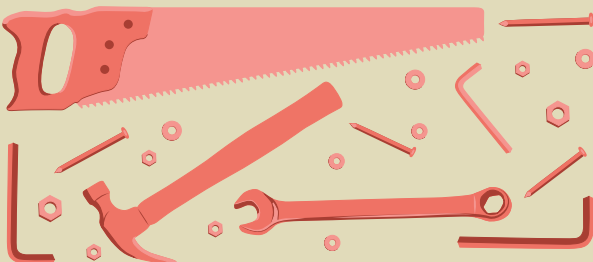
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Healthcare Employment Opportunities

- Dietitian/CDE** – part time to full time day shift position. **Up to a \$5,000 Employment Bonus available!**
- Occupational & Physical Therapist** – full or part-time positions, **Up to a \$5,000 Employment Bonus, prorated based on FTE!**
- Athletic Trainer** – full time AT position
- Vice President of Clinic Operations** – 1.0 FTE position
- Clinic CMA/LPN** – .8 FTE position working in our OB/GYN clinics
- Clinics Referral Coordinator** – 1.0 FTE day shift position
- Imaging/Lab Technologist (Clinics)** – full-time day shift position working 4 -10 hour day shifts
- MRI Technologist** – .5 to a 1.0 FTE day shift position. **Up to a \$5,000 Employment Bonus, prorated based on FTE!**
- Imaging Technologist** – day or night shift position in the hospital available. **Up to a \$5,000 Employment Bonus, prorated based on FTE!**
- Respiratory Therapist** – part-time day or night position & a .6 FTE weekender position
- Med Tech/MLT or CLS** – .9 FTE p.m. shift position and a .5 or .6 FTE Premium Pay Weekender Day shift position.
- Operating Room Tech** – .8 FTE position. **3,000 Employment Bonus eligible!**
- Med/Surg Unit Clerk/CNA** – .6 FTE day/evening shift.
- RN Skilled Nursing Care** – .6 FTE p.m. shift position. **\$3,000 Employment Bonus eligible!**
- RN Float** – .75 FTE p.m./night shift position. **\$3,750 Employment Bonus eligible!**
- RN Med/Surg Unit** – .6 FTE day/evening shift position. **\$3,000 Employment Bonus eligible!**
- Grant Writing Coordinator** – half time position
- Health Information Management Records Specialist** – half time day shift position
- Certified Nursing Assistants** – part-time positions available in our Nursing & Rehab Center day, evening and night shifts available, **\$3,000 Employment Bonus included!**
- Environmental Services** – part-time to full-time evening and day shift positions. **\$1,000 Employment Bonus!**
- Culinary Aide** – .5 FTE day shift positions available.

To find out more detailed information about all open positions and to apply, go to our website at: www.uplandhillshshealth.org.

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TOWN OF BLUE MOUNDS ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC HEARING

The Following Public Hearing will be held during the monthly Board of Supervisors meeting being held on January 8, 2024.

-Havens, Ferron and Barbara - Parcels #0606-094-8690-7, #0606-091-8190-2 and #0606-091-9500-4, Erbe Road, public hearing for the division of above listed parcels. These parcels are to be rezoned in the following fashion.

0606-094-8690-7 20.300 ac Lots 1 & 2 from A-1(EX) Legacy zoning to SFR-Single Family Residential District

0606-091-8190-2 20.100 ac From A-1(EX) Legacy zoning to AG -Agriculture Zoning District

0606-091-9500-4 40.100 ac 10 (ten) acres from A-1EX Legacy zoning to AG-Agriculture Zoning District being conveyed to the Havens with the remnant acreage of 30.1 acres to remain Legacy A-1(EX)

This rezoning is being done to divide one parcel into two residential lots with the other parcel being rezoned being added to parcel #0606-091-8190-2 and remaining AG. This rezoning will bring these parcels into the current Town of Blue Mounds zoning. A recorded CSM will follow the rezone to solidify the boundary of the rezoned area.

Additional information regarding this hearing will be posted at the Blue Mounds Town Hall no later than 1/5/2024.

This notice falls under chapter 985, Wis. Stats. Pursuant to s. 985.02(2), you have the option to publish in a newspaper, post in 3 public places, OR post in 1 public place and on the official municipal website.

Publish: 1/4/24 **WNAXLP**

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