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State Champs!



Neenah News photo

The members of the Neenah Rockets boys basketball team prepare to celebrate with the gold basketball trophy after winning the WIAA Division 1 state title in a convincing 64-52 decision at the Kohl Center last Saturday night. It was the fourth state title in the program's history and first since 1978.

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Valley VNA prepares for update project

Neenah News

Valley VNA Senior Care is preparing for a spring groundbreaking on the first phase of an expansion and remodeling project related to its Caring for Generations initiative that gained a recent federal funding boost.

A recent recipient of a \$4.3 million American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) grant through the city of Neenah, the nonprofit Valley VNA and its ongoing capital campaign received the major federal funding boost to add to contributions from community members toward the building project.

Valley VNA provides homes on Lyon Drive for older adults seeking independent senior apartments, assisted living care and memory care.

Gov. Tony Evers' office announced the grant award earlier this month among others statewide targeted at communities with long-term investments and recovery projects that have been impacted by higher construction costs and inflation during the pandemic. Frank Kearny, president of the board of directors at Valley VNA, said it comes at an opportune time.

"It is serious business based on common sense, especially during this time in history

SEE **Valley VNA** ON PAGE 8

Neenah secures program's first WIAA crown since '78

Neenah News

The Neenah Rockets boys basketball team brought home the Division I championship trophy from Madison with a fire truck escort Sunday afternoon that was greeted by fans at Tullar Elementary School and went to the high school.

Head coach Lee Rabas praised the team effort it took to earn the state's No. 1 ranking in January and hold onto it to the end for a 29-1 record and 64-52 title win over Brookfield Central.

"It is very rare to not only have five seniors, but to have five seniors contribute as much as these kids did," he said. "(Chevalier) Emery Jr., (J.J.) Paider, (Carter) Thomas, (Eli) Schmidt and (Matt) Jung

Rockets soar in Madison

For more on Neenah's win over Brookfield Central and photos from the game, see page 10.

have been the glue of this program for the last four seasons. They have accomplished so much during their time here and have changed the narrative for Neenah basketball in the community."

The WIAA title was the first for the Rockets since 1978, a team that Rabas gave a nod to as well as the other coaches and teams that competed in-between to help get them to this special place.

Rabas led a group that also recorded the

highest team grade point average in the state at 3.712.

He said his relationship with players such as J.J. Paider went all the way back to early grade school when he was their teacher before their coach.

Emery and Paider both described their feelings as "surreal" and "a kids' dream" after playing their last high school game to win the championship.

Rabas said the team was tested in the semifinals against Racine Case in a way that showed their resilience and growth during the season.

"We handled our business despite battling through moments on Friday," Rabas said.

Pace of police calls on steady climb

Department adds traffic, code enforcement roles

By Amber Brockman
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

The Neenah Police Department takes 190% more calls for service a year than it did 30 years ago.

In 1990, city police took 8,856 calls for service. That number hit 25,721 last year, Police Chief Aaron Olson said. That compares with 20,507 calls for service in 2020.

"Mental health calls, juvenile crime, fraud, drugs such as heroin and crack cocaine, sexual assaults and so much more are rising every year," Olson said.

There were 149 Group A arrests and 151 Group B arrests in the last quarter of

2021, according to the fourth quarter Unified Crime Report.

Group A arrests included 48 crimes against person, 60 crimes against property and 41 crimes against society.

Group B arrests included 37 disorderly conducts, 12 driving under the influence, three liquor law violations, six trespass of real property and 93 all other offenses.

"Neenah is still a very safe city, but society is changing and not for the better," Olson said.

Starting on May 2, the department will have a new traffic safety officer who will be responsible for traffic operations, traffic education and more, Olson said.

The department also added a code enforcement officer, which is a new position since December. This person takes

care of code compliance, coordinates inspections, performs education for quality-of-life ordinances and issues warnings and citations for code violations.

"The goal of this program is to identify minor code violations before they become large problems, which in turn attracts crime," Olson said.

The department also identified replacements for one open patrol position and two upcoming retirements, but by the time they complete their training, it will be early 2023, according to Olson.

To support the department in keeping the city safe, Olson advises: If you see something, say something.

"We would rather be called and not

SEE **Police calls** ON PAGE 8

Neenah News

Local news for you

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Advertising deadline is noon Friday for the following Friday. The classified line ads deadline is 4 p.m. Tuesday for Friday.

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Family hardware tradition marks 50 years

By A.J. Mikkleson
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Mike Brazee is a second-generation owner of Brazee Ace Hardware at 516 N. Commercial St. that is marking 50 years at that location while evolving with the changing needs of his customers.

Mike's father, Art, started in the hardware business to assist his auto service station on West Cecil Street and opened a store next door. The original hardware store opened in 1967.

When the Brazee family decided to go into hardware exclusively, the Cecil Street location was too small and in 1972 acquired their current location. Longtime residents might remember the Neenah-Menasha area's first supermarket grocery on North Commercial that closed in the 1960s. After a series of other businesses occupied the building, Brazee Hardware made it its home.

Brazees has been the owner for nearly 43 years, during which time the store and hardware business has transitioned from carrying appliances and heavy equipment to a bigger focus on do-it-yourself service supplies. Parts and supplies to make repairs and improvements around the home.

Brazees said the pandemic actually increased business activity, noting "we've hit sales goals we had never imagined."

As people stayed closer to home, Brazees said they discovered there were many solutions that a hardware store could provide while offering knowledgeable personal service.

Like many businesses in 2022, the two largest challenges Brazees faces are inventory and labor shortages. Looking around the store one wouldn't know that as the



Photo by A.J. Mikkleson

Dallas Brazees is the third generation at his family hardware store on North Commercial Street.

shelves are stocked. He said that's a result of experience and planning, trying to be ahead of competitors when ordering.

Brazees Ace Hardware is beginning another family transition as Dallas is following in his father's footsteps and taking on more day-to-day operations. While Dallas was originally encouraged to consider options away from running a family business,

he returned right when his father was in need of help around the store and the Brazees hardware tradition continues.

Brazees wouldn't go into specifics, but indicated residents should expect to see future changes and improvements as it grows and is in need of more space.

He called the local hardware store "the convenience store of home improvement."



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- 2040 Long-Range Comprehensive Plan
- Executive Director, Neenah Historical Society
- Neenah Arts Council
- Landmarks Commission
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COMMUNITY LEADERS ENDORSE JANE LANG

"I'm supporting Jane Lang for mayor because we share a love of this community and **she has the experience, ability, and leadership skills to keep Neenah growing.**"

- GEORGE SCHERCK,
former Mayor of Neenah (2002-2014)

"Jane Lang is committed to our community with the experience and vision to lead Neenah into a good future."

- MARIEN CARPENTER,
former Mayor of Neenah (1982-1998)

Jane is also endorsed by JOHN & DIANNE BERGSTROM, RICH & LORI BATLEY, and many more community leaders in business and local government. Read the full list at

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Mayoral candidates talk about city issues

Neenah News

Neenah mayoral candidates Jane Lang and Brian Borchardt are vying to replace Dean Kaufert as the city's leader in the April 5 spring election.

Lang, a 3rd District alderman and executive director of the Neenah Historical Society, has served on the council since 2014 and is chair of the Landmarks Commission, vice chair of the Plan Commission and Public Services and Safety Committee, and member of the Business Improvement District Board and Neenah Arts Council.



Borchardt

Borchardt, a 2nd District alderman since 2019 who has been a teacher in the district for 15 years, is on these city committees: Sustainable Neenah, Finance and Personnel, Committee on Rules, Neenah Menasha Fire Rescue Joint Finance and Personnel, and Park and Recreation Commission. He is on the boards for Verve Credit Union and The Brigade, a youth development program.

They both answered questions posed by the League of Women Voters of Winnebago County on www.vote411.org/wisconsin.

What are your thoughts about creating more TIF Districts in Neenah? Address where, when, and why TIFs are advantageous to the city of Neenah.

Borchardt: The bottom line is that in this economic environment we must utilize TIFs or Neenah will get looked over by contractors. TIFs reward investors and draw new people into Neenah. We have used TIFs to grow our downtown, develop the area west of Highway 41 and keep Menasha Corp. I exercise discretion with our tax dollars and TIFs are no exception, we would continue this best practice under my mayorship.

Lang: TIF districts are an important tool we can use to spur economic devel-

opment in the city. There are important questions to consider when determining if establishing a TID (tax incremental district) is the best decision for encouraging the development that's being considered. TIF districts are appropriate in areas where positive development would not otherwise occur, and that standard should



Lang

be uniformly applied when determining whether or not to establish a TID. TIF districts have many benefits to a community including expansion of the tax base, growth of employment opportunities, and are a means by which to achieve organized and thoughtful development. I support the establishment of TIF districts in Neenah when they're appropriate and well managed. Neenah has had some significant positive development that has come about by using TIF districts including the downtown district, the Westowne Shopping District and the Southpark Industrial Center.

How should Neenah work with local health officials, the County Health Department and others to mitigate the effect of COVID in our community?

Borchardt: We have to find ways to provide services and resources to our citizens while sharing the cost of those with our partners. In order to get that done, we need excellent communication, and the pandemic has left no room for error. On city council, we have received regular updates throughout the pandemic on the cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. As mayor, I would continue to meet with county and local health officials to make sure we are doing our best to keep our citizens safe. I would also extend our ongoing communication and build these current relationships further to address the mental health crisis our community is facing.

Lang: The city should continue to follow CDC guidelines and advice from our local health experts. We no longer have a health department in the City of Neenah and have to rely on the guidance we receive from Winnebago County. Maintaining constant communication with local health care leaders like Dr. (Imran) Andrabi (ThedaCare) is extremely important as we navigate through COVID and its effects. Personally, we have two children working in health care, and I so appreciate all that our health care workers are doing. We need to do our part to mitigate this health crisis. We need to be pragmatic about this and as much as possible refrain from allowing ourselves to be divided on this issue. It's in our best interest to find reasonable common ground from which we can fight this battle together.

How do you plan to involve residents in the decision-making process?

Borchardt: I would get people involved by establishing a city of Neenah app. This app would be an addition to our open forums and public hearings and would allow our local government to be accessible 24/7. I would get the residents of Neenah involved by listening to them and I feel this would allow me to serve our citizens in a much greater capacity.

Lang: Since most decisions within the city's government are made at the city council level, the best way to influence those decisions is to directly communicate concerns with your elected official. Access and education are the keys to helping involve residents in the decision-making process. It's vitally important for us to inform the community about what's going on and how citizens can have an impact on decisions that are being made. Social media has been effectively used by the city to inform residents in regards to issues and opportunities, but we should expand communication using additional tools. We still have a gap in reaching those who haven't been able to embrace digital communication, but our traditional city newsletter remains a great way to reach all. An open-door policy for hearing and addressing residents' concerns is vital. Education to help citizens best and most effectively communicate their concerns should be a priority.

What environmental/sustainability measures should Neenah be implementing?

Borchardt: Environmentally sustainable options have become much cheaper over the last decade. Embracing them would certainly benefit our bottom line. As a member of the Sustainable Neenah

City polling places

District 1: wards 1-4, Whiting Boathouse, 98 5th St.; wards 5-8, Washington Park Pavilion, 631 W. Winneconne Ave.

District 2: wards 9-12, Peace Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall, 1228 S. Park Ave.; wards 13-16, Neenah Police Station, 2111 Marathon Ave.

District 3: wards 17-18, Memorial Park Shelter – South, 1175 Apple Blossom Drive; wards 19-21, Fire Station No. 31, 1060 Breezewood Lane

Committee, I continually compare existing practices against alternative solutions. That process is why we installed solar panels at the industrial water tower to offset the cost to run it. It was economically and environmentally beneficial. As mayor, I would continue this practice. Meeting department heads to find ways to become more energy conscious while maintaining our bottom line.

Lang: Several of our city departments have taken leadership and initiated steps which should be encouraged. The Neenah Water Utility recently installed solar panels at the Towerview Drive Water Utility site. Following their lead, other city locations should be identified for solar installations. Maintaining our Tree City status (under the Parks and Rec Department) is a priority and a long-standing designation we should be proud to keep. Efforts by our Public Works Department to educate and encourage recycling and reduce our use of the county landfill must be continued and improved – all of these initiatives are not only good for the environment, they also save taxpayers' dollars. New approaches for transportation (i.e. charging stations) should also be encouraged as we move forward and away from dependence on fossil fuels. We must protect our environment and be proactive to anticipate the challenges of coping with limited resources.

City Council: Candidates for District 1 (wards 1-8) are incumbent Kathie Boyette and newcomer Kristen Sandvick.

Boyette serves on Finance and Personnel, Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue Joint Finance and Personnel Committee, and the Water Works Commission.

Sandvick has lived in the area most of her life, graduated from Menasha High School and has a sociology degree from UW-La Crosse. She and her family moved to Neenah nine years ago.

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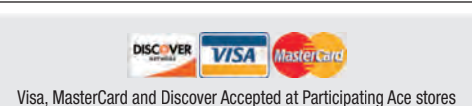
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School board candidates discuss district issues

By Patti Lee
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

The six Neenah Joint School District Board of Education candidates fielded questions last Wednesday in a Zoom forum sponsored by the Winnebago League of Women Voters and the Fox Cities Advocates for Public Education.

Candidates include current board vice president Lauri Asbury, child-parent advocate Tara Brzezinski, property investor Sara Johnson, small business owner Sarah Moore-Nokes, community health professional Lydia Rhoads and real estate professional Rocky Schafer.

In response to the lack of a state funding increase for public education, the candidates agreed it is a big challenge for school districts. Everyone stressed advocating to the state Legislature and practicing fiscal

responsibility.

Asbury advised that reinstating in-person education might open up some federal dollars; Brzezinski advocated for special education allocations while Rhoads suggested using programming experts. Johnson, Moore-Nokes and Schafer declined to speak to a budget without first analyzing the data. All candidates agreed on wise spending and creative use of existing funds.

Top of mind for parents is the new high school under construction and new format for grades 5-8 schools. There was consensus that while the board is responsible for major decisions, the public's buy-in is essential, requiring networking on all levels.

Recommendations included hard media in the form of surveys, mailers and in-person interaction in addition to electronic media. Transparency and commu-

nity involvement including committee memberships for parents as well as students were described as vital in creating stakeholders in the outreach process. Everyone agreed that "kids deal better with change than adults."

Another key topic was navigating the pandemic and its fallout, including staff shortages, low morale, learning loss and an ongoing mental health crisis. Brzezinski and Rhoads cited enrollment decline with Johnson listing the need for better summer school options. Schafer stressed teacher retention and the need to be proactive in lightening their load, "allowing them to teach."

On understanding the school voucher program, everyone described it as taking public funding and giving it to private/parochial schools. Asbury provided additional context and indicated there were bills moving through the Legislature that would remove all caps from the voucher program, which could have a negative im-

pact on public schools.

While all candidates agreed that parents and community should be involved and knowledgeable as to what their children are learning, there was consensus that setting the curriculum should remain in the hands of the professionals. It was noted that the curriculum is transparent and that interested community members are free to view it at any time. The candidates also were unanimous that public opinion, input and ideas should be offered and accepted in a respectful manner.

There was a full slate of questions in the 90-minute forum. The League of Women Voters has provided a link to all forums at lwvwinnebago.org. Additionally, campaign questionnaires featuring candidate bona fides and in-depth answers to questions may be found at www.vote411.org/wisconsin.

The spring election will be held April 5. For voting information go to ci.neenah.wi.us and click on Election Information.

Gustafson switches from Senate to Assembly bid

Fox Crossing resident Nate Gustafson announced his campaign for the 55th Assembly district after redacting his bid for state Senate to support Rep. Rachael Cabral-Guevara in her race.

Among his top priorities for constituents is encouraging the growth of local businesses and supporting education and parent involvement.

"As a lifelong Fox Cities resident, I know the unparalleled work ethic of our communities and believe that the best way to encourage private sector growth is allowing businesses to operate without mandates and shutdowns. I understand that

the way forward is through minimal government interference and allowing folks to control their own lives," Gustafson said.

Gustafson is an epic analyst at Novo Health Technology Group and vice president of Winnebago County for Freedom, an organization that encourages county residents to be active in local politics and recruits candidates.

"The greatest injustice to future generations is the lack of involvement of young voices in politics. I want to change that. In order to bring about good government, everyone needs to have a seat at the table," he said.

Voter ID reminders offered by state DMV

The state Department of Transportation Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds voters to have the proper identification needed to vote in the April 5 election.

Wisconsin driver licenses or IDs are most commonly used for voting purposes. A federally compliant REAL ID card is not required to show at the polls. The Wisconsin Elections Commission notes other forms of identification are valid for voting, such as military or student ID cards.

To obtain an official ID card, there are documentation requirements such as a birth certificate. If all documentation is not readily available, the ID Petition Process (IDPP) may be used to obtain a receipt valid for voting while the remaining documents or verifications are obtained.

DMV offers this service and ID cards for voting purposes free. The toll-free Voter ID hotline at 844-588-1069 is available for questions.



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Community policing gets boost from business

By Dan Roherty
NEENAH NEWS

A fundraiser at Cedar Bar & Grill got back to supporting the Neenah Police Department's community policing programs after the pandemic had interrupted plans after the first such event – and it was worth the wait.

Gretchen Diegel, who has owned the establishment with sister Kristin Zagrodnik at 1330 S. Commercial St. for more than two decades, said the \$6,600 raised March 12 through raffles and bingo was a credit to local businesses who donated prizes and the many visitors showing support.

"There was so much interest," Diegel said. "It was just packed."

Community policing coordinator Joseph Benoit, who was there with his family helping with the fundraiser and connecting with visitors, said Sgt. Clint Driscoll spearheaded this year's event that will help the department create other community programs.

"The funds raised will be put to good use, sponsoring events and community involvement initiatives for community policing," Benoit said. "It will directly impact members of the community, including kids and families, (which) is what our vision is."

Benoit said these types of fundraisers allow police to sponsor additional events and provide extra resources.

"That's the goal is to get families out enjoying the community, intermingling with one another, get them comfortable with the police department and try to provide them with any needed resources," he said.

Diegel said the first fundraiser was sparked by asking Lt. Kathy Voelker what



Neenah Police Department photo

Lt. Kathy Voelker (from left), police records coordinator Amber Boehlen, police officer Erik Douglas and community service aide Adam Kohler sit behind Luke Benoit, a young helper at the community police fundraiser at Cedar Bar & Grill.

police program could use a funding boost at a time when the community policing initiative was getting started. Diegel said she knew that the department's canine and bike patrol programs had some support groups and wanted to help efforts to connect officers to residents of all ages.

"I just feel that if people get to know our officers they would realize that they're really there to help us all," Diegel said.

"When you get the younger kids to get to know the officers personally, then as they grow up they're not afraid of them."

After the sisters contacted Voelker about resuming the event, Diegel said "it absolutely snowballed from there when I realized how many businesses were inter-

ested in donating to this."

This month's event that included basket raffles, 50/50 raffles and 50/50 bingo games took in more than four times the amount raised in the first fundraiser. Diegel credits generous downtown businesses and more than \$1,000 in presold tickets for raffles – and has her thinking about a bigger location with some outside options that could move the date closer to summer.

"It's pretty darn amazing the difference our officers make in the eyes of a child, a struggling mom or a family caring for a loved one who truly can't afford to," Diegel said on her Facebook page thanking everyone who took part.

Calendar of events

Thursday, March 31

Glass Art Class – Mosaic Tiles, 5:30 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Friday, April 1

Uncorked and Uncapped, 7 p.m., Best Western Premier Bridgewood
Downtown Neenah Spring Scavenger Hunt begins, through April 14

Saturday, April 2

Art Activity Day, 10 a.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Saturday, April 9

Brews with the Bunny, 5 p.m.; Easter Egg Hunt, 7:45 p.m., Fritsch Park, Fox Crossing

Irish Road neighborhood rummage sale to return

The Irish Road neighborhood in Fox Crossing is planning for its 51st year of rummage sales set for April 22-24.

The home rummage sale tradition started in 1971 with four locations, according to Marilyn Anunson, one of those four original participants. For the 40th annual event, it hit a record of 106 sales locations.

The spring sales generally have between 60 and 80 households that participate, listing their items online at irishroadrummage.sale.weebly.com.

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Photo by David Hall

Taking it outside

Visitors to Lion's Tail Brewing Co. downtown were able to take advantage of its recently added patio as temperatures warmed up last weekend in time for St. Patrick's Day festivities.

McMahon names architect, engineers

McMahon engineering and architectural firm has hired David Lintz as a senior architect as well as Ethan Lang and Maija Seppanen as water and wastewater engineers.

Lintz brings 35 years of architectural experience, including his own business for more than a decade and working as a building plan reviewer and inspector for the state. Lintz graduated from the Milwaukee School of Engineering with a bachelor's degree in architectural engineering.

Lang graduated from Michigan Technological University with a bachelor's de-

gree in environmental engineering. Lang is beginning his working career with this engineering position after interning in the consulting and industrial fields.

Seppanen graduated from Michigan Technological University with a bachelor's degree in environmental engineering. She has a master's degree in environmental engineering from University of Iowa. Seppanen comes to McMahon with more than 17 years of experience working on municipal wastewater and drinking water projects.

DeVooght appointed to FVTC board

The Fox Valley Technical College board appointment committee reappointed three board members to fill upcoming openings on its board of trustees, including Neenah-based Tammie DeVooght Blaney of the International Association of Structural Movers.

She is joined by Kaukauna-based Charles Spoehr Jr., representative at North Central States Regional Council of

Carpenters, and Oshkosh-based Smart IS International chief operating officer Javad Ahmad.

Fox Valley Technical College is governed by a nine-member board of trustees comprised of two employers, two employees, three additional (at-large) members, a school district administrator and an elected official. Each year, the terms for three board posts expire.

Easter-theme brew fest, egg hunt set

The Fox Crossing Parks & Recreation Department is offering an Easter-themed event for adults April 9 at Fritsch Park with both a brew tasting and an Easter egg hunt.

The first portion of the evening will be "Brews with the Bunny" that features live music, food trucks, craft beer and Easter-themed games from 5 to 7:45 p.m. Registration is not required.

At dusk there will be an adult-only Easter egg hunt with more than 1,000 eggs scattered at the park. Prizes vary and will include candy, gift cards and lottery tickets with the support of more than 35 businesses that have donated prizes.

All proceeds will go toward youth recreation programs. To register, contact 920-720-7108 or visit www.foxcrossing-wi.gov.



NEENAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Photo from Neenah Historical Society

Early educator

Dr. Emma Jaeck was one of the first women in the nation to earn a PhD. In 2018, she was inducted into the Neenah High School Hall of Fame. The historical society is celebrating Women's History Month.



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Valley VNA photo

Valley VNA Senior Care plans to break ground on its expansion in spring. The senior living community also provides community programs like Lyrics & Laughter for people experiencing dementia and their care partners.

Valley VNA

FROM PAGE 1

when our population is aging,” Kearny said.

Theresa Pichelmeyer, Valley VNA president and chief executive, detailed facets of the proposed construction and remodeling projects. After new construction of an additional memory care wing, the second phase will refurbish existing assisted living spaces with revised floor plans, more natural light and modern finishes.

Preliminary plans include creating assisted-living rooms to include small private living and visiting spaces adjacent to residents’ customary sleeping space. Bathrooms will be enlarged to afford more comfort and safety to residents and staff.

Valley VNA will also invest in residential-style kitchens that serve a smaller number of residents than a large dining room. These small kitchens have a wheel-up break-

fast bar where residents can watch some of the activity around their food prep in a more home-like setting.

“Mealtime routines are a comforting rhythm to our days, and they engender warm conversations between residents, families and staff,” Pichelmeyer said. “We want our residents to feel at home, and these improvements in our facilities will only match the excellent care they receive from our team. We are very happy to get started.”

Valley VNA was established by Neenah and Menasha residents in 1908 as an independent nonprofit organization with visiting nurses providing home care, well-child visits and even dental care.

Valley VNA’s current community outreach includes foot care clinics, coordinating the Meals on Wheels program, In-Home Care and caregiver support programs like Lyrics & Laughter music groups and monthly Memory Care Respite Partners.

County warning sirens to be tested

Winnebago County’s outdoor warning sirens will be tested every Saturday at noon starting this weekend and will continue through at least September.

Tests will be canceled if severe weather or other serious conditions are imminent.

The Winnebago County Office of Emergency Management reminds residents that the sirens are designed to warn people who are outdoors that a severe weather situation is happening or likely to happen. They should then seek shelter inside a

sturdy building.

Residents can enhance their severe-weather readiness with a NOAA Weather Radio that can be purchased at the records window in the Sheriff’s Office and may also be available from local retailers.

For more information, contact the Winnebago County Office of Emergency Management at 920-236-7463.

Winnebago County also will participate in a statewide mock Tornado Drill on April 7.

Library calendar

(Go to neenahlibrary.org or call 920-886-6315 for details or registration information.)

Monday, March 28

Book Club “Barbizon,” 10 a.m.

Thursday, March 31

Ukulele Open Jam, 6 p.m. Bring music, play for the group or with fellow ukers. All skill levels.

Open Chess Night, 6 p.m. All ages and skill levels.

Friday, April 1

Ced Ba’etch’ in concert, 2 p.m.

Monday, April 4

The Green Armoire – Repurposing Junk, 2 p.m.

Thursday, April 7

Ukulele Open Jam, 6 p.m. Bring music, play for the group or with fellow ukers. All skill levels.

Open Chess Night, 6 p.m. All ages and skill levels.

Friday, April 8

Yoga After Dark, 6:30 p.m.

Police calls

FROM PAGE 1

needed than be needed and not called,” he said. “Our officers are some of the best professionals in law enforcement, but they can’t be on every street during every minute of the day.”

There are only a handful of police officers and nearly 28,000 residents in Neenah, Olson noted.

“The police can’t police the city alone,”

he said. “It takes all of us.”

If you see an officer parked somewhere for an extended period, Olson said it isn’t because they aren’t busy or not working.

“We have directed our officers to complete their reports in their police vehicles rather than at the police department,” he said. “We are doing this so that our officers are more visible, in hopes of deterring crime.”

“The city of Neenah is a special place to live, work and play,” Olson said. “We can’t let criminal behavior become the new normal.”



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- April 22 **TUSK**
"The World's #1 Tribute to Fleetwood Mac"
with Special Guest Ryan McIntyre
Presented by BruMar Productions
- April 23 **Farewell Angelina**
Available Live or LiveStream!
- April 29 **Tim Harmston & Mary Mack**
Husband & Wife Comedy Duo
Available Live or LiveStream!
- April 30 **The Cheese Doodles**
Part of the Downtown Saturday Night Series

April Shows



Winter sports all-conference roundup

BOYS BASKETBALL

Emery Jr., Thomas named to all-FVA first team

The Neenah boys basketball team, fresh off a WIAA Division 1 state championship, was represented well on the Fox Valley Association all conference teams as seniors Chevalier Emery Jr. and Carter Thomas were named first teamers.

Neenah, which finished the season 29-1 with a 17-1 mark in the FVA, got 18.3 points a game from Emery Jr. while Thomas was second on the team at 14.8. Emery Jr. also dished out 4 assists a game for the Rockets.

JJ Paider finished the season with 11.7 points and 11.2 rebounds per game, landing him on the second team while sophomore Brady Corso and senior Eli Schmidt earned honorable mention.

Lee Rabas was named coach of the year in the FVA while Emery Jr. and Matt Jung earned all-defensive honors.

Uhlenbrauck, Griffith lead Zephyrs honors

The St. Mary Catholic boys basketball team had a solid one-two punch all year long with juniors Cole Uhlenbrauck and Daniel Griffith, helping the Zephyrs finish third in the Big East-North Conference.

Uhlenbrauck was second in the conference in scoring at 20.2 points per game while Griffith was fourth at 17.3 – helping them earn first and second team all-conference this season.

The Zephyrs finished 17-10 this season with a 12-7 mark in conference. Uhlenbrauck also led the team in rebounding at 7.6 rebounds per game while Griffith dished out a team-high 4.5 assists per game.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Ziebell unanimous first-team all-FVA

The Fox Valley Association girls basketball all conference teams were announced recently and Neenah had a couple girls receive honors, including Allie Ziebell, who was named to the first team.

A sophomore who already surpassed 1,000 career points this season, was one of three unanimous picks – along with Ap-

leton East's Emily LaChapell and Hortonville's Kamy Pepler, both who were named co Players of the Year.

Making second team for the Rockets was junior Ava Kok.

Vogel, Vosters lead Zephyrs' honorees

Big East North champion St. Mary Catholic landed a pair of unanimous selections on the all-conference first team, it was announced recently.

Senior Jaydin Vosters and junior Chloe Vogel were each named to the nine-member first team and were two of the three unanimous choices on the squad. Oostburg senior Ashley Ternes, who was named Player of the Year in the Conference, was also a unanimous choice.

Vogel finished second in the league in scoring at 16 points per game, while Vosters was fourth at 15.8 points per game. The duo helped lead the Zephyrs to an 18-1 mark in the league and a 25-2 record overall.

The rest of the first team consisted of senior Rose Hahn and Addy Verhagen of Sheboygan Lutheran, senior Laney Halbach of Hilbert, juniors Kailey Tulachka of Mishocot and Caris Jaeger of Oostburg and sophomore Halle Van Horn of Random Lake.

St. Mary Catholic senior Lilly Griffith and sophomore Audrey Norville were each named to honorable mention all-conference list.

BOYS SWIMMING

Rockets dominate all-FVA team rosters

The Neenah boys swimming and diving team dominated the Fox Valley Association once again as the Rockets had eight events named first-team.

Earning first team included the 200 medley relay team (Nolan Balensiefen, Jensen Rocke, Austin Henderson & Hayden Holinbeck), the 200 free relay team (Balensiefen, Holinbeck, Caleb Youngwerth and Carter Bauman) while the 400 free team also made it (Youngwerth, Bauman, Henderson, Drew Gaerthofner).

Individually, Henderson was first team in the 100 fly, 100 free and 100 back, Gaerthofner in the 200 IM and Bauman

in the 50 free. Henderson was named the co-swimmer of the year along with Appleton North/East's Ian Riddlehoover.

Coach Carrie Raeth was named coach of the year.

The Rockets 200 medley relay (Elias Strausman, Eli Klawikowski, Nicolas Boyer and Quinn Koeper) made second team while Youngwerth added second team honors in the 200 free, 200 IM, 50 free, 500 free and 200 free relay.

Ryan Foucault made second team in diving, Boyer was second in the 100 fly while Bauman earned second team honors in the 100 free. Gaerthofner was second team in the 100 breast event.

Earning honorable mention was Holinbeck in the 200 IM and 100 fly, Balensiefen in the 50 free, Connor Buss in diving, Braden Loudon in 100 fly, Strausman in the 100 back and Rocke in the 100 breast.

The 200 free relay team (Gaerthofner, Klawikowski, Wyatt Pershing, Koeper) also earned honorable mention.

GIRLS HOCKEY

Zilisch, Rentmeester and Gillard lead way

The Fox Cities girls hockey team had a handful make the Eastern Shores all conference teams, the league announced recently.

Leading the way was seniors McKayla Zilisch and Gwen Gillard, along with sophomore Grace Rentmeester – who all made the first team. Earning second team for Fox Cities was sophomore Maleiyah Streck as a forward.

Junior goalie Ella Sciborski and sophomore Parker Beyer both made honorable mention.

BOYS HOCKEY

Engel named all-league first-team defenseman

The Neenah/Hortonville/Menasha boys hockey team had a spectacular 2021-22 season, finishing with a 18-6 record while making it to the WIAA Division 1 sectional final game, where they lost 7-2 to Notre Dame.

Senior Ian Engel was named one of six on the first-team all-Badgerland Conference team, the league announced. Engel was one of two defensive players named to the team.

Earning second-team all-conference included senior forward Gabe Randel, junior forward Luke Sutton, junior defenseman Thomas Burns and junior goalie Caleb Moore.

Earning honorable mention included senior Easton Plachetka and junior John Kriz.

WRESTLING

Three Rockets make conference first team

The Neenah wrestling team had a great 2021-22 season, finishing runner-up in the Fox Valley Association and three wrestlers landed on the FVA first team, the league announced recently.

Freshman Jacob Herm (106 pounds), junior Eli Gast (170) and senior Bryce Fochs (285) all earned first team while seniors Charlie Alft (138) and Austin Lewis (145), along with junior Nick Novak (152) made the second team.

Earning honorable mention for the Rockets included seniors William Rambert (126) and Davin Munoz (182).



Neenah Historical Society photo

1929 champions

The 1929 Neenah High School championship basketball team included (front row from left) Lowbert Bell, Jack Hewitt, John Schneller, Mitchell Johnson, Gordon Ehlers, Howard Stacker and Phil Hall. (Back row) E. Thomson, Herb Thermanson, Pete Grogan, James Shea, Leonard Neubauer and Howard Schmidt, and (back row) George Blohm, Fritz Olson, Carl Gertner, Ole Jorgenson and H. Pautz.



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Neenah boys strike WIAA gold in title tilt

Rockets stifle Brookfield Central to claim crown

By Dustin Riese
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

It has been a long time since the Neenah boys basketball team could call themselves state champions – 44 years to be exact.

But on Saturday night that all changed as the top-ranked Rockets topped the Brookfield Central Lancers 64-52 to secure the WIAA Division 1 State Championship.

Some might say this has been a long time



Photo by Karen Schneider

Chevalier Emery Jr. (3) puts up a shot against Brookfield Central in a WIAA Division 1 state championship game last Saturday. Emery Jr. led the Rockets with 19 points.

coming as the Rockets have come close in recent years only to fall short. But this year the Rockets won their final 27 games of the season and took over the No. 1 ranking in the state in January that they weren't going to give up.

Unlike a lot of the teams last weekend that relied on one scorer to shoulder the load, the Rockets did things differently as their grit, toughness, balanced scoring and tenacious defense proved to be too much for their opponents. Even when things got tough, the Rockets didn't panic and did what they do best to come away with a gold ball.

"I thought our kids handled the moment the way we hoped they would all weekend," head coach Lee Rabas said. "They came in with a mature, businesslike focus and knew what we needed to do to accomplish our goals."

"I think the adversity we faced on Friday helped galvanize us today as we played much better today. We didn't want to fall into the same trap we fell into on Friday, and I think the kids just used all of that to fuel them a little bit more."

After a hard-fought win against Racine Case, the Rockets took on the Lancers who had upset Menomonee Falls. These teams met earlier in the season where the Rockets managed to hold on for a 63-57 win. Neenah expected another tightly contested game.

Despite Brookfield's Andrew Rohde going off for 34 points, the Rockets used a balanced attack that saw Chevalier Emery Jr. score his 1,000th career point.

Rohde was a man on a mission in the first half as he scored 18 of his team's 22 points. But with Rohde providing nearly all the offense for Brookfield, it allowed the Rockets to lock down defensively to help open things up for their offense.

For the second straight game, JJ Paider came up big with another double-double as he finished with 17 rebounds.

The game started off tight as Neenah held



Photo by Karen Schneider

Neenah's JJ Paider looks to put up a shot under pressure from a pair of Brookfield Central players during last Saturday's WIAA Division 1 state championship game.

a 12-11 lead until a 16-3 run made it 28-14. The Lancers were not going to go away quietly and leaned on Rohde the rest of the first half as he scored their final eight points to close the deficit to 31-22 at halftime.

Typically when a player scores that many points teams make an adjustment, but Rabas was happy where his team was at defensively and didn't want to change a thing.

"Rohde is a phenomenal player and is not easy to guard," he said. "I felt good with where we were in the first half in terms of defense as he did hit some tough shots. We made him work hard to earn those shots, but at the same time their supporting cast didn't get going. Credit our kids for that and the job they did defensively."

A Jack Daugherty triple for Brookfield

closed the gap to 38-33 before the Rockets' defense showed up in a big way and the team rattled off a 19-6 run to take an 18-point lead.

Paider was a big reason for that run and Rabas had nothing but high praise for him.

"JJ is a very special player who stepped up huge for us this season," he said. "He was one of those kids that always put the work in at practice and you could see the potential he had. I always knew whether it would be with me or in college that he was going to do good things. He just needed an opportunity to play and received that opportunity this season."

Rabas appreciates the entire team, espe-

SEE **State champs** ON PAGE 11

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Neenah News photo

The Neenah Rockets are the 2022 WIAA Division 1 boys basketball state champions.

State champs

FROM PAGE 10

cially the seniors, for what they have done for Neenah basketball.

“It is very rare to not only have five seniors, but to have five seniors contribute as much as these kids did,” he said. “Emery Jr., Paider, Thomas, Schmidt and Jung have been the glue of this program for the last four seasons. They have accomplished so much during their time here and have changed the narrative for Neenah basketball in the community. Not only that, but they are great kids who are going to be missed. They deserve everything this year and have earned it every step of the way.”

Racine Case battle

A game that many felt the Rockets should win handily was far from that as they had to respond to second-half adversity to hold on for a 60-52 win over Racine Case in the semifinal.

The Rockets built a 23-10 lead early and kept it until late in the second half until the Eagles began to turn the tide.

Leading 49-39, Amari Jenkins showed his athleticism on the inside before the sharpshooting Bryant connected from deep to pull the Eagles within 50-44. Racine Case forced a pair of Neenah turnovers that Jenkins converted into easy buckets to pull them within 50-48.

The Rockets came up with the huge bas-

ket as they managed to break the press and found an open Paider for a two-handed slam.

Even with the Eagles pulling within 54-52 with a Brumby bucket, the Rockets overcame a rough free throw shooting performance to ice the game from the line for the 60-52 win.

Paider had 17 points and 14 rebounds while Emery Jr. had 16 points and seven assists.

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UPDATE YOUR HOME with Beautiful New Blinds & Shades. **FREE** in-home estimates make it convenient to shop from home. Professional Installation. Top Quality - Made in the USA. Call for free consultation: **877-544-2415** Ask about our specials! **(WCAN)**

WONDERFUL, LOVING 8-year CAT looking for a new home in Fox Crossing. **920-738-7913**

Miscellaneous

DO YOU HAVE ITEMS TO SELL? GET RESULTS! Affordable advertising that fits your budget! Reach OVER 300,000 homes! Place

your ad in MANY weekly Wisconsin Shoppers & Buyers' Guide papers for as low as \$36.00 **Call today! Publishers Development Service, Inc. (PDS, Inc.) 1-800-236-0737 www.pdsadnet.com**

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LOOKING FOR ASSISTED LIVING, MEMORY CARE, OR INDEPENDENT LIVING? A Place for Mom simplifies the process of finding senior living at no cost to your family. Call **1-855-931-3662 today! (WCAN)**

MobileHelp, America's Premier Mobile Medical Alert System. Whether you're home or away, for safety and Peace of Mind. No Long Term Contracts! Free Brochure! Call Today! **1-855-491-0732 (WCAN)**

New Storage Units - Power & Light included, 24/7 access. 14x40 with tall door and 12x20 with large door. Outer Space Storage, 3250 Walter St, Oshkosh 54901, cleverly hidden behind Fasco Appliance. **920/376-0629**

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WCAN (Wisconsin Community Ad Network) and/or the member publications review ads to the best of their ability. Unfortunately, many unscrupulous people are ready to take your money! **PLEASE BE CAREFUL ANSWERING ANY AD THAT SOUNDS TOO GOOD TO BE TRUE!** For more information, or to file a complaint regarding an ad, please contact **The Department of Trade, Agriculture & Consumer Protection 1-800-422-7128 (WCAN)**

YOUR CAR, BOAT OR MOTORCYCLE helps Rawhide provide mental health services that redirect local Wisconsin youth & adults from harmful decisions. Donate Today! **888-653-2729 (WCAN)**

Real Estate/Rental

COMMERCIAL PROPERTY W/LIVING QUARTERS Upper 3 bd/1 bath apartment with lower level 30x100. Former restaurant but can be converted to suit your needs (Office/Storefront/Salon/etc) Includes vacant lot. Asking \$250,000 - Negotiable!! **Robin 920-517-4855, Chuck 920-921-9179 8am-5pm.**

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Congratulations Neenah Rockets 2022 D1 Boys Basketball Champs!



A Championship Season

Nov. 27	Notre Dame	W 80-49
Nov. 30	@Stevens Point	W 70-64
Dec. 3	Appleton East	L 64-68
Dec. 7	@Appleton North	W 59-46
Dec. 10	@Appleton West	W 100-68
Dec. 14	Oshkosh West	W 69-32
Dec. 17	@Hortonville	W 55-34
Dec. 23	Pewaukee	W 77-62

Dec. 29	@Middleton	W 58-55
Jan. 4	Kimberly	W 76-74
Jan. 7	@Oshkosh North	W 74-54
Jan. 11	Fond du Lac	W 95-58
Jan. 14	@Appleton East	W 59-55
Jan. 15	@Brookfield East	W 47-43
Jan. 18	Kaukauna	W 81-63
Jan. 21	Appleton North	W 81-55

Jan. 28	@Oshkosh West	W 73-42
Jan. 29	@Brookfield Central	W 63-57
Feb. 1	Hortonville	W 66-36
Feb. 4	Appleton West	W 103-43
Feb. 10	@Kimberly	W 83-82
Feb. 12	Oshkosh North	W 65-40
Feb. 18	@Fond du Lac	W 80-55
Feb. 24	@Kaukauna	W 78-67

Playoffs

Mar. 4	Oshkosh West	W 75-43 – WIAA Regional
Mar. 5	Appleton North	W 63-48 – WIAA Regional Final
Mar. 10	Kimberly	W 66-64 – WIAA Sectional
Mar. 12	Eau Claire Memorial	W 62-47 – WIAA Sectional Final
Mar. 18	Racine Case	W 60-52 – WIAA D1 State Semi Final
Mar. 19	Brookfield Central	W 64-52 – WIAA D1 STATE CHAMPS

