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## Phone scam thieves prey on families

### Victims recount experiences dealing with phony claims

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Police Department is notifying residents to be aware of scam callers after a city resident was scammed out of \$18,000.

The victim fell for a “grandparent scam,” which the FBI reports is a scam where “criminals impersonate a panicked loved one, usually a grandchild, nephew, or niece of an elderly person. The loved one claims to be in trouble and needs money immediately.”

Police posted on social media that the

suspected scammer called an elderly Neenah victim and pretended to be the victim’s granddaughter. The suspect stated she was with an attorney and the granddaughter was involved in a traffic accident and needed bail money.

The victim went and got \$18,000 cash and a man came to the victim’s house to collect it, according to police. The man introduced himself as “Jacob Robertson.” He is described as a 20- to 30-year-old African American wearing a black or gray jacket, pants and sunglasses. He was driving a smaller blue vehicle. Anyone with information about the case is asked to call 920-886-6000.

The FBI reports that in 2021, more than 450 victims over age 60 reported grand-

parent scams, with approximate losses of \$6.5 million.

An 89-year-old Neenah resident who asked not to be named in this story said he received a grandparent scam call around 9 a.m. May 4.

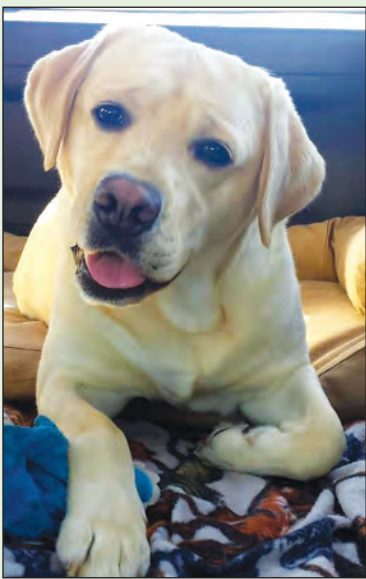
“They said their name was Bonnie and then they asked me what relation and who Bonnie was to me and I said it was my niece,” he said.

When the resident questioned the caller about why she did not sound like his niece, the caller told him that she woke up that morning with a cold, sore throat and stuffy nose, he said.

The resident said he knew the caller was

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**All-around talent**  
Neenah’s Thomas has resume of success  
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Photo by David Hall

## Riverside in bloom

Visitors to Riverside Park last weekend were surrounded by sunshine and colorful wildflower blooms.

## New mayor recounts her local history, looks forward

By Patti Lee  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Jane Lang is now sitting on “the other side of the desk,” the second woman to hold the office of Neenah mayor.

“I’m just so thankful to have the opportunity to sit in this chair,” Lang said in an interview. “It was actually very awkward for me at first – sitting on this side of the desk. I’ve spent so many hours talking with Mayor Kaufert on that side. It’s a different perspective.”

Neenah’s mayoral race was a clean and classy affair. The candidates were colleagues and friends. They focused on the issues. Lang put forward the qualities that set her candidacy apart and the rest, as they say, is history.

“This is part of what’s great about living in a country where a person is elected for a term. If the people want to elect that person again, they have the option to do

so,” Lang said. “It gives the community a chance for a fresh start, a fresh look at how you want the community to be viewed, and it’s a great opportunity for new initiatives and beginnings.”

On April 18, the mayor-elect sat down with Mayor Dean Kaufert for his last time in that capacity and talked through the handoff process.

“His last day, my first day. In a way, that’s really when it was turned over,” Lang said. The swearing in followed the next day.

There have been some emotional moments for Lang. As the baby of her family, there is a 19-year gap between Lang and her eldest brother. None of her siblings live in the area and her parents have both passed.

Her sister asked if she would be sworn in with a Bible. She hadn’t really thought

SEE **Mayor Lang** ON PAGE 12



Photo by Patti Lee

Mayor Jane Lang, shown behind her new desk, was sworn in April 19 as the city’s leader.

# Neenah News

Local news for you

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It is the policy of the Neenah News to correct all errors of fact. For correction information, call 920-486-1616.

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# State 114 road project previewed

Neenah News

The state Department of Transportation's Northeast Region has a design project preview available to view proposed improvements on 1.7 miles of State 114 within Menasha and Fox Crossing between Manitowoc Street and U.S. 10/Oneida Street in Winnebago County.

On [wisconsindot.gov](http://wisconsindot.gov), the information is through the Projects by Region link under the Northeast region. Included are maps of the project limits and location, proposed scope and schedule, traffic impacts and proposed detour route, displays and exhibits, temporary business signing

information, a downloadable project information handout, and methods for the public to comment.

Also on the website is information to join the State 114 Project online public meeting scheduled for 5 p.m. Tuesday. Project staff will present the proposed improvements via Microsoft Teams. Public input will be sought on the identified needs and proposed design details. A comment, question and answer period will follow the live presentation.

Participants can access the live meeting via computer browser or mobile device by going to the WIS 114 Project website and

clicking on the "join the meeting" under the Public Meeting Notice. There is an option to join the meeting via audio-only with a conference call.

The proposed project is a reconstruction-level improvement with full pavement and subgrade replacement. Construction is also proposed for sidewalk, curb ramps, storm sewer and the recreation trail on the south side of State 114 in the project work zone. Engineers are also reviewing intersection geometry and evaluating turn lane needs.

The road will be closed and detoured during construction.

## Farmers Market scheduled to open for the season on June 11

Future Neenah's 30th annual Farmers Market at Shattuck Park returns from 8 a.m. to noon Saturdays starting June 11 through Oct. 15 at Shattuck Park.

Fresh produce, crafts and bakery items will be available every week from more than 40 vendors. There will be live music

each week from 10 a.m. to noon.

New this year will be Kids' Day at the Market every third Saturday of the month.

Each month will be a different theme and include activities such as crafts, face painting and bounce houses.

The market offers a free Loyalty Card program with gift incentives that visitors can sign up for at the information booth.

The Farmers Market accepts Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) food share benefits through a grant from Kimberly-Clark Cares and WIC (Women, Infants, Children) benefits.

For details or more information visit [www.neenah.org](http://www.neenah.org) or call 722-1920.



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## Neenah-based reserve unit heading to Mideast



A Neenah-based U.S. Army Reserve unit is being deployed to the Middle East to support service members there.

The 395th Ordnance Company will send about 100 troops to the region later this month, according to a report that provided no other details.

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# Pedestrian dies in highway accident

A 24-year-old Neenah man was killed after being struck by a vehicle Sunday morning as he was walking along State 76 north of Shady Lane in the Town of Clayton, according to the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office.

The victim was identified as Michael James Schermerhorn.

The driver of the vehicle notified authorities at 12:19 a.m. that she had hit someone with her vehicle. Police said she

looked for the man but could not find him. Officers found the victim and lifesaving measures were attempted but he was pronounced dead at the scene.

The police report said the Hortonville woman was driving north on State 76 when the crash occurred. She was the only person in the vehicle and was not hurt.


The highway was closed until about 4 a.m. Sunday with several response agencies assisting. The incident is under investigation.



Photo by David Hall

## Shelter garden party

Visitors to the Neenah Animal Shelter checked out the offerings at the organization's Garden Party last Saturday, where plants and seedlings were donated for sale. Other family activities were offered at the fundraiser.



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# Special dogs help launch specialty beers in area

## Top Dog competition engages local breweries

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Five area breweries released special beers last weekend featuring some lucky dogs pictured on the beer cans as part of the northeast Wisconsin "NEW Top Dog" contest benefiting area animal shelters and the Oshkosh Mid-Morning Kiwanis Club.

NEW Top Dog is an online fundraiser and pooch popularity contest. The Kiwanis, a nonprofit organization serving children in Oshkosh and internationally, came up with the contest in response to the pandemic, according to its website. Proceeds from the fundraiser are split among the animal shelters and the Kiwanis.

The first NEW Top Dog contest was held in 2020-21 and raised \$50,000 for the Kiwanis and the Oshkosh Area Humane Society. The 2021-22 contest was opened up to benefit the Kiwanis and animal shelters in Appleton, Green Bay, Manitowoc, Neenah, Oshkosh and Shawano.

Participants enter the fundraiser by donating \$10 and sending in a photo of their dog along with a description of why their pooch is the coolest. After registering, contestants encourage friends and family to vote for \$1 each time.

The winning dog from each of the six local contests is featured on a beer can and their pet parents work with a local brewery to participate in the naming and brewing process. The nine runner-up dogs in each contest are also pictured on the beer can.

The top 10 dogs with the most votes from each of the six contests win prizes and move on to a championship round.

This year's overall champion is Watson, a 9-year-old yellow Labrador who represented the Neenah Animal Shelter. Watson is a grand champion show dog who lives with Neenah residents Larry and Suzanne Langohr. Watson is co-owned by their daughter, Nicole Langohr-Hahn.

The mother-daughter pair are the owners of Lucy's Closet pet boutique on West Wisconsin Avenue.

Watson is a therapy dog for The-daCare, several nursing homes in the Fox Valley and the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King in Waupaca, who awarded Watson with a certificate for his many hours of volunteer service. Watson also had a role in the musical "Le-

gally Blonde," put on by Neenah High School last year.

Watson helped raise \$11,843 for the Neenah shelter. He placed sixth overall in Neenah but then beat out the competition in the championship round, bringing in another \$5,000 bonus for Neenah Animal Shelter.

As the overall NEW Top Dog champion, Watson won more than \$3,000 in cash and prizes. Langohr-Hahn said that on behalf of Lucy's Closet, Watson's \$2,000 cash winnings were donated to the animal shelter.

"I think it's an awesome charity and it was an awesome event that the shelters and the breweries and everyone got together to support the shelter and the Kiwanis," Langohr-Hahn said.

Other Neenah winners included Malibu, Blu, Winston, Pepper, Maggie, Blue, Hannah, Scar and Miller; with Malibu taking first place. An overall total of \$260,000 was raised through the fundraiser to support the six animal shelters and the Kiwanis, with \$27,283 going to the Neenah Animal Shelter.

The Top Dog beers were released last Saturday at the five local breweries. The brewers are donating \$1 from each pint and \$1 per four or six pack purchased in the taproom to their partner shelter.

Neenah residents Tom and Jan Morse attended the Malibu's Brew beer launch at Bare Bones Brewery and its dog-friendly bar on County S in Oshkosh.

Jan and Tom are longtime supporters of the Neenah Animal Shelter. Their golden retriever, Hannah, was a runner-up in the competition and is featured with the other runner-ups on the beer can supporting the shelter.

Hannah passed away in March 2021 at 14 years old and was entered in the competition as a "memorial dog," Jan said.

According to Hannah's description in the competition, in her short 14 years on this earth she touched the hearts of all who knew her and "she LOVED happy hour."

Hannah finished eighth locally and 27th overall in the championship round. Her entry in the competition raised \$1,018 for the Neenah Animal Shelter.

Jan said entering Hannah into the contest posthumously provided her and Tom with some closure.

"I thought it would be the coolest thing to have a picture of my dog on a beer can," she said.

On its website, the Neenah Animal Shelter thanked everyone who partici-



Photo by Nicole Langohr-Hahn

Watson and owner Larry Langohr have an award from the Wisconsin Veterans Home in King for their many hours of volunteering.

## Where to find winning brews

### Bare Bones Brewery, Oshkosh

Shelter: Neenah Animal Shelter, Neenah

Winning brew: Malibu's Brew (Belgian witbier with orange peel and coriander)

### Fifth Ward Brewing, Oshkosh

Shelter: Oshkosh Area Humane Society, Oshkosh

Winning brew: LeeLee Pup's Brindle Ale (salted caramel amber ale)

### Appleton Beer Factory

Shelter: Saving Paws Animal Rescue, Appleton

Winning brew: Gustivus for the Rest of Us (Belgian witbier with orange blossom honey)

### Sabbatical Brewing Co., Manitowoc

Shelter: Lakeshore Humane Society, Manitowoc

Winning brew: Cafe Au Lacy (coffee vanilla brown ale)

### Zambaldi Beer, Green Bay

Shelter: Happily Ever After, Green Bay

Winning brew: Alister's Sunny Stout (ale brewed with cocoa nibs and tea aged on oak)

### Sabbatical Brewing Co.

Shelter: Shawano County Humane Society, Shawano

Winning brew: Kyrah's Bomb Pup (cherry, lime and raspberry shandy)

pated in the contest.

"Whether you voted, entered your dogs, attended events or participated in another way, you made a difference and for that we are filled with overwhelming

gratitude," the shelter wrote.

The commemorative beers are expected to sell out quickly and are only available on tap or in cans or bottles in each brewer's taproom.

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# Advocate Aurora, N.C. provider announce merger

Neenah News

Advocate Aurora Health, with Aurora Health Care facilities at 1136 Westowne Drive in Neenah, is merging operations with Atrium Health based in Charlotte, N.C., the organizations announced last week.

“This combination harnesses our complementary strengths and expertise of our doctors, nurses and teammates to lead health care’s transformation for those we are so proud to serve,” Jim Skogsbergh, Advocate Aurora president and chief executive, stated in a press release.

The new organization will have a footprint across Wisconsin, Illinois, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Alabama, and will serve 5.5 million patients at more than 1,000 sites and 67 hospitals, employing more than 7,600 physicians and nearly 150,000 staff.

The combined organization will be called Advocate Health, with the Advocate Aurora and Atrium Health brands continuing to be used in their local markets. Wake Forest

University School of Medicine will be the academic core. The new organization will be based in Charlotte, while continuing an organizational presence in Chicago and Milwaukee, including a new institute for health equity in Milwaukee.

The Advocate Aurora Health and Atrium Health boards of directors unanimously approved the agreement, which is subject to regulatory review. The two medical groups have combined revenues of more than \$27 billion.

“We’ve long admired Atrium Health’s nationally recognized clinical excellence and commitment to health equity,” said Michele Richardson, chair of Advocate Aurora Health’s board of directors. “Given our combined reach, coupled with our talented physicians, nurses and staff, we are uniquely positioned to lead health care’s transformation and create a platform for innovation.”

Leadership at both organizations pointed to advanced capabilities in data analytics and digital consumer infrastructure that will allow them to make a positive impact across

six key areas: clinical pre-eminence and safety, health equity, affordability, next-generation workforce, learning and discovery, and environmental sustainability. Highlights include a \$2 billion pledge to disrupt the root causes of health inequities across both rural and urban underserved communities, and a commitment to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030.

“This strategic combination will enable us to deepen our commitments to health equity, create more jobs and opportunities for our teammates and communities, launch new game-changing innovations and so much more,” said Eugene A. Woods, president and chief executive officer of Atrium Health.

“Advocate Aurora Health has a well-earned reputation as a national leader in diversity, equity and inclusion, as well as its value-based approach to care that has led to better outcomes and more affordable health care,” said Edward J. Brown III, board chair of Atrium.

A board of directors comprising an equal number of members from Advocate Aurora and Atrium Health will govern the enterprise. Brown will lead the board of directors until Dec. 31, 2023, and Richardson will assume leadership for the succeeding two-year term. Skogsbergh and Woods will serve as co-chief executives for the first 18 months, at which point Skogsbergh will retire and Woods will become CEO.

## Multiple states collaborate on labor shortages

Wisconsin is one of 10 states participating in the National Governors Association (NGA) knowledge exchange network for the Next Generation of the Healthcare Workforce Learning Collaborative program.

The state Department of Health Services (DHS), Department of Workforce Development (DWD), Department of Safety and Professional Services (DPS), and other partners will have access to workforce resources and experts and participate in discussions about best practices to support health care workers.

Other states participating include Ala-

bama, Connecticut, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Utah and West Virginia. Four other states (California, Colorado, Missouri, and Wyoming) will form a separate, related learning collaborative with administrative support from NGA to further develop and share best practices.

“Preparing for the next generation of health care workers is not just a Wisconsin issue, so the opportunity to collaborate on this topic at a national level will help Wisconsin identify and implement the most effective solutions,” said Gov. Tony Evers.

DHS and DWD participated in the learning collaborative kick-off event April 27 and 28. The group heard from the federal government, leaders from national health care workforce initiatives, and academic experts who evaluate interventions across the country. Work will continue through the fall and end with a series of recommendations.



Photo from Neenah Historical Society

### Pierce classic

This undated photo shows a 1912 Pierce motorcycle in front of the Armory on Doty Island. May is Motorcycle Awareness month. The Neenah Historical Society has a program on its YouTube Channel about the history of the city’s Armory and Samuel A. Cook.



## Correction

**MAY 13, PAGE 12:** Neenah Police Department staff members Laurie Krueger and Lindsay Elias were misidentified in a story about the K9 program.

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# New downtown leader ready to start the festivities

By Carol Patrizi  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

As summer nears, Future Neenah is gearing up for another busy season.

The nonprofit manages the Business Improvement District and organizes community events throughout the year in Neenah. But new executive director Sarah Wylie says that, no doubt, they are busiest in summer.

A big part of that reason is the evening and lunch concerts at Shattuck Park that start in June. New this year will be two street concerts, one to kick off the season and one to end it. The 100 block of West Wisconsin Avenue in downtown will be closed to traffic June 15 for a dance party with a Beatles tribute band performing at 6 p.m.

The series wraps up Aug. 24 with Boogie and the Yo-yo'z performing at 6 p.m. in the 200 block of Wisconsin.

The Out to Lunch concert series will be every Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

June 16 to Aug. 25.

They're also offering something new at the farmers market that runs from June 11 to Oct. 15 at Shattuck Park. Every third Saturday of the month will be kids' day with activities for families.



Wylie

Wylie, who has been on the job for about three months, said the transition has been "a little like drinking out of a fire hose. It's a lot; Future Neenah is involved in many things in different areas and there's a lot of moving parts."

Before this role, Wylie was director of strategic partnerships for the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity for five years, where she oversaw and managed neighborhood revitalization and Rock the Block, among other things.

She began as an outreach coordinator

and worked her way up to community development program manager before becoming the director of strategic partnerships – which included Future Neenah.

Wylie feels The Plaza at Gateway Park and its ice rink add a special element downtown. Now that the ice is gone, the Plaza has turned into a summer destination. They offer pickleball, live music on Sundays, evening movies and exercise classes. In coordination with the market, an art mercantile will be held Saturdays.

"The idea is to offer people something more," she said.

Many of their events draw from all over the Fox Valley and Wylie can't emphasize enough what that means for the entire community.

"The economic impact for all activities they offer through the year is over \$2.8 million," she said, an older estimate that she feels is understated. "That's people staying, shopping and dining."

To promote health and feature the area's

outdoors, Future Neenah is once again offering Log Your Loops. Beginning Memorial Day and running through Labor Day, trestle trail users who log at least 50 loops will get a free T-shirt.

This year, even dogs that take part can get a bandana. According to Wylie, about one-third of the people that have registered so far live outside of the city.

She said that while the organization serves Neenah, the impact goes well beyond. Sometimes people are surprised that little Neenah offers such wonderful gems.

"Someone said it best when they said we punch above our weight class," Wylie said. She feels that's an accurate portrayal. She credits the partnership to city and community support for all programs and activities they offer.

She's also thankful for the businesses and others who provide financial support and sponsorship.

"Being community driven is what really makes this so special," Wylie said.

## District joins credit card program

The Neenah Joint School District will participate in the Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials credit card program beginning July 1 with Tuesday's approval by the Board of Education at its regular meeting.

The program, used by more than 110 Wisconsin school districts and 750 nationwide, streamlines the purchasing process through technology and cards that have set limits on transaction amounts, what can be purchased and where they can be made.

In other action, the board approved

hiring teachers Nicholas Geiger at Shattuck Middle School, Tyler Jahn at Clayton and Taft elementary schools, and Megan Henn at Washington Elementary. Hires were also approved for educational assistants Melissa Van Hoof at Spring Road Elementary and Cynthia Pleshek at Tuller Elementary. Nathan Schaffer was added to the operations staff at Shattuck.

Resignations were approved for Connor Martin and Kelly Van Caster at the high school, Kalina Churness at Taft, Brenda Rahmlow at Clayton and Spring Road, and Valerie Moseng at Hoover.

## Future Neenah announces concert series

Future Neenah is launching the 2022 Summer Concert Series of regional artists and bands with a Summer Kickoff Concert on June 15.

Beatles tribute band The Britins will take the stage at 6 p.m. in the 100 block of West Wisconsin Avenue, where the street will be blocked off for a dance party. The Evening Concerts in Shattuck Park, presented by Richard and Amy Jo Aylward, are set for Wednesday evenings from June 22 through Aug. 10 from 6 to 8 p.m.

The lineup includes:

- June 22: Luma Knotty
- June 29: Rare Element
- July 6: Moejoe
- July 13: Carbon Road
- July 20: Daniel LeClaire & The Little Big Band
- July 27: The Love Monkeys
- Aug. 3: The Pocket Kings
- Aug. 10: Murphy's Law

The Out to Lunch concerts at Shattuck Park will be from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Thursdays from June 16 until Aug. 25 That lineup includes:

- June 16: Chalk Down Trio
- June 23: Music with Mr. Crowe (kids concert)
- June 30: Rings
- July 7: Jim 'n' Nancy
- July 14: Walt Hamburger
- July 21: Stewart Ellyson
- July 28: Sly Joe & The Smooth Operators
- Aug. 4: Brad Emanuel
- Aug. 11: Randy Peterson (kids concert)



- Aug. 18: Elvis John
  - Aug. 25: Barefoot Americans
- Boogie Downtown will wrap up the concert season Aug. 24 with the band Boogie and the Yo-yo'z from 6 to 9 p.m. in the 200 block of West Wisconsin Avenue.

The concerts are for adults, children and families, with local food trucks and vendors each week. Lawn chairs and blankets are encouraged. City ordinance prohibits liquor in community parks.

For more information, visit [neenah.org](http://neenah.org) or call 920-722-1920.

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# Chemistry course helps students become nurses

By Amanda Rice  
UW OSHKOSH TODAY

For some students, certain classes can stand as a barrier to fulfilling their dreams. Chemistry is a subject that commonly causes students to hesitate when it comes to pursuing a degree in nursing. This is often due to a multitude of reasons – including course difficulty, level of interest and concerns about not doing well.

To help them bridge that gap between wanting to become a nurse and actually becoming one, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Cooperative Academic Partnership Program (CAPP) offers a Chemistry 101 course at Neenah High School.

Chemistry 101 is the first semester of the one-year chemistry 101/102 course sequence, which is specifically designed to meet the needs of nursing students. All nursing majors are required to take both courses before graduating.

Shelley Dorner, UWO adjunct chemistry professor, said the course she teaches at Neenah is identical to the course offered on the UW Oshkosh campus and allows those who are planning to attend nursing school the opportunity to earn college chemistry credits through CAPP before leaving high school.

“Taking the course at Neenah High School involves the same things as taking the course on campus. The students com-

plete labs, take University quizzes and University exams,” Dorner said. “Those who have chosen to take the class for CAPP credit earn 0.5 high school credits and four UWO credits at the end of the semester.”

For some students, this course can mean the difference between deciding to major in nursing or choosing a different career path.

“A good number of my students struggled through their high school chemistry class, so having this off the list of things they need to do helps remove something that may have been a barrier to becoming a nurse. Often, their chances of success in college chemistry would likely have been slim without an opportunity to gain more practice in high school,” she said. “Failing college chemistry results in an inability to continue toward nursing school.”

Kiersten Lau, a freshman pre-nursing major from Neenah, completed the Chemistry 101 CAPP course last year and is now working toward a nursing degree from UWO. For her, taking the course was a great way to get started on becoming a nurse sooner.

“I knew I would be pursuing a degree in



Flom



Adelson

nursing after high school and Mrs. Dorner recommended that I take Chemistry 101 my senior year to help me work toward my goal,” Lau said.

“It was nice not having to complete Chemistry 101 during my first semester of college. I was able to take other pre-nursing requirements instead, allowing me to apply to the nursing program sooner.”

Natalie Flom, a UWO freshman finance major from Neenah, had planned to major in nursing when she completed the Chemistry 101 course in high school.

“I originally wanted to go to Oshkosh for nursing school. I knew that by taking Chemistry 101 in high school, I could get ahead in classes and it would be cheaper and I could get more one-on-one time with the teacher than if I took it in college,” Flom said.

Although she decided not to major in nursing, taking the course has still proven to be useful within her current program.

“For my major I need two lab sciences. So, by taking the class, I only needed one more chemistry course when I got to college. I’m happy I chose to take it,” she said.

Sarah Adelson, program assistant for CAPP, said there is a multitude of benefits for students taking CAPP courses before starting college.

“Students can experience the rigor of college, while still in a familiar environment, for only a third of the cost,” Adelson said. “Also, by taking care of some college classes like Chemistry 101 while they are still in

high school, they can get into higher-level and major-specific classes sooner once they get to campus. This can either lessen their time and cost toward a degree, or allow them the flexibility to add other opportunities such as study abroad.”

Research has shown that students enrolled in college courses in high school are more successful at transitioning to college and typically perform better than their peers. They also have an advantage over others in the application process.

Since 1975, UWO’s CAPP initiative and collaboration with participating high schools has provided academically capable students an opportunity to earn college credit while still in high school. CAPP courses are primarily taught during the regular school day by certified high school teachers who hold adjunct lecturer status with UW Oshkosh. Students receive both high school and college credit for taking the courses.

Through its partnership with CAPP, Neenah High School has been offering Chemistry 101 every fall semester since 2017. In that time, nearly 40 students have completed the course for CAPP credit. A good number of those students have moved on to nursing school – some choosing to attend UWO.

Students not planning on going into nursing are able to enroll in Chemistry 101 without receiving CAPP credit. Many do this to prepare for additional chemistry classes in college and to brush up on their skills before leaving high school. Those interested in going into other areas of medicine also benefit from the class by learning how chemistry is applied within the medical field.

## Law enforcement, credit union team up against phone fraud

A team of residents, law enforcement officers and a credit union have formed a Fraud Squad to work against a variety of fraud and scams that cost consumers nationwide more than \$6 billion last year.

Local law enforcement is reporting exponential growth in losses despite efforts to educate and inform consumers of how to keep their money safe. In partnership with the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office, Appleton Police Department, Village of Fox Crossing Police Department and creative partners, Verve, a Credit Union created the Fraud Squad.

“The sophistication of the scams and fraud we see today makes each and every one of us targets,” said police Lt. Meghan Cash of Appleton. “From young adults affected by fake job scams to senior citizens convinced they are helping a family

member in need, our entire community is being impacted. It was clear a strong partnership was needed to be more effective in protecting community members from losses.”

The Fraud Squad provides education and training on common fraud and scams to retailers and consumers, including ways to stay safe and recognize fraud and scams. To learn more, visit [fraudsquad.com](http://fraudsquad.com).

“We’re honored to team up with local law enforcement and allow our team members to share their financial expertise in an engaging way,” said Kevin J. Ralofsky, president and chief executive of Verve. “We believe this is only the beginning of a great partnership with a goal of creating a savvier community through education and open discussion to ultimately stamp out fraud.”

May 11 that they are investigating three separate fraud complaints involving grandparent scams near Marshfield with a total of \$83,400 in losses. The suspect showed up in person and collected cash in all three incidents, police said. One suspected scammer was arrested May 5 when he arrived at a victim’s house to collect payment.

Neenah police said that they will never send anyone to a resident’s house to collect bail money.

“If anyone calls you for bail/bond money, please go to your nearest police department or sheriff’s office to post bond,” they wrote.

On May 12, the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office announced a partnership with Appleton Police Department, Fox Crossing Police Department and Verve, a Credit Union, to create the “Fraud Squad.” The purpose is to curb the effects of fraud and scams on local communities and to “provide resources about current scams and ways to safeguard your finances,” according to the sheriff’s office.

Anyone who has fallen victim to a scam should report it to their local law enforcement agency.

## Phone scams

FROM PAGE 1

not his niece and was likely a scammer, but he kept talking to her. He said the caller told him that she needed \$20,000 bond money.

“Finally she put me on with her lawyer,” he said. “He wanted to make sure I understood what was needed for her to get out and that they could only take cash, not checks or anything.”

The resident said the scammers instructed him to take a cab to the bank and withdraw \$20,000 cash, and then to return home and call a phone number they gave him. When the resident didn’t call the scammers back, he received another call from the man pretending to be a lawyer.

“He was wondering if I had any problem getting the money and if I had it,” he said. “He told me, ‘I’ll let you talk to Bonnie again’ and then they hung up.”

The resident received the calls on a landline. His caller ID showed the two calls he received came from a 437 and a 647 area code, both originating in Ontario, Canada.

In Marathon County, officials announced



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# Zephyrs' hot bats quieted by Kewaunee hurler

By Dustin Riese  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

KEWAUNEE – After scoring 25 runs in the previous two games, the St. Mary Catholic softball team ran into a buzzsaw in Kewaunee pitcher Jenna Rohr on Tuesday.

Rohr struck out 10 in five innings and held the Zephyrs without a hit as they fell to the Storm, 11-1, in a nonconference

contest.

“We were no-hit by a great pitcher today,” head coach Brian Gillickson said. “Rohr was on her game right from the start, and we were not able to generate enough chances offensively. We also made plenty of defensive mistakes, which you can’t do against a team like Kewaunee.”

The Storm broke the game open with

six runs in the second inning and then tacked on five more in the fourth to secure the victory.

St. Mary Catholic did get on the board in the top of the fifth when Emily Vogel reached on an error, took second on a passed ball and then scored on another Kewaunee error.

Neveah Saringer allowed eight hits and walked one in four innings, but only six of

the 11 runs were earned. She also struck out three in the game.

“Today was not our best performance, but we gave it our best effort out there,” he said. “Sometimes it is a classic case of running into a pitcher who is on a roll. That is what happened to us tonight as Rohr made us look silly. Add in some sloppy play by us in the field and it was just not our night.”

## Prep sports roundup

### TRACK AND FIELD

#### Olkowski, boys relay post wins at FVA meet

Freshman Mazie Olkowski was the lone individual winner for Neenah, while the boys' 1,600-meter relay team also posted a first-place finish at the Fox Valley Association track and field meet in Hortonville on Monday.

The boys finished fourth overall with 75 points, just two behind Kaukauna and 10.5 behind Oshkosh North. Kimberly easily won the boys title with 165.5 points.

The Rockets' win came from the foursome of Charles Fredrickson, Gage Ramos, Ethan Snider and Jack Monson, with Neenah also placing second in the 800-meter relay and fifth in the 3,200-meter relay.

Jack Dorner posted a pair of individual top-five finishes, placing fourth in both the 1,600 and 3,200 meters. Monson added a second place in the 40 meters, Isiah Lassiter was third in the 800 meters and Snider was fifth in the 200 meters.

Michael Price and Trevor McGinnis

were each fourth in the discus and high jump, respectively.

On the girls side, Olkowski won the 3,200 meters by a whopping 17 seconds to lead the Rockets.

Laura Tears added a third place in the 1,600 meters, while Lydia Delene was fifth in the discus.

The Neenah girls finished ninth in the meet, which was won by Kimberly.

#### Zephyrs' Gennaro earns win at Big East meet

Margherita Gennaro finished first in the girls pole vault as the St. Mary Catholic girls finished third at the Big East Conference meet Monday.

The Zephyrs finished with 96 points behind only Manitowoc Lutheran (117.5) and Oostburg (104). The boys title was won by Oostburg with 157 points, with St. Mary Catholic placing ninth among the 13 teams with 43 points.

Gennaro's win in the pole vault came by clearing 8 feet, 3 inches and highlighted a strong showing in the event by both the girls and boys teams. Norah Lee joined

Gennaro on the medal stand by placing fifth, while the boys had three athletes finish in the top five in Ashton Post (second), Alexander Groppel (fourth) and Harry Higgins (fifth).

Jaydin Vosters picked up a pair of top fives for the Zephyr girls, placing second in the 100-meter hurdles and fifth in the 300-meter hurdles. Other top-five places for the girls were Anna Porter, second in the 400 meters; Anna Vanden Acker, second in the triple jump; Nolie Anderson, third in the discus; Kate Nackers, fourth in the high jump; Maria Marti, fifth in the 800 meters; an Gabby Ruback, fifth in the triple jump.

St. Mary Catholic boys who turned in a top-five finish were: Cam Connolly, second in the shot put; Charlie Nackers, fifth in the high jump; and the 3,200-meter relay team, which took fifth.

### BOYS TENNIS

#### Neenah too much for Oshkosh North

The Neenah boys tennis team picked up a Fox Valley Association dual win last Thursday, beating Oshkosh North 6-1.

Picking up wins for the Rockets included all four singles players in Solomon Dunsirn, David Murphy, Carl Hein and Ben Kotchen.

The No. 1 and 2 doubles teams also picked up wins as Nolan Kubiak and Khaled Saleh won 6-0, 6-0 as did Satchel Moss and Leyton Daharsh.

Neenah also won a pair of matches at home on Saturday, cruising past Green Bay Notre Dame, 7-0, while edged Eden Prairie (Minn.), 4-3.

Dunsirn posted a pair of wins at No. 1 singles, while Murphy was also 2-0 at No. 2 singles, including a win in a super tiebreaker against Eden Prairie.

Kubiak and Saleh also went 2-0 at No. 1 doubles for Neenah.

The Rockets wrapped up a busy stretch of the schedule with a 7-0 thumping of Kaukauna.

Neenah dropped a total of 10 games in the seven matches with Dunsirn at No. 1 singles, Hein at No. 2 singles and the No. 1 doubles team of Kubiak and Saleh each winning by 6-0, 6-0 margins.

### BOYS GOLF

#### Callahan medalist in FVA dual meet at Ridgeway

The Neenah boys golf team picked up a Fox Valley Association win last Thursday, shooting a team score of 161 over Oshkosh North – who shot a 183 in a match played at Ridgeway Golf Course.

John Callahan of Neenah led all golfers with a 37, while Payton Kramer added a 40 for the Rockets and Eli Oitzinger shot a 41. Julian Gallmeier rounded out the scoring with a 43.

Neenah came up short against Appleton North on Monday, falling to the Lightning 157-170 at Reid Golf Course.

Callahan paced the Rockets with a 40,

with Kramer scoring a 42 followed by Oitzinger with a 43 and Gallmeier with a 45.

### BASEBALL

#### Zephyrs' offense comes up empty

The St. Mary Catholic baseball team dropped a pair of games last week, falling 4-0 against Random Lake and 12-1 to Ozaukee on Friday.

The Zephyrs then bounced back Monday by erupting for a 15-0 win over Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah.

No additional stats were available from any of the games.

#### Rockets shut out at home to Kimberly

The Neenah baseball team dropped a Fox Valley Association game against Kimberly last week, falling 2-0 at home.

It was a scoreless game going into the seventh inning, when a home run by Carson Peeters put the Papermakers on the board.

Gradin Taschner had two hits for the Rockets, including a double. Jaeden Carstens pitched well despite that last inning, giving up just two runs on seven hits with five strikeouts and no walks.

The Rockets bounced back from a pair of losses to edge Oshkosh North, 2-1, on Tuesday.

Max Medrano and Taschner each drove in runs in the second inning to key the win, while a trio of Neenah hurlers held the Spartans to just two hits and an unearned run. Jaeden Carstens got the win, pitching five scoreless innings and striking out eight.

Neenah had five players finish with one hit apiece in the game.

### SOFTBALL

#### SMC beats Reedsville, loses to Peshtigo

The St. Mary Catholic softball team lost a 5-2 game to Peshtigo last Thursday night, but responded with a 16-6 win over Reedsville at home on Friday.

The Zephyrs only had two hits considering they scored 16 runs – but Reedsville gave up 21 total walks as St. Mary Catholic was patient at the plate.

Teagan Miller walked four times and Emily Vogel and Allie Strande each walked three times. Adela Thiel, Rhianon Reichenbacher and Addison Moder each had two RBIs in the win.

Neveah Saringer won in circle, giving up six runs – three earned – in five innings. She struck out one batter.

The Zephyrs then capped the week of action with a 9-3 win over Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah, building a 9-1 lead after the fourth inning before coasting to the win.

Jaylyn Akey and Allie Strande each finished with two hits, while Saringer drove in a pair of runs.



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# Rough inning thwarts Rockets in loss to Kimberly

By Dustin Riese  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

KIMBERLY – Kimberly’s seven-run third inning was too much for Neenah to overcome Monday night as the Rockets fell to the Fox Valley Association-leading Papermakers, 12-2.

Neenah starter Cal Radies allowed just one run in the first two innings but the Papermakers were able to break the game open with their offensive explosion in the third and cruised from there.

“I thought we lacked both effort wise today as well as our competitive nature,” head coach Jack Taschner said. “We didn’t bring the fire necessary to compete with a team of Kimberly’s caliber and it cost us in the end.”

The Rockets had the chance to get on the board first as Gradin Taschner and Eli Schmidt drew two-out walks in the first inning but were left stranded. Then, after Kimberly scored in the bottom the second, Neenah seized the lead in the top of the third.

Consecutive singles by Evan Paque, Brady Corso and Max Medrano plated a run to tie the score before Ethan Van Dyke’s RBI-single gave the Rockets a 2-1 lead.

Unfortunately for the Rockets, it wouldn’t last.

The Papermakers took advantage of some favorable counts to put together the big inning as Kimberly roughed up a pair of Neenah pitchers in the frame.

“We failed to get ahead and stay ahead

on the mound,” Taschner said. “From there a team like Kimberly is going to put pressure on you. They got on and did just that.”

The Rockets loaded the bases in the fourth on singles from Andrew Carlson, Paque and Corso but failed to push another run across, while Neenah put two runners on base in the fifth but were unable to chip away at the deficit.

“I saw a lack of tenacity in the early innings which came back to haunt us,” Taschner said. “We started to attack on offense as the game went on but would fail to finish. We are not a team who can sit back and wait for the big moment, we need to be on the gas from start to finish which we haven’t done.”

Corso, Paque and Van Dyke led the way offensively as all three of them came away with two hits. Van Dyke and Medrano were credited with the RBIs in the loss.

The loss drops the Rockets to 6-10 on the season and 3-9 in FVA play. They will be back on the field Saturday hosting Menasha, before finishing off the season with Oshkosh West, Kaukauna and Appleton West next week.

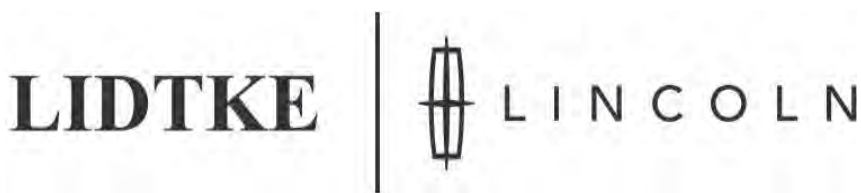
“I would like to see us turn a corner competitively,” Taschner said. “We need to be a hustle team. Right now, we are a passive team that is waiting for things to come to us. We no longer can do that. We have to be aggressive and keep that aggressiveness from the first inning through the seventh.”



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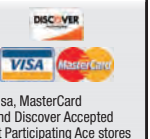
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# Thomas is high achiever in athletics and academics

By Tim Froberg  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Carter Thomas has made a name for himself on the court and diamond at Neenah High School.

Surprisingly, his preferred sport as a child took place on the mat.

Before he began drilling 3-pointers from beyond the arc and flinging mid-80s fastballs, Thomas was rocking a singlet and shooting for takedowns.

He was a youth wrestler.

"My dad (Bill Thomas) and his whole side of the family were wrestlers, so I grew up wrestling," Thomas said. "I was really passionate about it and pretty good at it. I did it until the fifth grade. A 6-5 wrestler, that's not ideal, so I'd say it worked out pretty good."

Neenah basketball coach Lee Rabas and Rockets baseball coach Jack Taschner will agree. Thomas was one of Wisconsin's elite basketball players the past few years and he's been a top-notch pitcher for the Neenah baseball team. Thomas is an all-star in the classroom, too, carrying a 3.75 grade point average.

Whether he's draining a three-pointer, mowing down hitters or acing an exam,

Thomas is driven by a fierce competitive nature.

"Carter is a great athlete and he's as competitive a kid that I've ever coached," Taschner said. "He's truly one of the most consistent athletes Neenah has had in the last seven years that I've been around here. He's a true joy to coach."

Thomas's best sport is basketball. A 6-5 small forward, Thomas was a prominent part of Neenah's Division 1 state championship basketball team. He averaged 14.8 points, 3.8 rebounds and 2.8 assists to land all-Fox Valley Association first-team honors for the second straight year. Thomas was a third-year varsity player for the Rockets, averaging 13.2 points, 4 rebounds and 1.6 assists as a junior.

So what was it like being a state champion?

"It was crazy – kind of surreal," Thomas said. "Just being able to experience it with guys that I grew up with – guys I've played with since hoops club – was unreal. There were so many great Neenah teams that got to state but didn't finish the job. It was crazy to finally get it done."

What made the state title even sweeter for players like Thomas and Chevalier Emery Jr. was that both were part of Neenah's 2019-2020 team that saw its championship hopes dashed due to the global pandemic. Thomas and Emery learned shortly after a 49-47 sectional



Submitted photo

Carter Thomas averaged almost 15 points a game in the Rockets' run to the state title.

semifinal win over Chippewa Falls that the remainder of the postseason had suddenly been wiped out.

"You just think about what could have been," Thomas said. "We were on that bus ride home thinking that we're only one game away from state. To have that taken away was devastating."

## Senior Spotlight

Thomas showed last spring that basketball isn't the only sport he excels at. A righthander who throws a four-seam fastball along with a curve and changeup, Thomas posted a 3-0 mark on the mound with a stellar 0.29 earned run average in 24 innings pitched. He received all-FVA honorable mention.

Four starts into the 2022 season, Thomas had compiled a 1-2 mark with 3.00 ERA and 14 Ks in 23 1/3 innings.

"I've been playing baseball since T-ball," he said. "To me, it's kind of a nice little break from basketball. As a pitcher, I just try to hit my spots and pitch to contact. I let the defense do some work behind me."

It doesn't hurt to have a former Major League Baseball pitcher like Taschner providing advice.

"It's amazing to have him as our coach," Thomas said. "He gives great advice. The level of coaching he gives is awesome."

Thomas will take his athletic and academic skills to the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh where he will play basketball and major in business finance.

"I really like what they do with their program - just the path they're going in with coach (Matt) Lewis," said Thomas. "I want to be part of it."

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# Recycling survey finds more electronics turnover

A recent state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) survey finds there were more households recycling or reusing unwanted electronics last year instead of storing them.

The survey highlights how many electronics are in Wisconsin households, trends in consumer awareness, electronics recycling behavior and barriers that prevent residents from recycling electronics.

Although recycling or reusing unwanted electronics increased since 2018 – the last time the survey was conducted – many residents still face barriers to recycling electronics.

Of the estimated 25.2 million devices in Wisconsin households, 7.6 million devices were not in use – about 17% of TVs, 26% of computers and 44% of cellphones.

This was an 18% decrease from the estimated 9.3 million unused devices in the DNR's 2018 survey.

Among households that had stopped using a device during the previous year, more chose to recycle or reuse, rather than store, the devices compared with 2018.

"We were really pleased to see that fewer households were storing unwanted electronics," said Sarah Murray, DNR E-Cycle coordinator. "But a lot of us still have old cellphones, computers and TVs in drawers, closets and basements. Now is a good time to look for options, since more collection events are hosted in the spring and summer. And you can throw in all those tangled cords, cables and accessories – they're also recyclable."

The DNR has conducted six statewide

household recycling surveys since 2010, when Wisconsin's electronics recycling law took effect. The law included a disposal ban for certain types of electronics and established E-Cycle Wisconsin, a manufacturer-funded program administered by the DNR that helps support a statewide network of electronics collectors and recyclers.

As of 2021, households and schools have recycled more than 350 million pounds of electronics through E-Cycle Wisconsin.

Among households that had computers or cellphones they no longer wanted during the previous 12 months, the most common action was to put them in storage. About half had stored unwanted cellphones and 56% had stored unwanted computers.

For TVs, the most common action was to recycle or reuse them (60% of respondents),

compared with 37% who stored unwanted TVs. Only a small percentage of respondents reported putting a cellphone (2%), computer (1%) or TV (3%) in the trash.

Among those who said they were unable to recycle electronics, the most common reason was not knowing where or how to do so.

Many also listed cost as a key barrier to recycling electronics. While many collection sites still take some items for free, most charge a fee to recycle some items, including TVs and monitors.

"Responsible electronics recycling has a cost," Murray said. "Recyclers must properly manage the hazardous materials and lithium-ion batteries found in many electronics and protect data security. Manufacturer funding covers some of that cost, but consumer fees help make up the difference as well as cover collection and transportation costs."

## Calendar of events

**May 21**  
Greene's Pour House 10th anniversary party, 2 p.m., Church Street  
Native Plant Sale, 9 a.m., Wild Ones Fox Valley Area, 2285 Butte des Morts Beach Road  
JDRF One Walk, 10 a.m., Riverside Park  
Brigade at Beamons tournament events, 10 a.m., Willie Beamons, 2590 County II

**May 22**  
Youth-Go Bike Auction, 11 a.m., Neenah Police Department

**Through May 22**  
Story Walk at Southview Park. Read a children's story along a walking path.

**May 25**  
Neenah High School Graduation Parade, 10 a.m., around high school  
Downtown Neenah blood drive, 8 a.m., DoubleTree Hotel, 123 E. Wisconsin Ave.

**May 27**  
National Poppy Day, American Legion poppies sold throughout city

**May 30**  
Neenah-Menasha Memorial Day procession and events

## Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 8

Saringer also picked up the win in the circle, striking out seven and allowing just one earned run.

### Rockets win big in Fond du Lac

The Neenah softball team responded with a 10-1 win over Fond du Lac on Friday after being shut out by Oshkosh North 4-0 on Thursday.

The Rockets pounded out 12 hits in the win, scoring nine runs in the final two innings to help secure the win.

McKenna Herm, Savanna Knuth, Bella Coulman and Madie Jagoditsch each finished with two hits to fuel the offense, while Herm and Jagoditsch each drove in three runs.

Knuth struck out four in three innings to get the win, while Autumn Schabo allowed one run and struck out four.

Neenah lost to Kaukauna, 5-1, on Tuesday despite jumping out to a 1-0 lead in the first inning against the Ghosts.

Jagoditsch finished 2-for-3 and scored Neenah's only run. Morgan Harwood struck out six in seven innings but took the loss.

## GIRLS SOCCER

### Rockets take wins over Hortonville, Fond du Lac

The Neenah girls soccer team picked up a big 9-0 shutout win over Hortonville last Thursday in an FVA contest.

The Rockets followed it up with a 2-0 win over Fond du Lac on Tuesday.

No stats were available from either match.

### Zephyrs play to tie against Lourdes/VC

The St. Mary Catholic girls soccer team played Lourdes/Valley Christian to a 1-1 tie on Saturday.

SMC jumped to an early 1-0 lead thanks to a Melisa Piotrowski goal, but Lourdes tied it up in the 72nd minute.

The Knights outshot the Zephyrs 5-3.

The Zephyrs also earned a 2-2 draw against St. Mary's Springs on Tuesday.

Audrey Wanless scored a pair of goals about five minutes apart for the Zephyrs, after the Ledgers had taken a 2-0 lead earlier in the second half. Megan Roloff assisted on both of Wanless' goals.

Greta Norville made seven saves in goal for St. Mary Catholic.

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# World war vet inspires new generation of service

## Island Shores resident gets a surprise visitor

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Don Schmelter is 97 years old but describes the war like it was yesterday.

"I was in three battles," he said. "The main battle that I was in was Iwo Jima and there we laid in the black sand for three days while they were using flamethrowers to get the Japanese out of the tunnels. Out of 15 in my medical team, I was the only one that survived the war there."

Schmelter lives at New Perspective Island Shores assisted living facility in Neenah. For most of his life he lived in Brillion.

In 1942, just three days after he graduated high school, Schmelter enlisted in the Navy as an alternative to being drafted into the Army.

"My dad had to sign up for me because I was too young," he said. "I went into boot camp in Farragut (Naval Station), Idaho, and then went to medical school and from there I went right overseas."

Navy corpsmen are soldiers trained in first aid and minor medical treatment. Schmelter joined the Medical Corps of the U.S. Navy and then served with the Marines.

"The Marines don't have their own medical corps," he said. "They take them from the Navy."

It would be more than three years before he saw his hometown again.

"I went in when I was 17 years old ... and I never got home until I was 21 years old," he said. "I never got leave or anything."

After World War II ended in 1945, Schmelter returned to Brillion and got married.

"Two years after I got married, I was called back into the service in the Navy and I was sent over to Korea and I was over there for almost two years. After that I got a discharge," he said.



U.S. Navy corpsman Rene Zehr makes a surprise visit to World War II veteran Don Schmelter, who has inspired her during her military service.

Schmelter spent seven years total in the Navy. After serving in the Korean War, Schmelter became a mailman, retiring after 38 years. He has a son and a daughter, three grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren. His wife passed away in 2006.

Schmelter is part of a dying demographic; a living piece of history fading away. Of the 16 million Americans who served in World War II, as of September 2021 there were just over 240,000 still alive, according to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. An average of 234 of these veterans die each day. About 4,000 live in Wisconsin, all in their 90s or older.

Schmelter is a staff favorite at Island

Shores. He's quick to smile and hasn't lost his sense of humor with age. His eyes are kind and they brighten up when he laughs.

He had a special visitor last Friday when U.S. Navy corpsman Rene Zehr, 31, of Neenah, made a surprise visit to share how a chance meeting influenced her life.

In 2019, Zehr was newly enlisted and had not yet been shipped out to boot camp. Her recruiters brought several enlistees to Island Shores to speak with some of the veterans. Zehr had the chance to talk with Schmelter about his time in the service.

"He's one of the only WWII vets that I've been able to sit down and talk to about his story," she said. "It just pushed

me more to want to do what I did and I've just always remembered him."

Zehr said her conversation with Schmelter reaffirmed her decision to join the Navy. She still keeps a picture of the pair from their first meeting.

"He's a corpsman; I'm also a corpsman in the Navy so his story just meant a lot to me," she said.

Shortly after Zehr enlisted, the COVID-19 pandemic began, and with only 14 hours' notice she was deployed to New York.

"I was working with COVID patients there so we built a field hospital in 48 hours," she said. "We had about 4,000 beds that we were able to put patients in."

Zehr said that experience was sad because people had to be separated from their families for treatment, but also rewarding because she was able to help so many people, particularly those homeless or low income.

"It was free health care for them so we gave them the opportunity to get COVID treatments and medications without any money, so it was actually pretty cool that we were able to do that," she said.

Zehr returned to Neenah with a special visit in mind.

"I just wanted to show him that I made it and he was a big part of the reason why I'm here," she said.

As part of her Navy duties, Zehr participates in military funeral ceremonies. Many of those funerals are for WWII veterans. She worries that as more veterans from that epic war die, America is going to lose a piece of history.

"That's why he's so important, because he's still a part of the history of the Navy and the corpsmen and where we started," she said.

Schmelter took the flattery in stride while speaking to a crowd of residents and visitors who gathered to celebrate his reunion with Zehr.

"I'm still happy to be around here when I'm 97 years old."

## Mayor Lang

FROM PAGE 1

about it, but Lang remembered a Bible on her shelf – her great-grandmother's.

"Great Grandma was born in Neenah in 1851," Lang recounts. "I'd been sitting on Council for eight years. My great-grandfather, her husband, was the fourth mayor of Neenah in 1877. I'd sometimes look over at his picture and wonder, 'I wonder what it was like for him to be the mayor?'"

"Being sworn in on his wife's Bible was really cool," she said.

The book was inscribed in 1878 by her great-grandmother's pastor, the Rev. J.E. Chapin, of the Presbyterian Church and founder of The Brigade.

Lang wants to run the city as a business while she acknowledges that it is different in that a city is not a private enterprise. But she believes that encompassing best practices of organizational behavior and management can optimize what city government can do for its residents.

There are already projects in motion such as the Capital Improvement Plan budget for the city, which was handed over immediately. Additionally, the council had previously authorized Human Resources to conduct a salary investigation of Neenah's market standing compared with other communities. This was executed through Carlson Dettmen Consulting with first interviews conducted April 19

and 20.

The mayor's first two days were spent in the conference room with department heads, discussing their structure and function.

"That part was great for me, having worked with them for eight years," Lang said. "I know them well and they know me. I can't imagine coming in without those established relationships in place. It's made it a lot easier."

Other projects on the table include Arrowhead Park development and the Police Department expansion. These pieces will be approached in a systematic and financially measured way, according to Lang. Economic factors such as supply-chain and inflationary cost increases mean that tax dollars must be managed evenly. While these are unique pressures, Lang believes the city can accomplish its goals by employing creativity, communication and facing difficult decisions head on.

Lang is still grappling with the idea of being a new presence in her home community as mayor.

"I'm still figuring out what that means and what it will look like. Representing your district as an alderperson is very different from being mayor and representing the entire city," Lang said. "I plan to be visible. I want to participate in our city's activities and events. I'm so thankful for the opportunity to serve as mayor of the city."

"My roots here are so deep. I want to keep it strong and vibrant and moving forward in every positive way we can. I think

I will grow into it and will fully embrace the opportunity. I certainly embrace the responsibility."

Lang acknowledges that Neenah is somewhat behind in the use of social media outreach. People want to be heard and to know their issues and concerns matter. She wants them to know that they're a vital part of the community.

"Every person in this community matters," Lang said. "We've all made a decision to live here. Every person here makes up what is the city of Neenah."

Next year, Neenah will celebrate its sesquicentennial – 150 years since its incorporation as a city.

"But our history is so much older than that," added the former president of the Neenah Historical Society before recently relinquishing that title. "It didn't start in 1873. We were incorporated as a village in 1856 but people were beginning to settle the area in the 1840s."

"People get confused when they see the date of a city. We'll be commemorating something worth celebrating next year but there's history that predates the city's incorporation. Kimberly Clark, the Neenah Foundry and Riverside Park were all founded in 1872."

She also points to the history that preceded white settlers here.

"And we are surrounded by our Native American history," Lang said. "We will be having our powwow again this year after missing two years due to COVID."

Lang collaborated with the late Menom-

inee elder and advocate Alan Caldwell and his wife, Cathy, to organize the city's first powwow in 2016. Lang and Cathy have continued the mission and it's set for Sept. 17 this year.

Cathy Caldwell's brother is Native American musician and three-time Grammy Award winner Bill Miller, who was born in Neenah.

"He played the flute on Disney's 'Colors of the Wind.' He's amazing," Lang said. "He has agreed to do another concert for us this summer (July 9). It's been a wonderful experience to connect and learn about Native American history and culture and to help the community connect with it as well."

At Lang's first full department head meeting, she laid out her expectations and vision for the community.

"One thing I stressed to them is that I want our community to be exceptional, not just acceptable," she said. "I want us to be viewed as an exceptional community. So how do we communicate that? How do we represent that? The public is carefully monitoring what we are doing and we need to project both positively and professionally to our citizens."

Lang plans to frame this into a mission statement for the city.

"I have this viewpoint on history. It's the ongoing story that we are writing. We are all writing the history of Neenah right now. Let's make sure we're writing a history of which we can be proud."