

# Neenah News

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## INSIDE



**Mow 'em down**  
Family taking part  
in 50 Yard Challenge  
Page 3

**Murder sentence**  
Kraus declared  
competent by judge  
Page 5

**Sports**  
Whitlinger named D2  
Coach of the Year  
Page 10



Photo by David Hall

## Ready to roll

Children in Independence Day regalia line up on Wisconsin Avenue in Neenah on Sunday night to take part in the annual Parade of Lights.

## Shopko site shows resurgence

### Noodles & Company to be joined by Planet Fitness

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A Noodles & Company restaurant will soon be constructed near the site of the former Shopko at 699 S. Green Bay Road, with signs of at least one new tenant in the former retail store location.

Spring Creek Center II is building a Noodles & Company on a new lot south of the main entrance of the former retail store's property. The franchise serves noodle dishes, soups and salads, and has two locations in Appleton and one in Oshkosh.

The site will be just over a half-acre with a 2,250-square-foot building, including a drive-thru window and lane. The site plan also proposes realigning the shared access drive from the main entrance to McDonalds.

Spring Creek Center II is owned by developers Phil and Larry Langohr, who purchased the property for \$1.6 million last year. The Langohrs own the adjacent Neenah Festival Foods building and completed development on the Walmart and Kohl's on Neenah's west side.

Wisconsin-based Shopko filed Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2019 and closed all of its stores, leaving vacant buildings across the state. Spring Creek II proposed transforming the Neenah building from a single retail store to a multi-tenant configuration for up to seven tenants.

Although it has not been confirmed, a sign on the vacant building indicates a Planet Fitness will be the next new business announced for the development

SEE **Shopko building** ON PAGE 8

## Retired dentists continue volunteer commitment

### Pair still seeing patients at clinic they helped found

By Kathy Nufer  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Trenten Francis, 18, had major milestones to smile about when he graduated from Neenah High School in May. He had survived senior year, and just completed the Tri-County Dental Clinic's Wetherbee Orthodontic Program that provided him with much-needed braces.

Now that those braces are off, every look in the mirror puts a grin on Trenten's face.

"I'm pretty happy about it," he said. "I never used to show my teeth when I smiled. Now I don't mind at all. I have more confidence."

Trenten's mother Elizabeth is happy,

too.

"I've always been big on getting my kids' teeth cleaned, but braces — I'm a single mom and I could never have afforded it," she said. "When I learned that both of my children got a scholarship to get braces I felt so grateful and blessed. For Trenten it was more than cosmetic. He really needed them."

Trenten, a patient at Tri-County Dental since 2017, is one of up to 13,000 patients served annually by the clinic, 63 percent of them children.

In addition to braces, he received more than \$3,300 in free dental care, including regular cleanings, X-rays, fluoride treatments, exams, oral hygiene instruction, sealants and two extractions.

Based in Appleton, the clinic has been making a significant difference for low-income residents of Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties since 2003.

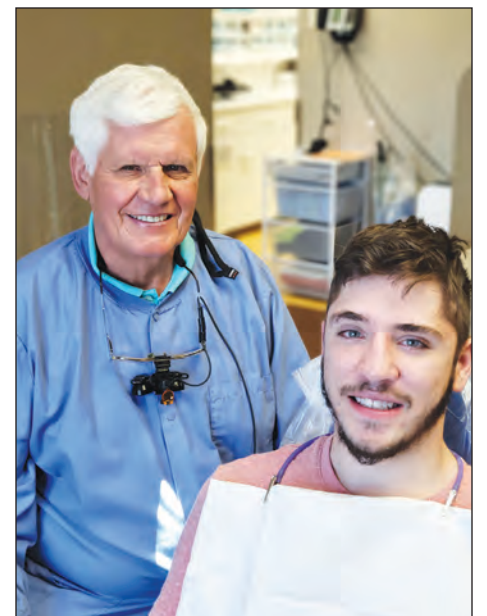
The clinic was created by a group of volunteers after the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region's 2002 Leading Indicators for Excellence (LIFE) study identified as many as 25,000 uninsured and underinsured in the three counties who were struggling to make ends meet, and unable to afford dental care.

Among the key players instrumental in founding the clinic were Dr. Tim Brown and Dr. Phil Florek, longtime Neenah dentists who are newly retired from their professional practices but continue to help guide its growth and volunteer at TCD.

"We exist because of their vision, passion and determination," said Sandy Drexler, clinic CEO and executive director.

Twenty years ago, area dentists already knew access to affordable dental care was

SEE **Dental clinic** ON PAGE 9



Tri-County Dental Clinic photo

Dr. Phil Florek works with patient Trenten Francis.

# Neenah News

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## Corrections

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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## Funeral home owner updates as he holds to tradition

### Kessler-Fahrenkrug keeps with standard of service

Neenah News

A funeral home continuously operating in Neenah for more than 100 years has an updated name: Kessler-Fahrenkrug Funeral Home.

Formerly known as Kessler Funeral Home, the business at 304 S. Commercial St. was purchased by longtime resident Patrick Fahrenkrug in 2017. After five years operating under his ownership, Fahrenkrug said it was time to add his name.



Fahrenkrug

"It took me a long time to decide to change the name because I wanted to make sure that I was doing the right thing," he said. "It's a major decision to update or change a brand; we've been known as Kessler

Funeral Home for over 70 years."

The location of the Kessler-Fahrenkrug Funeral Home has a rich history. Office administrator Becky Heidke Kwiatkowski is also associate executive director and treasurer of the Neenah Historical Society. She said the funeral home was originally a family home built in the 1870s by flour miller Carl Stridde.

Stridde died in 1877. His wife, Charlotte, and two children lived in the house until Charlotte's death in 1889. Daughter Hattie lived in the house her entire life. She married but had no children, and rented out part of the space as apartments.

Hattie passed away in 1930 and her funeral was conducted at the house by Charles F.A. Sorensen of Sorensen and Son Furniture and Undertaking Co. The

furniture and undertaking company was originally at 132 W. Wisconsin Ave. and had been operating from that location since the mid-1880s. In 1934, Sorensen purchased the home from Hattie's husband, William Burke, and relocated his business there, naming it Sorensen and Son Funeral Home.

In 1940, Sorensen's employee Arthur Kessler and wife Margaret purchased the business and later renamed it Kessler Funeral Home. Margaret was one of the first women in the state to be licensed as a funeral director. The husband-and-wife pair ran the home until the 1970s, when their son George took over. George owned and operated it for 51 years, retiring in 2017.

Fahrenkrug has worked in the funeral business for 34 years, with the majority of his career spent at Laemmrich Funeral Home in Menasha. He managed the funeral home after the Laemmrich family sold the business.

"Being the manager at Laemmrich gave me valuable experience. I learned a lot about how to run a business, and it really prepared me for what was to come," Fahrenkrug said. "It took me 30 years to get where I'm supposed to be, back in my hometown."

As a Neenah local, Fahrenkrug said Kessler could feel confident selling the business to someone who would keep the legacy alive.

"I think it was satisfying to George Kessler that he was able to sell to somebody that people were going to know. There was still going to be that familiarity. Many families walk into the funeral home that their family has been going to for generations and they want to know who they are dealing with," he said.

Fahrenkrug said he often finds himself

conducting funerals for families that he knows, such as relatives of former classmates, friends, or friends of his parents.

Fahrenkrug finds himself wearing many hats with the assistance of staff. As funeral director, he not only takes care of grieving families, but also the deceased. The funeral home has a phone number that is answered 24/7, and callers can expect to talk to Fahrenkrug at all hours of the day or night.

"I always try to talk to the family no matter if it's 2 in the morning," he said. "If the family is available to talk to, I talk with them right away. I want to make sure they are taken care of and feel comfortable right from the beginning."

Fahrenkrug said they have remodeled and redecorated. The main level of the building includes a chapel or service room and a reception room for luncheons and gatherings.

Funeral operations have largely remained unchanged since he took over, other than a shift toward informal celebration of life gatherings and cremation services. The staff is updating the website at [kesslerfh.com](http://kesslerfh.com), including a new online funeral pre-planning tool. They have also been researching the history of the building and the individuals who lived there or owned the building.

Fahrenkrug said that by adding his name to the sign outside, he hopes to raise awareness to the families that have used his services.

"There's so many emotions going on with planning a funeral," he said. "I want people to feel relaxed. I want to take care of them and not have them worry about what's going to happen. I want them to feel comfortable and let them know that we are going to plan a service that's going to be meaningful for them."

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Photo from Neenah Historical Society

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# Kindness repaid with lawn service project

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A local family who was once the beneficiary of a community outpouring of support is now giving back to the community by offering free lawn mowing services to those in need.

Amy Jape and her children Jacob, 17, William, 16, Nicholas, 14, Zachary, 12, and Josephine, 4, moved to Neenah from Omro in January. The four boys are participating in the Raising Men & Women Lawn Care Service 50 Yard Challenge.

The 50 Yard Challenge encourages kids ages 7-17 to mow 50 lawns for free for the elderly, disabled, veterans or anyone in need. Families who sign up three or more children for the challenge agree to mow 100 lawns.

As the kids reach different mowing milestones, they're rewarded with a new colored T-shirt. Once they complete the challenge, the nonprofit's founder, Rodney Smith Jr., personally delivers a brand-new lawn mower, weed eater and blower to each of the children.



Photo by Bethanie Gengler

William (left) and Jacob get to work on a lawn recently as part of the Raising Men & Women Lawn Care Service 50 Yard Challenge.

Smith, 33, of Huntsville, Ala., said during his senior year in college in 2015 he was driving down the road when he saw an elderly man struggling to mow his lawn.

"I pulled over and helped him out and that night I just decided I would start mowing lawns for free for the elderly, disabled, single parents and veterans in Huntsville, Alabama," he said. "At first my goal was to mow 40 lawns by the end of winter but I mowed 40 lawns so quick that I moved my goal to 100. A month and a half later I reached my hundredth lawn and that's how the idea of Raising Men and now Raising Women Lawn Care came about."

The nonprofit was originally called Raising Men Lawn Care Service but was renamed Raising Men & Women Lawn Care Service to be more inclusive. Smith founded the nonprofit in 2016. In 2017, he mowed lawns in all 50 states.

Smith has gone on 13 U.S. tours to mow lawns and raise awareness for different causes including breast cancer, childhood cancer, autism and veterans. The custom-painted lawn mowers he mows with on the tours are then auctioned off to benefit related charities.

With the addition of the 50 Yard Challenge, Smith has now recruited an army of more than 4,000 young volunteers in the U.S. and eight other countries, helping those in need and giving back to local communities by mowing lawns.

Jape said several years ago her family was the recipient of an outpouring of support from Omro residents after they experienced a traumatic event. As a single mother of five, she doesn't have much extra income but she said she wanted to

find a way to give back to her community. She signed up for the 50 Yard Challenge last year and her family was on a waitlist until October when a spot opened up.

"It was toward the end of the season so there wasn't a lot to do so we didn't really go gung-ho on it until we moved here this year," she said.

The boys encountered a small hiccup in their lawn mowing service when their mower kept breaking down. Smith had them covered. After delivering lawn mowers in Michigan, he made a quick stop in Neenah in mid-June and dropped off two new mowers for the boys to use.

Once they complete the challenge, they'll pass on the lawn mowers to other children who want to participate in the challenge who are in need.

Smith said he was able to deliver the mowers thanks to a generous donor who purchased 50 lawn mowers to loan out to children who want to participate in the challenge but don't have access to a reliable mower. He's already given away 36 of them.

The nonprofit is funded entirely on public donations which are used to purchase the lawnmowers, weed eaters and blowers that are given out to children.

Jape recently made a Facebook post to offer the lawn mowing service to the community. In the six days since making the post, she said the boys have worked in pairs to mow about 10 lawns, averaging two per day.

During a really hot day in mid-June, Jape said Zachary, who has diabetes, was sweating so much while mowing that his insulin pump came off of his arm and he needed new insulin. William was able to drive Nicholas out to take Zachary's place, so that the kids could finish the lawn mowing service while Zachary got new insulin.

"They've always been really good about pitching in and doing things like that," Jape said. "It's really helping keep them busy and get them tired and really wear them out. It's teaching them responsibility, it's teaching them how to arrive at a place on time, how to schedule their time."

Jacob said that participating in the 50 Yard Challenge has given him the experience of running his own lawn care business. He said residents have been receptive to the service.

"They've been really kind," he said. "Some of them have even been generous enough to leave a tip. It makes me feel good getting to do something out of my comfort zone."

There are a few requirements for using the free service. Participants must be within 15 minutes of central Neenah and the maximum time the kids can spend mowing each lawn is two hours. Participants must also clean up lawn ornaments, pet excrement and toys before they arrive. The children are allowed to accept tips, which cover the cost of gas. They're not allowed to accept food. Residents who want to set up a time can email amykjape@gmail.com.

Smith said it's important to get children out and active in their community.

"It keeps them out of trouble, helping those in need," he said. "They're learning life skills and it's something they will always remember the rest of their lives, just helping people, because one day when they get up in age themselves they're going to need help and hopefully this program is still around in years to come, helping people."



Photo by Bethanie Gengler

Zachary (from left), Jacob and William are three of five siblings that have been offering lawn care services to the community through a special program.

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## Egan, Farrey tabbed

The Winnebago County Board of Supervisors has a new chairman. Veteran board member Thomas Egan of Omro, who had been serving as vice chair for the board, was named the new chairman at Tuesday night's organizational meeting. Egan, who has served on the board since 2008, takes over the position from Shiloh Ramos, who did not seek re-election for his Neenah seat in this past election. Chuck Farrey, who represents District

30 in rural Winnebago County, served on the board since 2002, was ultimately selected as vice chair. Three other supervisors — David Brecht, Bryan Stafford and Mike Norton — were also nominated for the position. The board took part in three rounds of voting to choose the vice chair with Farrey topping Stafford in the final ballot to earn the post. After the election of the two leadership positions, the board had 30 resolutions on its posted agenda but the board was

The board members took their office from Judge Barbara Key.

### INSIDE



# Neenah News

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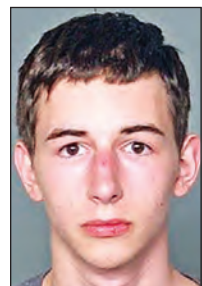
# Sentencing proceeds in 2019 shooting deaths

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A judge ruled last month that a teen found guilty of killing his grandparents as part of a plan to shoot students at Neenah High School is competent to proceed with sentencing.

Alex Kraus of Neenah was 17 when he called 911 on April 14, 2019, and told the operator that he had killed his grandparents, Dennis Kraus, 74, and Letha Kraus, 73, and needed to be arrested.

"I just murdered two people," he told dispatch. "I am at the end of the road, by the



Kraus

way, so the officers that are coming here might mistake the driveway of my grandparents' home for another road, but it's a driveway."

Officers who arrived at the Grand Chute home found the pair deceased. Dennis was shot once in the head

and Letha twice in the head and once in the right forearm.

Police found a shotgun with a knife taped to the end of it, several more guns and large amounts of ammunition inside the home. They also found a backpack with a folder inside containing Kraus' typed-out plans.

"I had plans, you see, to shoot up my school and I was going to kill my grandparents and then after that, drive to my school and then shoot everyone there on Monday morning, but killing is not really what I thought it would be," Kraus told a 911 dispatcher. "This is all my fault."

Police later learned Kraus had been



Neenah News

Alex Kraus shot and killed his grandparents in their Grand Chute home in 2019.

working on his plan for nearly a year. In the months leading up to the shooting he had searched the internet for information on guns, how to dehumanize people and researched other school shootings.

Kraus documented his plan in essays stored in Google Documents. He wrote that he identified with Columbine High School mass shooter Dylan Harris.

"Mankind is a cancer and I am one of the doctors," he wrote.

During his junior year at Neenah High, Kraus collected supplies to carry out the school shooting, including an ammunition belt, a leather jacket and a gas mask, which he told police he obtained because he thought it would scare people.

Documents indicate Kraus' plan was to kill his grandparents to obtain access to their guns and car. He planned to attach a Bowie knife to a 12-gauge shotgun and to wrap the shotgun in a rolled-up poster board to conceal it to bring it into the school.

Kraus' plan was to drive to Neenah in the

stolen car and enter the high school before school started with the concealed gun. He wrote that he would hide in the bathroom until the middle of the first period when he would shoot the students in either room 200 or 201. Documents indicate Kraus chose those classrooms because they were large and had 15 or more students.

Kraus told police he spent the night at his grandparents' home and on the morning of April 14 told his grandfather he wanted to shoot guns. Dennis took him to a shooting range and when they returned Kraus went upstairs and pretended to put the guns away. While upstairs, he inserted ear plugs, loaded a 20-gauge shotgun and put extra shells in his pocket. He then went downstairs and shot Dennis from behind, then he shot Letha.

After the killings, Kraus continued with his plan by attaching the knife to the shotgun and took the gun outside for target practice. Kraus told police that once he got outside he realized he locked himself out of the house. He regained entry using a spare

key and began searching for his grandparents' car keys but soon gave up. Documents indicate he watched television and drank a soda before calling police.

Kraus told police he expected to get a rush from killing, but didn't. He decided to call police around 11:30 a.m. because he was worried about what his father would do when he arrived to pick Kraus up at noon.

"I'm 17," he told the 911 operator. "Will I get executed? Will I get a life sentence? Oh my God."

His father has repeatedly written letters to the court asking for the judge to find his son not guilty due to mental illness and to place him at a mental health facility. He stated Kraus had a cyst on his brain and was seeing things that weren't there.

"Alex is a caring and loving person who would never commit the heinous acts he is accused of but for mental illness," Charles Kraus, Alex's father, wrote.

Last June, he was found guilty of two counts of first-degree intentional homicide. In August, Outagamie County Judge Mitchell Metropulos ruled he was not competent to proceed with sentencing and the case was suspended.

There have been three competency hearings since that ruling. Last month, Metropulos ruled Kraus is competent to proceed with sentencing.

In a letter to the court, Charles asked for leniency.

"If he doesn't commit suicide in prison he will become a tortured shell," he wrote.

Alex will be sentenced Sept. 2. The judge will determine his eligibility date for supervised release. Both of the charges he has been found guilty of carry life sentences.

## Calendar of events

- July 8**  
Friday Family Fun, 6 p.m., The Plaza and Globe Coffee
- July 9**  
Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park  
Bill Miller concert, 7 p.m., Riverside Park
- July 10**  
Sunday Music with Olsen & Evenson, 11 a.m., The Plaza and Globe Coffee  
Summer Fun Runs, 6 p.m., Memorial Park

- July 11**  
Doty Island rummage sales, 8 a.m.
- July 12**  
Neenah Community Band concert, 7 p.m., Riverside Park  
Winnebago Free Legal Assistance Clinic, 4:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library
- July 13**  
Future Neenah Evening Concerts with Carbon Road, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park  
Night Games, 7 p.m., Memorial Park
- July 14**  
Future Neenah Out to Lunch with Walt Hamburger, 11:30 a.m., Shattuck Park  
Pattie Shack Music Series with Thomas Dijkstra, 6 p.m., Ground Round
- July 16**  
Future Neenah Farmers Market (Kids' Day), 8 a.m., Shattuck Park  
Filthy Fun Kids Run, 8 a.m., O'Hauser Park, Fox Crossing

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**Neenah News**  
Local news for you

# Pulse therapy brings new approach to health issues



Neenah News

PEMF Energy Wellness has opened at 642 Main St.

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

PEMF Energy Wellness has opened at 642 Main St. in the building formerly occupied by Barrier Security.

The new business focuses on health and wellness, offering pulsed electromagnetic field (PEMF) therapy. The therapy is believed to recharge or “pulse” cells by sending energy through a person’s body. The therapy can also be used on animals.

Owner Kim Walsh of Neenah said she was a stay-at-home mother to five daughters before returning to school to become a certified medical assistant. Walsh said after working in health care for about eight years she became somewhat disillusioned with Western medicine.

In 2017 Walsh listened to a podcast about PEMF that piqued her interest. Walsh has owned horses for many years and she said the portion of the podcast that talked about using PEMF on animals was especially intriguing.

Walsh purchased her first PEMF system in 2017. She quit her health care job and started a business using PEMF on animals.

“Animals do not have a placebo effect,” she said. “So it was gratifying to witness the amazing results on horses and dogs.”

As Walsh’s business grew, she said people started asking if the therapy also worked on humans.

“I told them it does, very well, and so I added people to my horses and dog schedule,” she said.

In 2020, Walsh was hired as a sales representative for the company that manufactures the PEMF technology that she uses. In the past two years she said she’s sold PEMF systems to chiropractors, spa owners, horse owners and individuals.

“Interestingly, I have sold systems to more individuals than anyone else,” she said. “The reason being is once someone sees the amazing results they get using our PEMF technology, they want to have their own to use on a daily basis. Especially people with chronic issues, owning your own system is the way to go.”

Walsh said cells lose their charge for a variety of reasons including sickness, injury, stress, processed food, dehydration and lack of sleep.

“People don’t really understand that our bodies are made up of trillions of cells that all have an electrical charge,” she said. “When our cells lose their electrical charge, they lose their ability to do their job.”

Walsh said there are several ways to repair damaged or weak cells including exercise, eating raw foods and drinking natural spring water, but the fastest way to repair the cells is using magnetic fields or PEMF

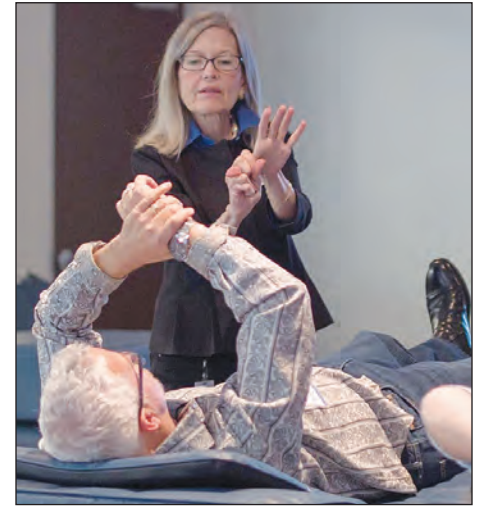


Photo from PEMF Energy Wellness

Patients take part in a therapy session at PEMF Energy Wellness.

technology.

PEMF therapy involves the use of a device that is placed on or near an intended area. Walsh has several systems available with accessories including a bed pad, chair pad, focus pad, rings, paddles, cube and large dog pad to give individuals the option to choose what accessories work best for them. A typical session lasts for about an hour. Walsh offers an introductory package of three one-hour sessions for \$100.

The Food and Drug Administration has approved certain PEMF devices for non-union bone fractures, treatment-resistant depression, urinary stress incontinence, postoperative edema and pain, and brain cancer.

Aside from PEMF therapy, Walsh’s business also offers an infrared Sunlighten Sauna and Molecular hydrogen inhalation.

The infrared sauna has the touted benefits of detoxification, weight loss, pain relief and anxiety relief.

Walsh said breathing in molecular hydrogen also has major health benefits.

“It is an amazing antioxidant which reduces oxidative stress,” she said.

PEMF Energy Wellness has partnered with New Hope Regeneration to provide stem cell therapy.

PEMF Energy is open by appointment. Anyone interested in stem cell therapy or scheduling an appointment for services can call or text 920-385-3011.

Walsh said her business provides residents with a nontraditional method of healing.

“I have found most people are sick and tired of being sick and tired, and are looking for more natural solutions to their health issues,” she said. “I like to tell them they need to take charge of their own health.”

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Photos by David Hall (above and below); photo by Scott Kruger (right)

Fourth of July fireworks launched from Riverside Park filled the skies Monday night. The colorful display also capped off CommunityFest, which was celebrated throughout the weekend, including the Parade of Lights on Sunday with Mayor Jane Lang (below) talking to children ready to take part in the procession.



# Native American music artist returns to Riverside Park

Neenah News

Grammy-winning musician Bill Miller returns to Neenah's Riverside Park on Saturday night for a free concert that continues his connection with the community and its Native American history.

Miller performed last September at Riverside after making connections with Neenah that encompass historical roots, family and friendship. The city hosted a series of powwows starting in 2016 that involved Miller's sister, Cathy Caldwell, who later brought in Miller to perform for the dedication of the Lakeshore Trail signs last year.

Miller returned to the area to make up for the sign dedication day that was disrupted by a storm. The concert was organized on short notice, and though a

midweek event, was well attended by an appreciative audience.

Born on the Stockbridge-Munsee reservation near Shawano, Miller began playing guitar when he was 12 before moving to Milwaukee in 1973 and winning an art school scholarship.

He attended the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse, where he returned in 2008 to help dedicate a regional arts center with his artwork along with performing with the La Crosse Symphony Orchestra.

Miller has won three Grammy Awards and many Native American Music Awards, including Lifetime Achievement. In 2005, Miller's "Cedar Dream Songs" won a Grammy for Best Native American Music Album.

Since moving to Nashville in 1984,

Miller has continued to gain fans through collaborations with other artists from a broad musical spectrum. He has toured with Pearl Jam's Eddie Vedder, The BoDeans, Richie Havens, John Carter Cash and Arlo Guthrie while writing songs with artists such as Nanci Griffith, Peter Rowan and Kim Carnes.

Miller's flute playing was featured on Vanessa Williams' "Colors of the Wind," the theme song on the soundtrack of "Pocahontas" in 1995, which won a Grammy, Oscar and Golden Globe.

His collaborations with other Native American musicians include Robert Mirabal, Carlos Nakai and Joanne Shenandoah.

Miller's concert at Riverside's gazebo starts at 7 p.m. Saturday.



Submitted photo

Bill Miller returns to Riverside Park on Saturday for an evening concert.

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# FVTC May graduates

Fox Valley Technical College's May graduates from Neenah have been announced:

- Janetta Breister, Quality Technician
- Nicole Bresnyan, Early Childhood Assistant Teacher
- Mitchell Broeske, Fire Protection Technician
- Angela Buksyk, Practical Nursing
- Jacob Clausing, Fire Protection Technician
- Harley Cochenet, Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Sara Custer, Administrative Professional Office Assistant
- Andrew Czechanski, Nursing - Paramedic to ADN Pathway
- Ndeye Ganyla Sow Diop, Legal Studies/Paralegal
- Zachary Dorschner, IT - Software Developer
- Hailey Esslinger, Process Technician
- Amber Evers, Emergency Medical Technician - Paramedic
- Zachary Fenner, Business Operations
- Yudelka Garcia Zorrilla, Practical Nursing

- Lukasz Glowacki, Electronic Engineering Technology
- Leah Grundman, Agribusiness Science and Technology - Agronomy
- Rachel Gwitt, Accounting and Accounting Assistant
- Allison Herlache, Veterinary Technician
- Madelyn Himes, Nursing - Associate Degree
- Trisha Hurm, Human Resources
- Jeremy Jansen, Construction Management Technology
- Makynna Johnson, Dental Hygienist
- Elizabeth Kempfert, Veterinary Technician
- Caden Klatt, Criminal Justice Studies
- Samuel Knott, Mechanical CAD Drafting
- Tristen Knuijt, Aircraft Electronics
- Davis Knutzen, Nursing - associate degree
- Don Kortbein, Metal Fabrication/Welding
- Nora Kowalkowski, Food Service Production
- Korey Krause, Electronic Engineering Technology
- Ian Langenhahn, Automated Manufacturing Systems Technology
- Mercedes Lexvold, Criminal Justice Studies
- Emily Manteufel, Medical Laboratory Technician
- Joshua Mattfeld, Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics
- Jayson Mayo, Electro-Mechanical Technology and Industrial Maintenance Mechanic
- Jacob Miller, GM Express Service Technician
- Jacquelyn Mucha, Practical Nursing

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- Josh Rankin, Web Design
- Clarissa Rowe, Esthetician - Basic
- Kevin Schoner, Airframe and Powerplant Mechanics
- Emily Schultz, Horticulture Technician
- Erica Sewall, Practical Nursing
- Alicia Smith, Nursing - associate degree pathway
- Caleb Stern, Technical Studies-Journeyworker
- Kyle Tennie, Criminal Justice Studies
- Mike Tietje, Business Operations
- Brittney Tunnell, Interior Design
- Isaac Vandenlangenberg, Diesel Engine Service Technician (FABTECH)
- Chee Vang, Event Management
- Sadi Verken, Substance Use Disorder Counseling
- Devin Vinci, Electricity
- Carrie Walbrun, Medical Office Assistant
- Johan Weisensel, Automotive and Light Duty Truck Technician
- Johan Weisensel, Automotive Technology
- Noah Weyenberg, Marketing
- George Whitney, Electro-Mechanical Technology
- Rebekah Willoughby, Early Childhood Education
- Mariah Wood, Wildland Fire Crew and Wildland Firefighter

# FVTC, partners gain training program grant

Fox Valley Technical College and partners Rawhide Youth Services and Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin have been selected to receive a \$6.5 million Workforce Innovation Grant.

The award announced by Gov. Tony Evers last week will be used to deliver a special education and training program to help alleviate some of the economic hardships as well as reverse mental health challenges created as a result of the pandemic.

Rawhide will train the trainers at FVTC and Goodwill to use a trauma-informed approach to education and services.

FVTC will provide education for up to one year toward a viable career path while Rawhide embeds a personal navigator to help students inside and outside of class to assure individual success.

Goodwill will add employment case management and on-the-job support for trainees, including removal of barriers such as referrals to child care and transportation.

"Across our region, we are talking with employers who need a skilled workforce to help make their businesses successful and their communities strong," said FVTC president Chris Matheny. "These programs will help identify and connect high-potential individuals with employers through job skills training and holistic support."

The program expects to welcome its first students in January for training and certification in such areas as industrial maintenance technician, wood manufacturing/cabinet maker, welding fundamentals, plumbing, early childhood teacher's aide, nursing assistant, truck driving and mechanic-vehicle manufacturing.

The program intends to serve about 450 individuals through the 2024 calendar year.

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**Sat. Fire on High 3pm**

**Thurs. Model Citizens 8pm**

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Neenah News

The former Shopko building on Green Bay Road will be regaining business activity with the announced opening of a Noodles & Co. restaurant and a Planet Fitness location.

# Shopko building

FROM PAGE 1

and expected to open before the end of the year.

Earlier this year the Common Council voted to provide an annual assistance payment – totaling \$950,000 – to rehab the site for future tenants. Noodles & Company is the first confirmed business for the property.

Construction work was needed on the existing structure to remove a mezzanine, improve flooring, repair and replace HVAC systems, prepare tenant spaces, reconstruct the site's parking lot and install landscaping.



# Dental clinic

FROM PAGE 1

a growing problem, based on the number of poor and low-income families seeking care in their offices. "It was becoming overwhelming," Brown said.

The idea to build a clinic came after brainstorming by community leaders and several local dentists, including Brown and Florek, followed by extensive planning and fundraising. Drs. Jeff and Marissa Keesler donated the land.

"We started with just a handful of volunteer dentists," recalled Florek, the clinic's first treasurer. Today there are as many as 80 volunteers, including oral surgeons and dental specialists. "That's quite a commitment," said Brown, the clinic's first president.

Brown added that early on, and even today, many patients require emergency dental care.

"Hospital emergency rooms used to get the brunt of bad toothaches," he said. "Now ERs in the Valley are able to refer dental emergencies to our clinic."

Prevention is another clinic initiative.

"Our bus is an educational tool that is really instrumental in reaching young children, breaking the cycle of dental disease and changing the mentality about oral health," Florek said. "By going into the schools we reach kids who can't afford

good dental care. Kids who qualify for the free lunch program qualify for free dental exams and care."

Clinic programs continue to grow to meet needs.

Widower Bob Polakowski, 97, of Kimberly, came to the clinic through Operation Dental Care for military veterans.

His daughter, Joan Wettstein, searched for resources to stretch Bob's limited income and found several offering assistance because of his service, including free dental care.

Once approved by the Fox Valley Veterans Council, Bob started seeing Kayla Poxleitner, the clinic's hygiene volunteer coordinator, every six months for cleanings and checkups.

Wettstein said she was impressed by the kindness and level of care. "They're very patient and thorough. I felt very informed on my end as a family member."

Dr. Robert Chabolowski, retired Menasha dentist, even went the extra mile to repair one of Bob's old amalgam fillings, which is rarely done today. "He did a great job," she said.

A Marine who served in both World War II and the Korean War, Bob gets emotional when he thinks about the dental care he receives.

"I don't have any idea where I would be without their services," he said. "They take such good care of me. Kayla's a peach. They're not only great people, they know



Submitted photo

Dr. Tim Brown is a longtime Neenah dentist who helped found Tri-County Dental Clinic.

## About the clinic

### Tri-County Dental Clinic

**Founded:** 2003 as a volunteer-based, clinic providing emergency, general, and preventive care.

**Created:** In response to a Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region study identifying 25,000 uninsured and underinsured people in Calumet, Outagamie and Winnebago counties who were unable to afford dental care due to inadequate income or lack of access to Medicaid.

**Mission:** Provide greater access to quality oral health care services, "in a caring and compassionate manner," for low-income residents of the three counties by tapping services of volunteer dentists, paid staff, and students studying dentistry, hygiene and dental assistance.

### Growth

**2007:** With growing tri-county need estimated at 60,000, clinic used a Delta Dental of Wisconsin grant to add prevention measures after dentists noticed severity of patients' dental disease and tooth decay.

**2009:** Established Robert Glass Focus on the Children Program to provide free dental care for school children who qualify for free or reduced price lunches. Last year, it served 2,300 children.

**2012:** Aided by significant donations, Tri-County added a mobile clinic to increase services. The new dental bus visits 37 area schools, Boys & Girls clubs, homeless shelters and domestic abuse shelters. The mobile and fixed-site clinics see about 45 patients per day.

**2014:** Introduced Wetherbee Orthodontic program to cover the cost of children's braces.

**2016:** Started Operation Dental Care for local military veterans with limited access to dental care.

### Today

Clinic serves 10,000 to 13,000 patients per year, 63% of them children. Many are regular patients with much less tooth decay than in Tri-County's early days.

Treatment: dental screenings, exams, X-rays, cleanings, fillings, extractions, preventive sealants and fluoride applications.

Collaborating volunteers: About 70-80 area practicing and retired dentists, Marquette University School of Dentistry fellows and dental students, Fox Valley Technical College and Northeast Wisconsin Technical College hygiene students, and dental assisting students. (18 paid staff)

**Value of donated services in 2021:** \$4,279,276

**Major corporate/foundation support:** J. J. Keller Foundation, Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region, Menasha Corp. Foundation, WOW-We Care Fox Cities, Theda and Tamblin Clark Smith Family Foundation, ThedaCare Foundation-Neenah, United Way Fox Cities, Oshkosh Area Community Foundation, US Venture/Schmidt Family Foundation, Nicolet National Bank Foundation, Jane and Tad Shepard Family Foundation, Wallace Family Foundation.

**Tri-County volunteer dentists who live and/or practice in Neenah:** Drs. Chris Bergstrom, Bob Brennan, Dawn, Tim, Tip, and Tyler Brown, Erin Curless, Phil Florek, Amy Henderson, Marissa and Jeff Keesler, Stephanie Kramer, Dave Mentz, Joe Olsen, Brandon Roth, Roger Stanek, Steve Stoll, Ben Strobel and Bret Trent. Also, Menasha dentists Dave Angell, Bob Chabolowski, Lisa Lang Riegel, Jason Krahenbuhl, Ashley Minten and Mike Wockenfus.

what they're doing."

"He always comes out of his appointment saying, 'Boy, do my teeth feel good,'" Wettstein said.

Brown and Florek praise their fellow dentists, many of them from Neenah, who have joined them at the clinic over the years.

"The amount of volunteering we see is such a reflection of our community," Florek said.

They hope to recruit more practicing and retired dentists to the clinic's volunteer ranks so it can keep up with the de-

mand. "There is such a great need," he said.

Both men noted their faith is a huge factor in their volunteerism.

"When God gives you gifts, talents, and opportunities, it is wonderful to share," Brown said. "When I am headed to the clinic to volunteer, I know there could be challenging cases and I need to push myself. However, when I walk out the door after working there, I know I have helped a few and it is rewarding, and keeps me coming back."

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## Whitlinger named D2 Coach of the Year

St. Mary Catholic boys tennis coach Tate Whitlinger was named the Division 2 Coach of the Year from the Wisconsin High School Tennis Coaches Association after leading the Zephyrs to the first WIAA team state tournament in school history.

Whitlinger guided St. Mary Catholic to a close win over perennial powerhouse Xavier in the sectional final to earn the Zephyrs their first trip to Madison. He also led his

squad to an undefeated record in the regular season and a conference title.

Whitlinger was chosen ahead of Brookfield Academy's Michael Rajchel and Catholic Memorial's Chris Benyousky.

Neenah head coach Kyle Falk tied for second place in the voting for the Division 1 Coach of the Year.

Falk finished tied with Madison West's John Braxler, with Menomonee Falls' Matt Andreshak earning the top honors.

## Kaminski, Harwood earn all-District softball honors

A pair of Neenah High School softball players garnered all-District honorable mention honors from the Wisconsin Fast-pitch Softball Coaches Association.

Senior Amara Kaminski and junior Morgan Harwood were among the 16 players to earn honorable mention honors on the District 2 Large School group.

Kaminski batted .306 this season in helping the Rockets reached a Division 1

sectional final. She tied for the team lead in RBIs with 17, while picking up four doubles, a home run and scored nine runs.

Harwood led the Neenah regulars with a .407 batting average, while leading the team with six doubles, four home runs and tying for the team lead with 17 RBIs. She was also Neenah's top pitcher finishing with a 1.99 earned run average, while striking out 148 batters in 116 innings.

## Paider, Thomas represent Rockets at WBCA all-star game

Former Neenah Rocket standouts JJ Paider and Carter Thomas participated in one more high school basketball game as both hit the court for the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association all-star games in Wisconsin Dells recently.

Although teammates during the season, the two Neenah players were on different squads for the Division 1 all-star game with Thomas' White Squad edging Paid-

er's Red Squad, 107-100.

Thomas scored five points in the game, while Paider finished with four. No other stats were available.

The Neenah duo were two of the four players from Fox Valley Association teams who participated in the Division 1 game. Owen Powlikowski of Kimberly and Max Nelson of Appleton North joined Thomas on the victorious White Squad.



Photo from Fox Crossing Police

## Fox Crossing bear

A black bear was sighted and photographed here in the O'Hauser Park woods on June 28 and also near Susan Avenue in Fox Crossing. Police responded but did not locate the animal. With an increase in bear movements throughout Wisconsin this time of year, the state Department of Natural Resources has tips to help those who encounter a bear and ways to avoid attracting them at [dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom](http://dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom).

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# Obituaries

## Sharron Hargis

Sharron Hargis passed away peacefully on June 22, 2022, at the age of 87 surrounded by the love of her children and family. Sharron was born in Muskegon, MI on April 12, 1935, to her late parents Dail and Beatrice Patterson. She was the older sister to her two brothers, the late Dr. Dail Patterson Jr. and the late Dennis Patterson.

Sharron's father stressed the importance of education during her early years. Sharron graduated from St. Joseph's High School, Muskegon, MI and graduated in 1956 as a top honor student from the Mercy Central School of Nursing, at St. Mary's Hospital, Grand Rapids, MI. After graduating, Sharron married Steven G. Peliotes in a Greek Orthodox ceremony.

Sharron and Steve had six children together and the couple moved to Neenah, WI in 1972. Sharron was a dedicated mother, supportive wife, and a selfless registered nurse for 46 years until she re-

tired in 2002. In 2001, Sharron married Bruce Hargis where they lived in Fond du Lac, WI until his death. Sharron enjoyed travelling, movies, dining out, and caring for their beloved dogs with Bruce as they enjoyed retirement together.

Sharron spent her life dedicated to her family and her nursing career. She had an inspiring work ethic, a can-do attitude, and an unmatched love for her family. She is survived by her six children and their families: Stephanie King, Frances Ann Armstrong (Hal), George Peliotes, Dail Peliotes (Denelle), Genevieve Peliotes, and Jim Peliotes (Ann); seven grandchildren, Alex King (Kari), Catherine (Armstrong) Ozark (Scott), Elizabeth (Armstrong) Hietpas (Trevor), Jonathan Peliotes, Michael Peliotes, Benjamin Peliotes and Nathaniel Peliotes; and four great-grandchildren, Theodore "Teddy" J. Ozark, Violet D. Ozark, Emma King, and Grace F. Hietpas. She is also survived by her nieces, Helen Christ and Jan Patterson Samson (Eric); nephew George Saines, and sister-in-law Agnes Patterson.

Sharron was gifted in cooking Greek food, enjoyed the sand dunes of Michigan, loved her dogs, enjoyed knitting, and was inspired by the Apostle Paul,

"And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Jesus Christ." God has called one of His angels home - Sharron will be missed by her family and friends but her kindness and loving memories will continue to inspire.

Services: The family will host a celebration of life at Zacherl Funeral Home, 875 E. Division Street, Fond du Lac, on July 11, 2022 from 10:30am - 1:00pm. A service will be held at 1:00pm at the funeral home. After the service, a private family committal prayer will take place at the Shrine of the Rest Mausoleum, Ledgeview Memorial Park in Fond du

lac, WI where Sharron will be in her final resting place with her husband Bruce.

The family extends their sincere appreciation and gratitude to the countless people who made the final years of Sharron's life so happy and peaceful.

In lieu of flowers, the family has requested donations be made to a local food bank or church.

Zacherl Funeral Home will be serving the family: [www.zacherlfuneralhome.com](http://www.zacherlfuneralhome.com).



## Cemetery walk set for July 21 at Oak Hill

The annual cemetery walk set for 6:30 p.m. July 21 at Oak Hill Cemetery will focus on immigration stories of four individuals who traveled from Europe and settled in Neenah, and their impact on the community.

The Neenah Historical Society's Immigration Stories program will feature cos-

tumed re-enactors presenting the stories of Elizabeth Meyer, Signe Boehm, Henry Hewitt and Jens Jersild.

There is a suggested donation of \$5 per person or \$10 for a car load.

The program will be recorded and will be available on the society's YouTube channel at a later date.

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**Zacherl Funeral Home, Inc.**

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**SATURDAY, JULY 9TH**  
10 AM - 6 PM

**SUNDAY, JULY 10TH**  
11 AM - 6 PM

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