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Shattuck site future gets new look

City, school district weigh options for site

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Joint School District (NJSD) and city's Common Council each met in closed session this week to discuss the next steps for the Shattuck Middle School after the council voted to deny a rezoning request to redevelop the site into apartments and homes.

The 27-acre property at 600 Elm St. will be vacant next school year with the completion of the new Neenah High School. The middle school will move to the current high school site.

NJSD listed the site for sale about two years ago. It only received one offer to purchase, which came from Northpointe Development, of Oshkosh. In July, NJSD agreed to sell Shattuck to Northpointe for \$500,000, with the sale contingent on the city approving a rezoning request.

Under the agreement with North-

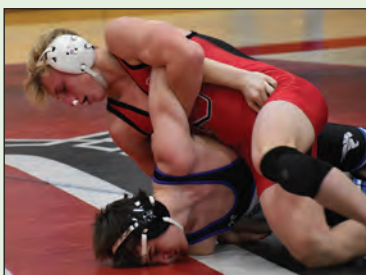
pointe, the district's Health & Wellness Center would remain in place, saving the district about \$600,000 in relocation fees.

Andy Dumke of Northpointe said he planned to preserve the 94-year-old school and turn it into moderate-income apartments. He estimated the renovation would cost up to \$30 million, which includes about \$1 million in asbestos abatement.

Northpointe would also construct duplexes, townhomes and single-family

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Photo by David Hall

Seasonal scene

President Lincoln's statue and a gingerbread man anticipate a white Christmas in front of The Plaza ice rink downtown earlier this week.

Window contractor piles up complaints, charges

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

A Neenah man is in hot water legally, accused of taking payments through his window replacement and general contracting business and then not completing the services.

Tyler Frantz, 32, has been charged with theft by false representation and theft in a business setting.

Frantz owned Wisconsin Windows LLC, formerly located at 228 Washington Ave. The business was started in 2017, according to the Wisconsin Department of Financial Institutions, which has it listed in good standing.

Wisconsin Windows has received five Better Business Bureau complaints in the past three years, earning it a rating of F.

At least six victims have filed police complaints indicating they paid thousands of dollars for services they never received.

Ten small claims lawsuits have been lodged against Frantz in the past two years in multiple counties.



Submitted photo

Dennis and Stephanie Drewa of Neenah took photos showing damages to their home caused by work they said was done by a contractor they took to small claims court.

Some of his reported victims:

- Karen Bergman, of Neenah, who said Frantz botched a door installation, causing an additional \$500 in damages.
- David Grover, of Grover Electric in

Oshkosh, who said he was subcontracted by Wisconsin Windows for electrical work on two homes and he was never paid the \$1,500 he was owed for the work.

- Emmanuel Bruno, of Neenah, who

said Frantz stiffed him for about \$6,000 when he failed to complete a project he was contracted for or provide any of the materials.

- Jon Misevicz, of Neenah, who said he paid Frantz \$1,500 to install two windows and the work was not completed.

- James Israel, of Neenah, who said he paid Frantz about \$3,500 to install a window and the window failed city inspection.

- Air Tech Heating Inc. and Advocap, both in Fond du Lac, who were awarded \$4,748 and \$5,690 in small claims court, respectively.

- Andrew Berg, of De Pere, who was awarded \$5,169 in small claims court.

In total, Frantz has racked up small claims judgments of more than \$53,000.

Dennis and Stephanie Drewa of Neenah said they hired Frantz in October 2021 to install two egress windows, paying a \$3,500 down payment and purchasing

SEE **Window contractor** ON PAGE 8

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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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Job training effort seeks to transform

Goodwill, FVTC, Rawhide target mental health

By Dan Roherty
NEENAH NEWS

Regional entities who specialize in different pieces of the educational training puzzle are collaborating on a new program to offer career options for individuals with mental health issues who are ready to get on a pathway to success.

Personalized job training options with an ongoing support team are being created through the Career EXCElerate Wisconsin program with the financial backing of a public grant to Goodwill North Central Wisconsin with partners Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) and Rawhide Youth Services.

“The goal for this program is to really address the national staffing shortage crisis that currently exists in our state and across the nation,” said Melissa Iverson, Goodwill’s program specialist, who noted there are an estimated two open positions

for every job seeker out there.

“We also recognize there is a population of individuals who are not yet in the workforce, or maybe not retaining work or underemployed, or maybe not elevating in their career but who potentially could be if they had the right support and training.”

Backed by the Wisconsin Workforce Innovation Grant Program, the career-track instruction curriculum that starts in mid-January includes wood manufacturing, diesel technology, class A and B truck driving, welding fundamentals, industrial manufacturing technician, pipe trades, nursing assistant and teacher aide programs.

Iverson said Goodwill, FVTC and Rawhide have worked together in other capacities but this effort will specialize in backing up the technical instruction with trauma-informed care training throughout students’ chosen program all the way into their job environment. Rawhide’s mental health coaches, or navigators, will check in with students during the different phases of the program to keep participants on track and get them through obstacles as they come up.

“There are a lot of great teachers out there who really try to invest in their students, but that teacher has only so much capacity to re-engage with those students and try to reach out to them if they fall off the radar and stop coming to class – there’s only so much they can do,” Iverson said.

Participants don’t need to be formally medically diagnosed with mental health issues to qualify for Career EXCElerate, but Iverson said everyone applying will have experienced some form of behavioral trauma they are trying to work

through with this initiative that’s ready to help. Available class openings will be on a first-come, first-served basis and public funding will ultimately determine the program’s longevity.

After interested individuals are identified, evaluated and matched with one of the eight career pathways, Rawhide navigators work with the students throughout the one- or two-semester classes with any related support issues – inside and outside the classroom – that can challenge students on staying with the program.

Goodwill Industries staff, who offer job training and career exploration services on a regular basis, will provide job coaches to this program when the courses are completed to keep the new employees and their employers supported through additional skill building and retention. Navigators also stay on board with the newly hired graduates to help manage expectations, co-worker relationships and common stresses of a new career.

Dale Walker, FVTC’s director business and industry service, also noted Career EXCElerate’s special emphasis on what has been a growing health issue in the post-pandemic world.

“What is different about this program from other offerings at Fox Valley Technical College is this program includes wrap-around services for participants who may be working through economic hardships or mental health challenges that have prevented them from returning to the workforce,” he said. “That includes additional support in the classroom and labs.”

To refer a job training candidate, go to careerEXCEleratewi.org or call/text 920-204-7002.



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Respiratory ailments coming in threes this season

By Kaitlyn Scoville
NEENAH NEWS

A “tripledeemic” has been taking place this winter season, particularly for young children and older adults with either COVID, the flu or respiratory syncytial virus (RSV).

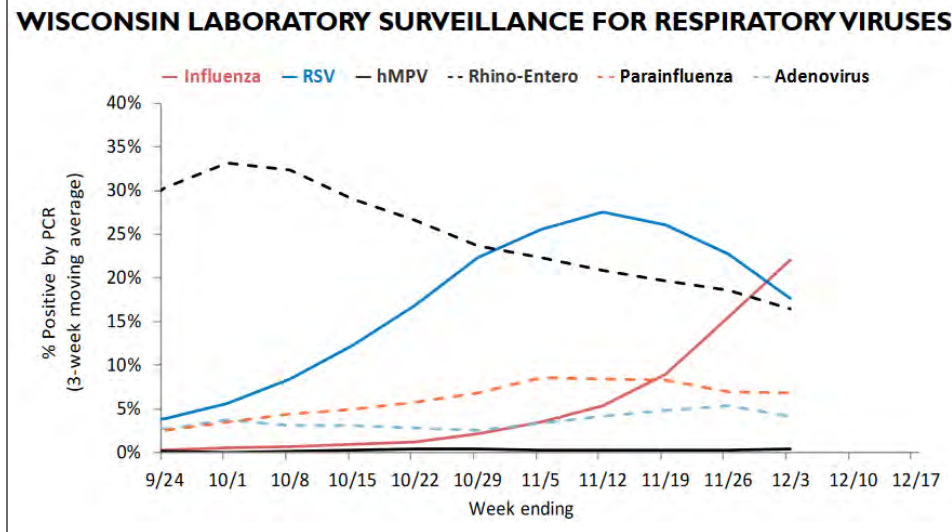
According to the state Department of Health Services (DHS), the flu has been dominating most cases in children throughout December. RSV cases, despite remaining at relatively high activity, have begun to decline, with a spike happening in Wisconsin around mid-November.

Among the flu, COVID and RSV, symptoms are relatively similar from cough, headache and fever to runny or stuffy noses. RSV is more contagious compared to its tripledeemic counterparts and does not currently have a vaccine available to the public.

Children’s Wisconsin, which has a location in Neenah with ThedaCare, has continued to see high numbers of children with RSV. Contributing to longer wait times are more people requesting flu and RSV testing, a statement from the organization reads.

“RSV is a common cause of respiratory illness in all age groups,” the Children’s statement said. “Among infants and young children, it is the most common cause of bronchitis, croup, ear infections and pneumonia. The infection occurs most often in the winter and early spring and is so common that almost all children have had the virus by age 2.”

Aurora Health Care Oshkosh pediatrician Laurie Muller said the infection can last as long as two to three weeks in both



children and adults who have contracted RSV.

Furthermore, “certain children are at risk of developing bronchiolitis or pneumonia,” Muller said. “These are typically children 6 months or younger, children with lung disease, heart defects or compromised immune systems.”

Alyssa Prothero, a pediatric health care worker in Winnebago County, said this year’s viral season has been particularly busy and intense.

“This is my very first viral season working in pediatrics, so I didn’t realize the extent of RSV and how it affects kids,” Prothero said. “It was a really big change from working over the summer then having the viral season start. It was a big jump from a typical day to a lot of (RSV inpatient cases).”

“This viral season hit a lot earlier and a lot harder; we’re seeing that all across the nation,” she said. “As someone who has worked in child care for the past few

years, my day care kids would get this, and I didn’t really know what it was. I didn’t realize the extent of how hard it hit kids. “I’m hearing a lot are out with RSV and now I’m seeing the medical, professional side of that.”

Muller said in this area specifically, cases have also been on the decline, though there are still some reports of RSV infections.

“This year it will be especially important for us to prevent the spread of germs. While RSV season is starting to calm down, influenza season has started and is expected to last for several weeks,” Muller said.

What the nation has been seeing in this tripledeemic are respiratory viruses that spread when we cough, sneeze or spread germs to surfaces that others touch. Prothero said keeping toys clean and continuously disinfecting surfaces are the best ways to stay safe.

“I feel like a big part of (this year’s vi-

ral season) has to do with lessening of restrictions with mask mandates. Now that COVID has decreased so dramatically, these kids haven’t had a lot of viral exposure because it had been well managed,” Prothero said. “So, when they’re getting hit with these things, they typically haven’t been hit with respiratory illnesses before and their body takes it as kind of a shock.”

Dr. Dave Margolis, interim chair of the department of pediatrics at Children’s Wisconsin, said he could not be more proud of the organization for being present for the children recovering from these illnesses.

“We don’t have a vaccine for RSV that’s available to the public – I look forward to that day,” Margolis said. “But we do have a vaccine against influenza so we can let our doctors take a breather. We all look forward to that.”

“We’re getting through it. I think people are tired; they probably miss their families and we’re getting through it as an organization.”

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Spending priorities detailed for county ARPA funds

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Lingering questions over the process of spending Winnebago County's \$33.3 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were discussed at an ARPA Strategy & Outcomes Commission meeting Dec. 14.

In October, the County Board of Supervisors voted 27-9 in favor of accepting the second round of ARPA funding awarded through the federal government. The board also voted to allocate the entirety to cover lost revenue from the pandemic.

The designation is an accounting maneuver that allows the county to spend the money in different ways rather than only for pandemic-related expenditures.

At a Nov. 30 meeting, the commission voted to rename the ARPA Strategy & Outcomes Commission to the Spirit Fund Commission and establish a new Spirit Fund that could prevent a federal audit on the use of the money. That measure will need to be approved by the county board before it takes effect next year.

Kathleen Propp of Oshkosh told the commission last week that the procedure is "fishy."

"County residents are entitled to straightforward, transparent decisions made in public with a long list of appropriate projects debated by this ARPA Commission," she said.

The commission previously agreed to spend \$3 million in ARPA dollars on projects with local governments and to allocate the money equally among the municipalities in the county, regardless of their size. Each of the 22 municipalities would receive about \$136,360 under the proposal.

Last week's meeting included discussion on whether the commission had authority to spend the \$3 million or whether the discussion and action was only related to the process of soliciting and collecting requests for community projects.

During County Executive Jon Doemel's report to the Board of Supervisors this Tuesday, he defended the decision to designate the ARPA funds to lost wages and rename the ARPA Commission.

Doemel said he didn't agree with the federal government's choice to "print" the ARPA money but said that sending the money back wouldn't change that.

Doemel said the action also eliminates the requirement that the funds be allocated by 2024 and spent by 2026.

"When people ask me why other counties did not do this, I pose the same question," he said. "Because they should have."

Doemel said that claiming the money as lost revenue is following federal guidance to its fullest. He said the county could have just placed the money in the general fund, but the purpose of pulling the money back out of the general fund and into a Spirit Fund was to maintain transparency and ensure the money was spent on its original purposes.

"I am committed to using these dollars to increase the resilience of our community," he said. "I wanted to ensure that these dollars will go to make sure the lives of our people are better."

At the Dec. 14 commission meeting, District 33 Supervisor Thomas Egan questioned why some of the action items for spending the money weren't already sent to the county board to be considered.

"If this money is going to be available to us right after the first of January, we need

to get things going because we're sitting here and all these other people are spending money and I don't know what we're holding it for," he said.

In other action, the commission:

- Authorized a transfer of \$175,000 from the Spirit Fund to the general fund for the executive's office for the expense of assistance with strategic planning and priority-based budgeting, particularly related to how the county should spend ARPA money.

- Authorized a transfer of \$300,000 from the Spirit Fund to the general fund for a Facilities Department countywide building condition assessment study. Collard clarified the department can use the money for any other operating expense, according to budget rules.

- Authorized a transfer of \$853,000 from the Spirit Fund to the general fund for purchase and installation of an emergency generator for Sunnyview Expo Center. Doemel said funding the generator increases community resilience which is in the "spirit of ARPA."

- Voted to double the funding from \$300,000 to \$600,000 from the Spirit Fund to provide a rapid intervention vehicle (RIV) to the Wittman Regional Airport.

The RIV is used to combat fires on general aviation aircrafts. The airport's current RIV is from 1999 and has ongoing costly maintenance issues. The commission noted the increase in funding was to potentially obtain the vehicle from Oshkosh Corp.

- Authorized a transfer of \$120,000 from the Spirit Fund to the county Parks Department to install automated pay stations at the county's seven public boat launches on lakes Winnebago, Poygan, Butte des Morts and the Fox River.

- Authorized \$542,600 from the Spirit Fund and \$212,400 from outside funding to create a redundant fiber loop between the administration building and sheriff's office to allow network traffic to be rerouted in the event of a cut, hardware changes or network repairs. The loop also increase connectivity among Oshkosh fire stations.

- Authorized spending \$2.56 million to purchase radios for county departments, to be funded by the Spirit Fund.

- Authorized transferring \$3 million from the Spirit Fund to use for land conservation projects.

In total, the commission made spending decisions for \$8.36 million of the \$33 million the county has been awarded.

Keller Foundation marks milestone with grant

Neenah News

In honor of the continued commitment of the J. J. Keller Foundation to address mental health, a surprise \$75,000 grant has been awarded to Catalpa Health in celebration of the foundation reaching the \$75 million mark in giving.

The J. J. Keller Foundation has been a key partner of Catalpa since its inception and continues to support their mission to help children and families improve their mental health and well-being.

"Catalpa has been a leader in our area for 10 years, changing the narrative around mental health and helping young people access the care they need," said Marne Keller-Krikava, foundation board adviser and secretary. "The J. J. Keller Foundation is honored to share this milestone grant with Catalpa to continue strengthening their efforts."

Bob Keller, chairman of the J. J. Keller Foundation board, added, "We're on a mission to get at the root causes of these issues and make a difference in the lives of individuals and in our community as a whole.

Mom was instrumental in rallying the partners that would initiate Catalpa Health. She would be happy to see how far they've come, serving so many families in our area."

Catalpa Health started in 2004 when community leaders and three local hospital partners – Affinity Health systems (now Ascension), Children's Wisconsin and The daCare – came together to deal with the need for pediatric mental health access in the Fox Valley. Today, Catalpa provides care for more than 8,000 children and teens.

The J. J. Keller Foundation moves toward its next milestone of giving under incoming executive director Monica Stage, who will provide strategic leadership and operational responsibility for the foundation and its assets.

"While we celebrate this milestone of \$75 million in giving, and the receiving partners, we are invigorated for our future of giving," Stage said. "Now, more than ever, our communities need our support. As Ethel Keller instilled in us, everyone can give something, our finances, our time, and our talents."

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—Dr. Esser



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Photo from Neenah Historical Society



Church at holidays

The sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church was decorated for Christmas in this photo featured in a booklet sent to members of the First Presbyterian Church who were serving their country during World War II.

Lawsuits on child death investigation turned away

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Two civil lawsuits alleging the Neenah Police Department refused to release records pertaining to its review of the Wausau Police Department's handling of a 2020 child death investigation have been dismissed.

The lawsuits were filed by Alyssa Froom and Julie Leist, the mother and step-grandmother of 7-year-old Eliana Froom, who collapsed at her father's Wausau home Sept. 26, 2020.

Eliana was taken by ambulance to the hospital, where she died two weeks later. The medical examiner's report indicated she died of myocarditis, an inflammation of the heart typically caused by a viral infection. The specific viral cause was undetermined.

The Wausau police investigation into Eliana's death revealed she died of natural causes. Froom and Leist challenged that finding, stating that they believe Eliana died due to neglect from her father. They both filed complaints against Wausau Police Chief Ben Bliven and six officers who they said mishandled the investigation.

In February, the Wausau Police and

Fire Commission (WPFC) dismissed the complaints against Bliven and ordered him to select an outside law enforcement agency to conduct an investigation into the six officers named in the complaints. Neenah Police Chief Aaron Olson was selected to conduct the investigation.

At a June WPFC meeting, Olson said his investigation determined the complaints were unfounded. He recommended that each detective be issued a body worn camera. WPFC dismissed the complaints after the meeting.

About two weeks later, Froom and Leist filed lawsuits against Neenah police, asking for the court to enforce open records laws.

In late July, Froom and Leist also filed lawsuits against WPFC. In August, Leist filed a lawsuit against Wausau City Clerk Kaitlyn Bernarde. That case is set for a scheduling conference in January.

Both Leist and Froom's lawsuits against Neenah police have now been dismissed, with Judge John Jorgensen noting the city has met all of the open records requirements.

WPFC is also moving to have Leist and Froom's lawsuits dismissed, with motion hearings in both cases set for March.

National map details broadband access

The Federal Communications Commission (FCC) has unveiled a draft of a new national broadband map, according to the Governor's Task Force on Broadband Access, that New North officials are encouraging their partners to review.

This new map is the current federal map that identifies where broadband is in place and what internet service providers cover those locations. The broadband maps will be used to determine the allocation of Broadband Equity, Access and Deployment (BEAD) funds that Wisconsin will receive to build broadband infrastructure.

"New North has spearheaded efforts to collect accurate data on underserved areas in our region for the last two years, first with the regional broadband access study, which included public survey and speed tests," stated Barb LaMue, president and CEO of New North, the regional economic development corporation for 18 counties. "Now is another opportunity for Wisconsinites to help contribute to a broadband solution."

Barbara Koldos, vice president of business development for New North and a member of the governor's task force, added, "We are asking everyone in the New North region to visit the new FCC map and make sure it correctly reflects the fixed and mobile internet service avail-

able to your home or business. If it does not, we have a brief window to individually challenge that finding."

To ensure valid challenges are incorporated into the map before federal funding allocations are made, the public is encouraged to submit challenges by Jan. 13.

New North is asking partners to promote this initiative widely in their networks so the region can obtain the support necessary to help expand opportunities for its businesses, organizations and residents. The public is also encouraged to continue conducting speed tests for future broadband grant funding at www.thenewnorth.com/broadband-access.

The map displays address-level availability and data (as self-reported by internet service providers) for fixed and mobile broadband as well as data aggregated to larger areas. Data can be examined by exploring the map's digital interface or by searching by state or address. The map also displays coverage data by provider.

There is more than \$42 billion set aside for broadband expansion under the Federal Broadband Equity Access and Deployment (BEAD) program. Wisconsin's allocation of these funds is based on the accuracy of these maps.

More information on the challenge process can be found at help.bdc.fcc.gov.

City fire adds emphasis to safety needs

Neenah News

Neenah Menasha Fire Rescue officials said smoke alarms prevented a potential tragedy Wednesday morning on Honey-suckle Lane in Neenah where a fire caused damage in the upper level of an apartment building.

The fire was contained to the apartment but that unit and the one directly below it were determined to be uninhabitable and the occupants displaced. Crews were able to rescue a dog and cat upstairs.

Adam J. Dorn, Neenah Menasha Fire Rescue assistant chief and fire marshal, said they responded in about 4 minutes of the

2:35 a.m. dispatch. He said in a report that the cause was determined to be improper use of an extension cord/heating device.

Additional resources were provided by the Town of Neenah, Village of Harrison and city of Appleton.

Civilian home fire fatalities in Wisconsin were at 51 this year as of mid-December, which compares with 40 such deaths in 2021, down from 52 in 2020.

Residents are encouraged to practice fire safety in their homes.

"We just can't allow another person to die a preventable death. Smoke detectors save lives," Dorn stated.



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Holiday decor, inside and out, becomes family affair

By Rob Zimmer
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

“Gardening is a year-round joy,” Dan Van Daalwyk said. “Decorating, to me, whether inside or out, is merely an extension or version of gardening.”

For Van Daalwyk and his family, sprucing up their North Park Avenue home has become a family affair each holiday season, one that grows more meaningful each year.

The Neenah GARDENER

“Whether you have space, large or small to create beauty, the holidays are the perfect opportunity to express how we feel about the season. I love seeing everyone’s interpretations of it,” he said.

The excitement begins in the hearts of the children as the holiday spirit kicks in and creative souls begin to share the spirit.

“Our 14-year-old Charlotte leads the start of the holiday by creating nightly vignettes with the visiting Elf, to the delight of our twins. They, in turn, enjoy pulling all the red tubs from the basement to begin laying out decor we have collected over the years.”

Using natural elements to create breathtaking displays, the children are free to create as they please.

“Our 10-year-old Milo surprises us all with his creations – all the displays in these pictures were his creations – displays that my partner Jose and I would never think to do ourselves,” Van Daalwyk said.

“It’s important to save the things you



Photos by Rob Zimmer

The Van Daalwyk family spruces up their North Park Avenue home indoors and outdoors each holiday season.

cherish that remind you of past holidays, your parents or other loved ones. We incorporate old and new into each display.”

Outdoors, in the yard and garden, the displays and accents are created using mostly fresh greens each year. Creating long-lasting evergreen containers and displays is a family endeavor, as well.

“For us, we try to remember that “less is more.” For instance, when setting up your garden pots with either pre-arranged greens or doing it yourself, consider the long winter that follows the holiday. Get mileage from having the ability to remove the Christmas trimmings from the pot as the greens can last through the entire winter.”

Van Daalwyk shares his tips on finding joy and satisfaction in creating your own

special Christmas and winter pots and displays.

“Don’t shy away from doing your own pots. If you gather three or four kinds of pine boughs – scotch pine, balsam and cedar for instance, have a pot full of not-yet-frozen soil, just start sticking in the boughs, largest in the back and work your way around and down. Don’t be shy with the quantity and variety. In this case, more is more.”

“One year I found mini pine trees and

added three to back and center of the pot and worked in more boughs from there,” he said. “Giant pinecones on sticks can be beautiful additions.”

The spirit of family enjoying time together creating new memories and reliving memories of Christmases past is what the holidays are all about.

“Bottom line, creating a beautiful space is just a few red tubs away and the perfect thing to do on a lazy snowy afternoon.”



Photo from Fox Crossing

Kind connections

Officer Dan Wiechman from the Fox Crossing Police Department was helping make some people’s day better last Wednesday by handing out gift cards along with a note and brief story in memory of 11-year-old Olivia Stoffel, who was killed along her father and another person on the Trestle Trail Bridge in 2015. Olivia would have been 19 on Dec. 7.

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Shelter concerns arise with weather

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Winnebago County Executive Jon Doemel issued a declaration to temporarily open up shelter for homeless people and expressed support for marijuana reform but not a legalization referendum during the County Board of Supervisors' Tuesday meeting.

Doemel mad the emergency declaration in response to winter storms this week. He said it will allow county staff to prepare and quickly respond to weather-related emergencies.

The declaration will also allow Human Services to find temporary placement for those in need in the wake of the Day By Day Warming Shelter in Oshkosh announcing its closure through Jan. 9.

In a press release, shelter board president Gretchen Withers wrote that the shelter is temporarily closing due to illegal drug use by guests and extreme staff shortages. She said the shelter will use the time to ensure it is free from drugs and paraphernalia.

Doemel said high-risk individuals will not be placed in hotels or shelters and instead the county will take over running the shelter.

"In essence, we will be running a homeless shelter for the next three weeks," he said.

Marijuana referendum

Whether Winnebago County residents will be able to weigh in next year on the legalization of marijuana was a hot topic at the meeting, as the board was set to vote on whether to hold an advisory referendum on legalization during the April 4 spring election.

Several county residents told the board that marijuana is a gateway drug that leads to harder drugs. One resident listed the names of several mass shooters and pointed out that they were all users of marijuana.

As of last month, 21 states have legalized marijuana for recreational use. Bordering states Minnesota and Iowa have legalized medicinal marijuana, while Michigan and Illinois have legalized recreational use.

In September, Gov. Tony Evers announced that he would include marijuana legalization and decriminalization in the upcoming 2023 state budget.

Doemel said he supports marijuana reform but would not support an advisory referendum. He suggested the board review the county code and statutes related to marijuana possession.

District 28 Supervisor Nate Gustafson moved to have the marijuana advisory referendum request sent to the legislative committee.

District 26 Supervisor Conley Hanson requested that it also be sent to the judiciary committee, referring to a memo issued by the Winnebago County District Attorney office in February.

The memo indicated the office has ceased criminal prosecution of personal use marijuana cases. The DA's office requested that personal use marijuana cases be handled as ordinance violations or sent to an alternative program.

In order for the referendum to be on the April ballot, it would need to be submitted by Jan. 24. The legislative committee's next meeting is Jan. 29.

District 24 Supervisor Andy Buck said the purpose of sending the resolution back to the committees is so that it fails.

"It's not to let people's voices be heard at the ballot box, it's to kill this and not let your constituents have an idea about this issue," he said.

The board voted to send the resolution back to the committees, indicating residents will not weigh in on marijuana legalization at the spring election.

Ice report

By Jim Nobbe
PAYNE'S POINT HOOK AND SPEAR FISHING CLUB

As of Tuesday morning, the northwestern part of Lake Winnebago was mostly covered with a layer of ice. It is mostly real rough shove ice from the last time it broke up and refroze. There is between about 1 and 5 inches of ice on the bays that I have seen. I am sure there are places with less and places with more as I write this.



I would not recommend venturing out on the lake yet, especially with the shove ice and snow. It will make "reading" the ice that much harder as I would call it and with the future weather forecasts right before Christmas I would not be surprised if the lake breaks up again from the wind and snow.

As conditions change, I will keep you informed with updates here and at Payne's Point Hook and Spear Fishing Club's website and Facebook page. Happy holidays.

Photography contest, exhibition in works

Neenah Arts Council will hold its second annual juried Photography Contest and Exhibition in the spring that will celebrate the city's sesquicentennial.

Commemorating Neenah's 150 years of incorporation as a city, the 2023 Photo Contest will have just one category for photos: the spirit and beauty of the city of Neenah.



Photo by Chris Kuhlrow
A photo by Chris Kuhlrow was submitted in last year's Arts Council contest.

The Arts Council is looking for photos that highlight landmarks, cityscapes, scenic views and iconic features. Photos must have been taken in the city between Jan. 1, 2022, and March 1, 2023.

Photographers can submit up to six photos, and those from novice photographers under age 18 will be judged separately.

Entries must be submitted in both print and digitally and will be accepted March 1-31 via the Neenah Public Library website.

Photos will be displayed in the Shattuck Community Room at the library throughout April.

Contest details will be available this month at neenahlibrary.org.

For more information, contact library director and Arts Council member Gretchen Raab at director@neenahlibrary.org.

Calendar of events

Friday, Dec. 30

Doo-Wop Daddies, 6 p.m., Bridgewood Resort Hotel

Saturday, Dec. 31

New Year's Eve Party, 5 p.m., Ground Round

Wednesday, Jan. 4

Vaccine clinic, 3 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Thursday, Jan. 5

Meditation session with Zen River Sangha, 6 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Friday, Jan. 6

Fitness Friday, 9:15 a.m., Neenah Public Library

Saturday, Jan. 7

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

Toward Harmony with Nature Conference speaker set

The 26th Toward Harmony with Nature conference with Wild Ones Fox Valley Area is set for Jan. 28 at the Culvers Family Welcome Center at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

Keynote speaker will be Stanley Temple, professor emeritus in the Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology at UW-Madison and a senior fellow PhD on Aldo Leopold, Land Health, and the Resilience of Nature.

For 32 years Temple occupied the faculty position once held by Leopold. He and his students have worked on conservation problems in 21 different countries and helped save some of the rarest and most endangered

species and habitats on which they depend.

The conference that runs from 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m. includes an address by Jennifer J. Wilhoit titled "Native Species and Ecotones: We Can't Do Without Them."

Four other expert speakers will add knowledge on ways to create healthy habitats through natural landscaping and invasives control.

Participants can visit with vendors and exhibitors, pick up resource materials and bid on silent auction items. Details, fees and registration are available at TowardHarmony-withNature.org. A virtual option is available. Email wildonesfoxvalley@gmail.com with questions.

Winnebago County December COVID-19 Vaccine Clinics

- Offering Pfizer and Moderna vaccines. (Subject to availability.)
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More Info:
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3:00 - 5:00 p.m.

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(1326 Cold Spring Rd, Neenah)
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WEDNESDAYS

3:00 - 6:00 p.m.

Sunnyview Expo Center
(500 E Cty Rd Y, Oshkosh)
Home test kits available.

Flu shot available!

THURSDAYS

9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Oshkosh Public Library
(106 Washington Ave, Oshkosh)

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Shattuck site

FROM PAGE 1

homes at the site. The development plans were later altered to eliminate the duplexes and townhomes due to heavy opposition from neighboring residents.

The final plan that Dumke presented to the council was to build 89 apartments inside the Shattuck building and construct 49 single-family homes at the site. Four acres of green space would be donated to the city to be made into a park.

At a Dec. 7 meeting, the council was swayed by opposition from residents and voted against rezoning.

Dumke said at the meeting that Northpointe would back out on the sale if the city denied rezoning. The contract gave him until Dec. 15 to make a final decision. He did not respond to a request for comment.

NJSD communications director Jim Strick said he could not confirm whether Dumke had backed out or if he asked for an extension. The school board met in closed session Tuesday to discuss the site.

Strick said that after the meeting it was discovered that it wasn't properly posted to the public, so any discussion or action taken will be rescinded. The board met in closed session again Thursday to discuss the property.

Ahead of the meeting, resident Tamara Hasz said she emailed the school board about her intent to purchase Shattuck, offering the same terms as the Northpointe sale, but without a rezoning contingency.

Hasz said she would accept input from neighboring residents and turn it into a community development. She said she's unsure whether the Shattuck building itself would be renovated or razed if she were to purchase the site. NJSD estimated razing the building would cost about \$2 million.

The council met in closed session at its regular meeting Wednesday to discuss the site. Community development director Chris Haese said the department requested the meeting to discuss tax incremental financing and the possible investment of public funds into the Shattuck property.

"It became clear that it would be appropriate to address any ongoing questions aldermen may have regarding this piece of property and any city financial involvement in its redevelopment," he said.



Neenah Joint School District photo

Spirit of sharing

Spring Road Elementary fourth-grader Angel Kranzusch performed sign language for the school's winter concert to assist several of her family members, including her parents, who are hearing impaired. Angel asked her teacher if she could sign the fourth-graders' performance and then decided to sign the entire concert.



Photo by David Hall

Holiday concert

The Neenah Community Band performed its winter concert Sunday at the high school's Pickard Auditorium, where it was announced the group will be playing at Gov. Tony Evers' inauguration Jan. 3 in Madison.

Window contractor

FROM PAGE 1

their own supplies. Dennis said it was "the worst experience you could possibly have."

Frantz's work resulted in an inch of cement dust coating the inside of the home and the new windows couldn't be opened all the way due to floor joists.

The Drewas said they are out more than \$10,000 due to the botched work and they had to pay a different company to repair the damages.

Documents indicate that in April, a couple contacted Neenah police to report Frantz for contractor fraud after he took payment of \$1,240 with no services provided. The victims said that they're elderly and on a fixed income.

"This created stress and financial hardship as we have to save for projects like this and it was a substantial sum," they wrote in a victim impact statement.

The officer investigating located two additional police reports on Frantz with similar details. Documents indicate the Winnebago County District Attorney's Office declined to file charges on one of the complaints because Frantz paid the victim back. The second complaint was under review for possible charges.

"Tyler Frantz will contract to do work for a party, take the down payment and not complete the work," the officer wrote.

A third victim reported to police they sent Frantz a check for \$1,000 and set up five appointments to have a sliding door installed and Frantz never showed up for any of them. A fourth victim, who was out more than \$2,000, declined to press charges.

Police contacted ABC Supply Co. in Neenah, who Frantz ordered materials through, and verified there could be 12 or more victims whose orders were placed with ABC Supply and were not paid for by Wisconsin Windows.

In September, Frantz was charged in Winnebago County with two misdemeanor counts of theft by false representation. Each count carries a fine of up to \$10,000 and up to nine months in jail.

In October, Frantz was charged in Door County with a felony count of theft in a business setting, which carries a fine of up to \$10,000 and up to 3.5 years in prison. That charge stems from a complaint made by Martha Baker of Baileys Harbor.

Baker said she gave Frantz \$4,000 to re-



Submitted photo

More damage to the house of Dennis and Stephanie Drewa is pictured.

place windows in her home in April 2021, with the work expected to be completed by August of that year. Frantz never completed the work and a year later Baker received a call from ABC Supply who asked if she still wanted the windows Frantz ordered.

ABC Supply informed Baker that Wisconsin Windows was out of business. Baker contacted police and pressed charges.

In both cases, Frantz has asked to be appointed a public defender to represent him.

Frantz has been fined more than \$8,300 by Wisconsin Department of Workforce Development for two worker's compensation penalty warrants and a delinquent unemployment tax warrant.

The Drewas didn't press criminal charges but they took Frantz to small claims court and were awarded \$7,616. They said they don't think they'll ever see the money because Frantz filed for bankruptcy earlier this year.

"I don't think he should legally be allowed to file bankruptcy," Stephanie said. "He should never be allowed to have a business ever again."

According to the bankruptcy filing, Frantz disclosed total assets of \$18,734, and total debt of more than \$192,000.

The business debts listed in the filing include more than \$48,000 for work that Frantz took payment to complete and never performed.

In October, the U.S. Trustee Program filed a complaint asking a judge to deny Frantz's request to have his bankruptcy debt discharged.

Documents indicate Frantz obtained two Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans in April and May 2021, totaling more than \$45,000, and failed to keep any records demonstrating that the funds were used for business expenses.

Frantz did not disclose the PPP loans on his initial bankruptcy statement of fi-

nancial affairs. He later amended the statement to include the PPP loans after being questioned by the U.S. Trustee.

According to the complaint, Frantz also failed to disclose personal and business bank accounts he had opened within a year of his bankruptcy filing and gave false testimony that he did not use the Wisconsin Windows bank account for personal expenses.

A review of the Wisconsin Windows account revealed payments for personal expenses between April and August 2021, including \$945 in purchases at Pawn America; \$3,321 in transfers to his relative Tracy Frantz; \$5,590 in checks issued for whom the payee is not identified; and \$16,921 in electronic transfers to a friend, Kate Meyer, of Neenah.

An attorney for the U.S. Trustee wrote that Frantz's errors and omissions demonstrate "his intent to defraud or his reckless indifference for the truth."

Frantz did not respond to a request for comment.

Dennis said Frantz should be in jail.

"I think he's just a thief," he said. "He needs to reimburse everybody for everything he's done."

Wisconsin Windows was listed online as closed earlier this year. The business' former address is the location of a home Frantz shares with Meyer.

Meyer said Wisconsin Windows is no longer operating at the location and she shouted expletives at a reporter.

Baker said she'd like to see Meyer held accountable as well.

"She's just as culpable," Baker said. "I think she's awful, too, and I'd love to see them both rotting in jail."

The Drewas said they don't want anyone else to fall victim to a bad contractor. After this experience, they said they will not give a contractor a down payment. They urged others to research contractors online and to look at their reviews and references.

Stephanie said to also check into the contractor's background, as she later learned Frantz had a previous conviction from 2010 for armed robbery.

"If we would have looked like we should have, we would have never had him in our house," she said.

Baker encouraged other victims to come forward to police.

"You don't just do that to people," she said. "What he did was a bad, horrible, wrong thing to do."

Novak proving to be leader in Rockets' wrestling room

By Steve Clark
NEENAH NEWS

Wrestling has been part of Nick Novak's routine for as long as he can remember.

The Neenah High School senior was steered toward the sport in kindergarten by his father, Nate, a former Neenah High School wrestler, and he has been hitting the mats ever since.

Of course, the practices may have changed a little.

"I remember it being a lot of fun in those early days," Novak said. "It's a lot of basic wrestling the simple stuff, but you're a little kid so you just roll around on the mat a lot. There isn't much technique there, but it was a lot of fun."

Novak's technique has certainly picked up from those early days, but wrestling is still fun.

"A big thing we started doing in the room is finding things in practice to make it fun. Otherwise, wrestling can just turn into a hard grind," Novak said.

"If you try to find the fun in things and make it a competition, it's a lot more fun."

As much fun as wrestling is for Novak, there is more to it than that.

When asked about what he likes most about the sport, Novak took a polite pause before answering. Not because he was searching for an answer but rather because there were a wealth of possibilities to choose from and it seemed like he just wanted to be sure.

"I like how you are out there as an individual. If you make a mistake or get caught in something, you can't blame it on anybody else," Novak said. "It makes you work harder at practice because if you work harder, you are going to perform better."

Even when he's not at practice, Novak is always looking to improve.

And with a father who has a background in wrestling, well, sometimes that means moving some furniture – or trying not to break anything – to try some new things.

"We will talk about moves and we will go to the living room and start throwing stuff in on each other," Novak said.

And how does he fare against his dad?

"Well the most recent time, it didn't go too well," Novak said. "He's a bit bigger than me. I tried doing some moves and they didn't quite work."

Against opponents his own size, Novak is faring quite well nowadays.



Neenah News

Senior Nick Novak is a returning state qualifier for the Neenah Rockets and has gotten off to a 16-3 start this season.

He has started the season with a 16-3 record – tied for the most wins on the team – and has settled into a role as one of the leaders for this year's talented Rocket squad.

He has wrestled at the varsity level in all four years at the high school level – he was on Neenah's state-qualifying team as a freshman – and now continues to focus on his own goals while preparing the younger Rocket wrestlers.

"Being a leader is a lot of responsibility and a lot of fun," Novak said. "Setting the example of working hard, that's a big thing we've done year over year. It was shown to me as a freshman and through my years, so I'm trying to do it this year and pay it back."

And it isn't just how about to shoot a double-leg takedown or work a power half either.

"Having very good sportsmanship and respect for each other, which is one of our big values. Just trying to teach the younger guys those things," Novak said. "It's a lot of fun getting to know the guys and watching them work and get better. Not only on the

mat but in other areas of life."

Novak also has his own goals to work toward and that's a big part of his focus as well.

Last season, Novak posted 36 wins and earned his first trip to the WIAA State Tournament in the 152-pound bracket – the same weight he is wrestling at this year. He said it was a special moment walking out on the Kohl Center floor to compete last season.

"It's different than any other sporting competition I have ever been in. It's truly amazing. It's so grand, such a big stadium, and you walk out there and are like 'Wow. I made it here. I actually did it,'" Novak said. "It's a really cool great experience and it's something that I never forget."

Now the plan is to get back to Madison this February and that goal is something he works toward every day.

"Just because I made it last year, is no guarantee that I will make it again this year. That's why I'm still working as hard as I can in the room," Novak said. "Whatever goal that makes me push the hardest and work on the things I need to work,

Senior Spotlight

that's what I think about. But when it's the day of, I think about that match."

But there is more on Novak's agenda than just getting to experience state as an individual. He wants to return to the Team State Tournament as well and add that impressive nugget to his legacy.

"I would love to go to that again," Novak said. "My freshman year, I was not one of the main pushers for getting us there but it was still a great experience. If we made it again this year, it would be all the better because being a senior on the team and helping to lead it, it would be so much better of an experience and would mean so much more to me."

There's little doubt that Novak will do his part to get the Rockets there as he takes the approach of trying to improve every day he's in the practice.

For him, though, that doesn't mean adding a lot of new or different moves to his repertoire, but rather making sure all the tools he takes to the mat are functioning perfectly.

"I only have a few moves that I really do a lot and I focus on those and try to make them the best that I can," Novak said. "Now, I focus on the little things more than I did earlier (in my career). It makes a big difference when you are trying to take that next step and get better every day."

Novak doesn't plan to wrestle in college so he knows that his last match this season will likely be his last competitive match ever.

Although he plans on returning to the Neenah practice room when he can in the future and already is thinking about becoming a referee or possibly coaching in the future, once this season ends he will likely be hanging up his headgear for good.

"It's going to be weird. It's definitely going to be a change," Novak said. "I literally don't remember a year where I didn't wrestle and I've had a lot of fun doing it."

Zephyrs ride defense to rout of Tigers

Second-ranked St. Mary Catholic wins Big East North showdown

By Dustin Riese
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

When St. Mary Catholic and Howards Grove took the floor Tuesday, it was supposed to be a showdown between two of the best teams in the Big East North Division.

Both teams came into the game with one loss, with the Zephyrs sporting a top-10 ranking in Division 4.

But what was expected to be a close game turned into a blowout as St. Mary Catholic put on a defensive clinic to make quick work of the Tigers, 61-35.

“Overall, we played a very good game against a tough team,” head coach Jeff Chew said. “We can improve our foul situation as we did get into some foul trouble tonight. We also made some poor decisions at times, and we just need to start understanding where we are offensively as a team.”

It was the press that did the Tigers in as the Zephyrs executed it to perfection in building a 12-0 lead to open the game and extending it to a 34-21 lead at halftime.

The Tigers narrowed the gap to 10 early in the second half. St. Mary Catholic used their press again to spark a 20-3 run to stretch the lead to 56-29.

“We have three different presses that we like to use, and we spend a lot of time every day practicing those,” Chew said. “Not only do we spend a portion of every practice going over some of our presses, but it allows us to practice our press break as well. We don’t have a ton of teams that press us, but the ones that do we are often prepared for given how we do things at practice.”

Chloe Vogel continued her impressive senior season with 22 points, while sophomore Emily Vogel added 10 points.

Six other players scored in the game for the Zephyrs, who once again used a balanced scoring attack.

Chloe Vogel is the lone senior on the squad, but just because the roster is stocked with underclassmen, it



Photo by Dustin Riese

St. Mary Catholic's Chloe Vogel goes up for a shot between a pair of Howards Grove defenders Tuesday night.

doesn't mean the Zephyrs don't bring experience to the court.

“This is a very fun team and they all enjoy playing together,” Chew said. “When they look at our roster and they see the age of some of our kids they think we are an inexperienced group. Well, three of our kids have been starting on varsity for two years and we also have a four-year starter in Chole. We have a nice balance of scoring across the board, but we would like to have more of an inside presence at times.”

At 6-1 in conference and 9-1 on the season, St. Mary Catholic is tied atop the Big East North standings with Howards Grove, who came into the game unbeaten in conference play.

The Zephyrs will have a little time off before hosting Coleman on Dec. 29.

Rockets top Pirates to remain unbeaten

By Dustin Riese
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

In the end, it was a comfortable 73-53 nonconference win for the second-ranked Neenah girls basketball team.

But before the final horn sounded on the Rockets win Monday night at the Ron Einerson Fieldhouse, a pesky Bay Port squad made things anything close to easy.

“The score may not indicate it, but this was a great battle on the floor tonight,” head coach Andy Braunel said. “Credit Bay Port for that and the game plan they put in place. They forced us into some sloppy play, and we got off to a slow start which they capitalized on. Thankfully we settled in as the game went on.”

Neenah used a 22-7 run to open the second half to seize control of the game after leading by seven points at halftime.

Allie Ziebell led the Rockets, nearly posting a triple-double with 29 points, 11 rebounds and seven assists. Sammie Buss added 15 points and Ava Kok had 13 points in the win, while the duo combined to finish 8-of-13 from 3-point range.

As a team, the Rockets knocked down 14 3-pointers in the game, which helped key the victory.

“3's were big for us, but our offense is really strong when we balance our outside shooting with attacking the lane,” Braunel said. “It was one of those nights where we were hot from distance, and that made things easier for us to drive the lane. The second half we found that balance much better and started to get easier looks at the basket.”

Braunel also focused on the team's defense, which helped Neenah pull away in the second half.

Yet, Braunel believes the Rockets can be even better in that area and need to raise their level of consistency when the other team has the ball.

“Our defense is a key to our overall energy and level of execution,” Braunel said. “We have spurts where our defense carries us, but then at times we get a little lazy and lack the execution. We need to play with more consistency on that end of the floor, but that will come with more time together.”

Neenah, which improved to 9-0 overall on the season, returns to the court Friday night (tonight) as it travels to Hortonville for a huge Fox Valley Association matchup.

The Polar Bears are 8-1 on the season and Braunel is excited for the challenge his team will face.

“Friday is going to be a big test for us against a very good Hortonville club,” he said. “They have been the class of the league for a while and if you want to be the best you have to beat the best. They are coming off a loss against Kaukauna, so we expect them to be hungry and ready to go.”

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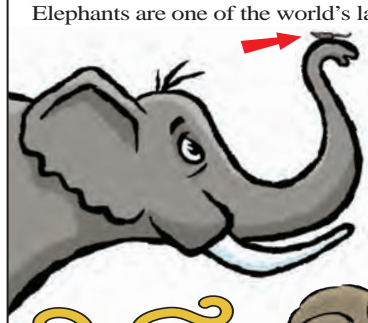


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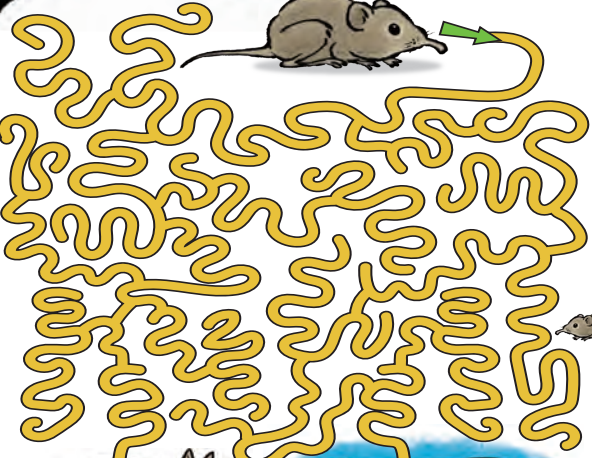
A Mouse with a Trunk?

There is an animal that looks like that. It's a **short-eared elephant shrew**, and it looks like a mouse with a trunk. But it's no mouse.

Elephants are one of the world's largest animals and elephant shrews are one of the world's smallest. But they **are** related! An elephant shrew is **not** a member of the shrew family.

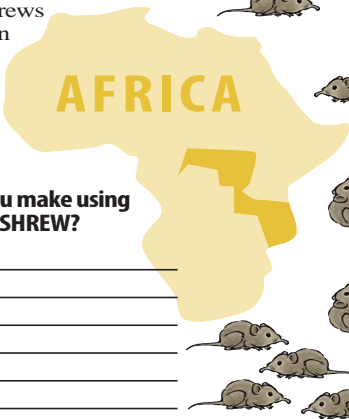


Follow the maze to see which of these animals is an elephant shrew relative.



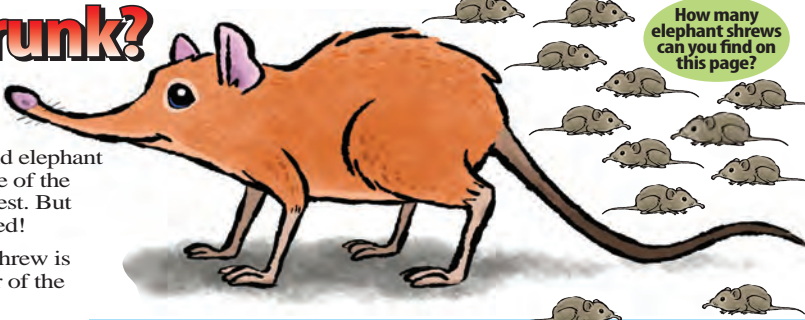
Home Sweet Home

Short-eared elephant shrews live in southern Africa in Namibia, Botswana and South Africa. They like to live in sandy soil, dry grass and shrub land.



How many words can you make using the letters in ELEPHANT SHREW?

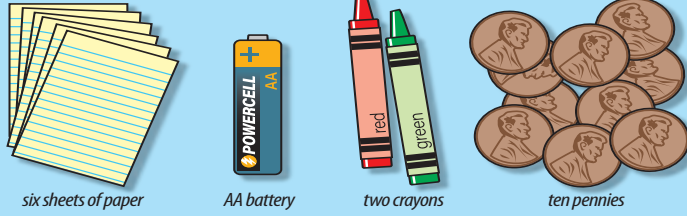
Blank lines for writing words.



How many elephant shrews can you find on this page?

Smallest of the Small

The short-eared elephant shrew weighs between 1 and 1.5 ounces (28 and 43 grams) and has a body length of about 4 inches (10 centimeters). Which of these things do you think weigh about 1 ounce?



Circle every other letter to see if you guessed correctly.

W E V A B C T H K O L F C T W H Z E F S A E R W
U E L I D G F H T S I O Y N C E Y O T U M N J C K E

E

Why is it called an elephant shrew?

Some say the elephant shrew's long nose, or snout, looks like the trunk of an elephant. Sometimes it is called a jumping shrew. Use the code to discover yet another name for this tiny animal.

- = A
- = E
- = G
- = I
- = N
- = S

Lunch time!

Cut and paste these sentences in order to find out what these animals eat.

- even eat small worms.
- Some elephant shrews will
- tender shoots of young plants.
- Short-eared elephant shrews eat
- ants, termites, berries and the

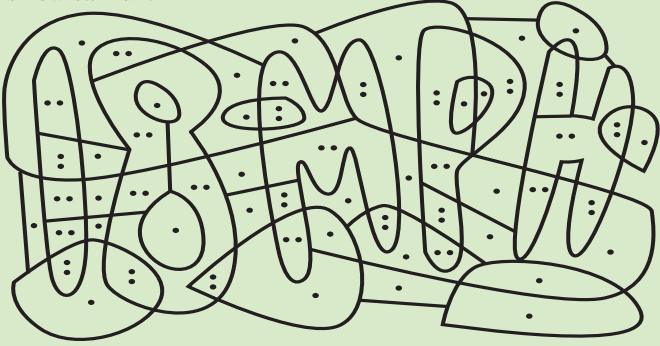
Extra! Extra! Critter Combos

Look through the newspaper for pictures of animals. Cut out parts of different animals and put them together to make up a new animal. Give your animal a name and describe where it lives, what it likes to eat and how it behaves.

Kid Scoop Puzzler

Small and Speedy

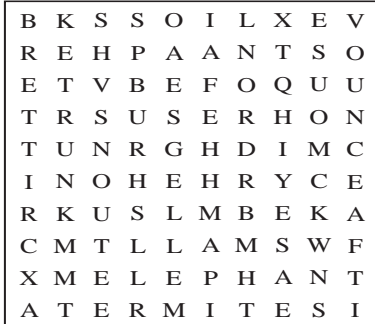
An elephant shrew is small but speedy. Color in the spaces with two dots red to find out how many miles per hour an elephant shrew can run!



Double Double Word Search

- AFRICA
- ANTS
- CRITTER
- ELEPHANT
- LEGS
- MOUSE
- OUNCE
- SHREW
- SHRUB
- SMALL
- SNOUT
- SOIL
- SPEEDY
- TERMITES
- TRUNK

Find the words in the puzzle. How many of them can you find on this page?



Standards Link: Letter sequencing. Recognize identical words. Skim and scan reading. Recall spelling patterns.

Kid Scoop Together Proof It

Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Circle the 9 mistakes in this article. Then rewrite it correctly on the lines below it. Have a family member check your work.

Lost and Found

For nearly 50 years, scientists thought a kind of elephant shrew, the Somali sengi, had gone extinct, or disappear forever.

In 2020, scientists travel to Djibouti, a country next two Somalia in Africa. They went to look into reports that peopul had seen the tiny Somali sengi.

They baited a traps with peanut butter, oatmeal and yeast and caught a sengi. This was the furst recorded sighting in 50 years.

Horizontal lines for rewriting the article.

Write On!

If I were an Animal

Which kind of animal, are you most like? If you were an animal, what kind would you be and why?

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