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## INSIDE



**Doty site**  
Former Roosevelt  
school to be removed  
Page 2

## Policy Forum examines why educators leave

By Jonathan Richie  
NEENAH NEWS

Teacher turnover surged in Wisconsin in 2023 as record numbers of teachers moved between districts, and the most teachers since 2012 left public school classrooms altogether, a new Wisconsin Policy Forum report found.

Turnover from 2009 to 2023 was more prevalent among teachers of color than their white counterparts, in districts serving vulnerable student populations, and among rural school districts as well as those with the lowest enrollment. Turnover was caused to a greater extent by teachers exiting public school classrooms altogether rather than moving between districts.

The Wisconsin Policy Forum report suggests teachers are leaving schools for other schools or simply leaving the professions for two major reasons: COVID-19 and Act 10.

SEE **Teacher turnover** ON PAGE 10

## City sign rules temporarily on hold

### Court prevents Neenah from enforcing ordinance

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A circuit court judge issued a ruling temporarily preventing the city of Neenah from enforcing its sign ordinance last week and denied the city's request for summary judgment in a lawsuit asserting the ordinance is unconstitutional.

Neenah residents Gail and Margaret Minks and Gary and Kim Novak, who are represented by the Wisconsin Man-

ufacturers & Commerce (WMC) Litigation Center, sued the city over its ordinance in April. The lawsuit contends the ordinance imposes content-based restrictions and singles out specific subject matter for differential treatment.

The city's sign ordinance limits residents to displaying one portable sign of 6 square feet or less on a residential property for a period of 30 days within a 90-day period. In July 2022, the city received a complaint stating the Minks had signs on their property "for months."

The five signs stated, "DEFUND CRITICAL RACE THEORY," "Rachael

Cabral-Guevara State Senate," "Rebecca for Governor," "Ron Johnson U.S. Senate" and "Nate Gustafson State Assembly."

The city sent a warning letter to the Minks that month, notifying them of Neenah's ordinance, with a compliance date of Aug. 19, 2022. The Minks removed the signs in advance of the compliance date.

Documents state the city has had no prior contact with the Novaks regarding the sign ordinance. WMC's legal filings

SEE **Sign ordinance** ON PAGE 10



Neenah News

The entrance and waiting area of the newly remodeled space for the St. Vincent de Paul Neenah/Menasha Food Pantry is nearing completion.

## St. Vincent food pantry grows with need

### Expansion project adds capacity and access

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The St. Vincent de Paul (SVDP) Neenah/Menasha Food Pantry will soon move to a newly remodeled location after food insecurity has driven an increased need in the community.

Construction began in July on the 27,000-square-foot space at 1421 S. Commercial St., next door to the SVDP resale store, which is where the pantry is currently located. The new location formerly operated as a child care center. SVDP now owns 91% of the mini-mall on South

Commercial Street.

SVDP has spent more than \$700,000 on procuring and remodeling the new pantry location, which involves demo work on walls, floor work, painting, removing day care-related items and installing retail coolers, freezers and shelving. Construction is about three-fourths of the way complete and the new location is expected to open in late September.

The pantry was operated by St. Mary and St. John parishes out of a church closet in Menasha for about 15 years. In February 2021, the location expanded into a full food pantry utilizing a portion of the SVDP thrift store's retail space.

SVDP director of operations Jeremy Pingel said research shows that about 14%

of Neenah's and 13% of Menasha's population is below the poverty level. When SVDP took over the pantry, it was expecting to serve up to 200 families. The pantry started with about 50 families and is now serving 1,800 households.

"But as that need grew, we realized we really needed to be in that market of helping supply food to people," he said.

On average, the pantry supplies 45,000 to 50,000 pounds of food per month to residents of northern Winnebago County. Since early 2021, the location has distributed a total of more than 1 million pounds of food to residents.

Pingel said the current location can't

SEE **Food pantry** ON PAGE 11



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### Corrections

It is the policy of Oshkosh Herald dba to correct all errors of fact. For correction information, call 920-385-4512.

### About the newspaper

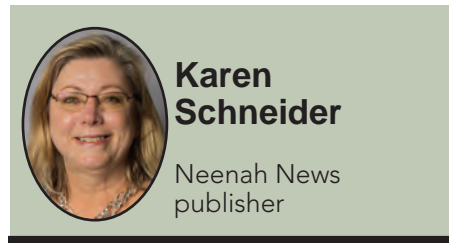
Published weekly and mailed free of charge Thursdays for Friday delivery (may vary based on U.S. Postal Service and holidays) to more than 21,00 homes and businesses in the Neenah and Fox Crossing areas. An E-edition of the newspaper can be accessed at www.neenahnewsnow.com.

Neenah News is owned by Oshkosh Herald LLC, 36 Broad St. Suite 300, Oshkosh, WI, 54901. 920-385-4512.

# Community news is everyone's business

We hope you enjoyed our Aug. 25 issue with special content on Neenah High School. This was our way to introduce Neenah's weekly community newspaper to the majority of homes in the Neenah Joint School District – specifically in ZIP code 54956.

After 18 months we have changed our distribution model to mirror that of our parent newspaper, the Oshkosh Herald, and now Neenah News will be direct mailed for Friday delivery by the U.S. Postal Service, bringing to your door school news, city council proceedings, local business news, local advertising and all the good things a community paper



**Karen Schneider**

Neenah News publisher

provides in connecting and informing its readers.

More than five years ago we started the Herald to provide coverage of local government, schools, sports and businesses to create a community news forum where businesses and organizations could get the word out about the

awesome things they are doing as well as offer an effective platform to advertise on a regular basis with a readership that supports them.

Our goal is to continue bringing community news to school district residents. We are a small but mighty team who believe in quality journalism and sharing community news.

We thank those who subscribed and businesses that have trusted us to bring their advertising message to you. It will take all of us – readers, advertisers and Neenah News team – to provide a meaningful, local newspaper for the community.

# Roosevelt building set to be cleared

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Work will soon be underway to remove Roosevelt Elementary School building and turn the property on Doty Island into green space.

Local businessman John Bergstrom and other community members purchased the site at 215 E. Forest Ave. for \$1 million last year and donated it to the adjacent ThedaCare Regional Medical Center.

The 100-year-old Roosevelt School permanently closed after the 2022-23 school year as part of the district's restructuring plan with the completion of a new high school in Fox Crossing.

Roosevelt was chosen for closure because it's the oldest and smallest of the elementary schools, lacks the opportunity for expansion and had low enrollment.

Bergstrom's offer to purchase the site was one of four the district received. Although it was below the asking price of \$1.1 million, the district considered it the best offer because it was in cash and included no contingencies.

Bergstrom told Neenah News last week that initial discussion around the Roosevelt site included the possibility of using it for housing, but there were concerns over the proximity of the hospital's new helipad.

"We just don't think it would be good to put housing that close to where the new helipad is," he said.

The existing helicopter landing spot and hangar is near the W G Bryan Bridge, requiring patients to be wheeled from one end of the hospital to the other. A new helipad was installed adjacent to the emergency department entrance to allow patients to quickly be transferred once they arrive. The Trauma Center was also rede-



Neenah News

Roosevelt Elementary School closed its doors this year as part of the school district reorganization of its schools.

signed and includes a separate hallway for patients to be transported.

The ThedaStar Air Medical Program began using the new helipad last month. After landing on the new helipad to drop a patient off, the helicopter is then flown to the existing helipad and hangar.

"It's a tremendous new improvement for the patient," Bergstrom said.

The motivation behind acquiring the former school was to ensure the new helipad and emergency landing area is not a detriment to the property, which is about 1,000 feet away.

"This is good for everybody and to have space for the helicopter makes all the sense in the world, so that's why they didn't build housing on the Roosevelt land," Bergstrom said.

He noted future uses for the site could change but the current plan is to have it cleared and the area landscaped by the end of summer.

"We're going to have the building taken down and we're going to landscape it very much like the other half of that block that's now landscaped, so it will be grass and trees," Bergstrom said.

## Metro area jobless rate drops to 2.9% in July

The Oshkosh-Neenah metropolitan area and Winnebago County saw a drop in its unemployment rate from 3.2% to 2.9% between June and July, according to preliminary data from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Last July's jobless rate in Oshkosh-Neenah and the county was also at 2.9%.

The non-seasonally adjusted data shows jobless rates in Metropolitan Statistical Areas declined in all of Wisconsin's 12 metro areas over the year and decreased or stayed the same in six of those areas over the past year.

Unemployment rates declined or stayed the same in all but one of Wisconsin's 34 largest cities and 48 of 72 counties over the year.

Estimates of unemployment and employment statistics are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.



Neenah Historical Society photo

## Welcome back to school

This 1958 photo of fifth-grade teacher Ruth Emmels' classroom at Hoover School is from the collection of Hoover Principal Blanch McIntyre.

# Kayak rentals sought for city waters

Neenah News

The city of Neenah is considering installing kayak rental pods to allow residents to venture into area waterways.

The Parks and Recreation Commission was presented with an opportunity to purchase kayak rental pods for the park system through the Fox Cities Convention & Visitors Bureau, providing joint purchasing power and grants.

The kayaks would come from Rent Fun, which sets up the pods for fully operational kayak rentals with no staff required. Rent Fun is also responsible for maintenance of equipment.

The program is similar to the city's Bird scooter rental program. Users download an app and then scan a QR code at the station to unlock a kayak. Paddles and life jackets are included. When finished, the equipment is returned to the station.

Other towns with the program charge an average of \$10 to \$25 per hour. Oshkosh recently installed a Rent Fun pod, with kayak rentals priced at \$20 for two hours.

The city's initial investment in the program is \$20,000, with Rent Fun indicating there is a 7-10 year return on investment in similar locations without grant assistance. The rental site must have good WiFi service and a hard surface for the pod to sit on.

The Parks and Recreation Commission voted last week to add \$20,000 to next



Neenah News

A kayak rental pod serves the public at Miller's Bay in Oshkosh's Menominee Park.

year's capital improvement plan budget with the stipulation that grant funding for the program is secured.

The commission will determine locations for the kayak pods. Director of Parks and Recreation Michael Kading said depending on funding and overall costs the city may be able to purchase two pods.

Future Neenah issued a statement to the city on the rental pods, offering to support efforts to obtain them.

"Future Neenah would be in support of kayak rental units in Neenah parks and believe it's an important amenity to offer," the statement read. "This is a request we get from both residents who don't wish to buy/store kayaks, as well as visitors to the community. They would make our parks destinations, as people seek out the rental units, add to the overall park experience, and capitalize on our waterfront locations."

# Probation, fines ordered in storage unit thefts

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A Neenah man was sentenced last week to four years of probation on three felony burglary charges for breaking into storage units at Pack Rat Mini Storage last year.

Jacob Lehmann, 37, was also sentenced to time served and was released from jail after spending 400 days incarcerated. He was ordered to pay about \$3,000 in restitution.

The charges were reduced from 10 counts, with the remaining seven dismissed but read into the record.

Documents state in March 2022 investigators determined 25 storage units were burglarized at the Pack Rat Storage location at 1661 Bergstrom Road. Items stolen included tools, coolers, personal identifying documents, clothing, jewelry, televisions, a trailer, kayaks, furniture, fishing and hunting supplies.

Officials reviewed surveillance footage of two suspicious vehicles coming and going on several occasions during the time period when the units were burglarized. They also identified a unique Adidas shoe print in several units.

A few days later, police responded to a report of a man living in one of the storage units. Officials found Lehmann, who was wearing Adidas shoes that matched the prints in some of the burglarized units. Several items in the unit where Lehmann was staying in matched items stolen from other units.

The storage unit Lehmann was living in was rented by a Neenah woman and her boyfriend, identified as Michael Ruby, 33, of Kaukauna. Ruby told officials he allowed Lehmann to stay in the unit and use his truck.

At last week's sentencing hearing, District Attorney Eric Sparr told the judge that a fairly credible version of events was presented that indicated Lehmann may have been less culpable for the burglaries than prosecutors initially thought.

Lehmann told officials that Ruby was responsible for the break-ins but that he also

entered about 10 units and removed items. He said some of the stolen items were moved to the storage unit he was staying in, while other items were taken to another location. Ruby has not been charged in the burglary.

One person whose belongings were stolen from a storage unit wrote in an impact statement that the criminal act was premeditated and intentional, and a trailer and other stolen items were never returned.

"We felt violated," the victim wrote. "Why did he think he had the right to steal other people's property, especially when it was a locked storage unit and a secure fenced area?"

Sparr said storage unit burglaries are fairly common in Winnebago County and surrounding counties.

"They don't tend to put people at risk in the same way that home invasion burglaries do," he said. "There's the financial impact and the concern for people that want to have an interest in keeping their property safe."

Judge John Jorgenson said the loss of property from the units isn't just financial.

"Many people use these things to store an-

tiques and family heirlooms, things that can never be replaced," he said. "But things also that they worked hard for by getting a job, saving their money and making purchases."

Lehmann addressed the judge and said he is going to change his life around and reconsider the people he spends time with.

Jorgenson said Lehmann stole the items for his own use and to support a drug habit.

"It's more than just saying sorry - which I didn't hear that," he said. "But It's more than just apologizing. It's about you taking action once you're out of jail to make amends to these people, to these other victims, and to society."

About seven months after Lehmann was charged in the burglaries, he and Michael Stenz, 37, of Neenah, were charged with breaking into an occupied home on Third Street in Menasha while armed with a baseball bat and a crowbar, and stealing the homeowner's keys and phone.

Sparr noted the charges against Lehmann in that case were dismissed last month because the victim didn't make himself available to prosecutors.

## WILLS vs TRUSTS

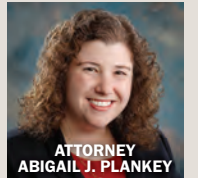
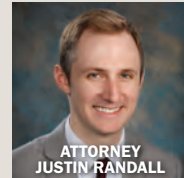
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# Party planner inspired to make memories for others

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

It was an evening of Whimsical Celebrations last month as the local party-planning business marked its one-year anniversary with an open house at Xe54 wine and cocktail lounge in Fox Crossing.

About 70 open house guests sampled hors d'oeuvres, viewed photos from various events, patronized a food truck and listened to live music while socializing with business owner Jessica Williams.

Williams started the event planning business in Neenah last year. She graduated from Alverno College in 2009 with a degree in professional communication. While attending Alverno, Williams completed an internship with Oshkosh Convention Center and Children's Hospital in Appleton, where she expanded



Williams

her knowledge in event planning, fundraising, human resources and public relations.

After graduation, Williams landed a job as the admissions counselor with the Wisconsin Challenge Academy in Fort McCoy, helping at-risk youth obtain their high school equivalency diploma, an experience that led her to join the military.

Going from a military career to event planning may seem like quite a change, but Williams said that background helped her to gain experience in the field.

"I was always the one coordinating this human resources convention, this statewide veteran conference, this military dining in and dining out, doing this fund-



Photo by Katie Madlom, Cattail Creek Creatives

Jessica Williams (center) of Whimsical Celebrations was dressed for a mess at an art party she planned last year before starting her business.

raiser, doing these workshops, so it was just always something that I was doing for everyone else," she said.

Williams said she had to switch careers several times due to budget cuts and politics, leading her to feel burned out. An art party she organized last summer sparked the idea to open her own business.

"I said dress for a mess, put the art in party, and it was the best party I've ever

had," she said.

Guests were instructed to wear white and were given squirt guns with tie-dye ink inside. Some used a slip and slide with paint, while others threw darts at paint-filled balloons.

"The more people came, the more people complimented, and it was because it was different," she said.

After the success of the party, a friend suggested Williams should start her own party-planning business. At first, she was unsure if there was a market for that in the Fox Valley.

"The more and more I thought about it and talked to people and kind of tested it out, people are looking to make memories with their families and their friends," she said.

Whimsical Celebrations officially became a licensed business on Aug. 1, 2022. Two months later, Williams attended the Vetrepreneur Project by the Venture Project in Oshkosh which partnered with Salute Our Troops to offer the nine-week accelerated entrepreneurship course. That experience helped her hone in on her business plan and model.

The Whimsical Celebrations business name, colors, marketing and theme align closely with peacocks, of which she had a taxidermied specimen on display at her

open house celebration.

"The peacock represents that yes, I can do beautiful and elegant and classy for your parties, and also the white resembles actually the peacocks themselves," she said. "The males are the gorgeous, beautiful colored ones, where the females are white. And since I'm a female-owned business, it makes sense to make the peacock white."

Williams offers personal and business event planning, including bridal showers, engagement parties, bachelor and bachelorette parties, family reunions, baby showers, ribbon cuttings, anniversaries and Christmas parties.

Aside from planning, Williams also rents various supplies such as vases, silk flowers, table runners, decor and yard games; and offers her services as a host.

"I'm a people person, I feel like I can really work the room," she said. "And the thing is, what I tell people is, when you're having your own party, you're too busy hosting that you can't really enjoy the party."

Williams also has some fun and unique offerings, including murder mystery dinners, date nights, marriage proposals, minnow races and girls' nights.

"And I take care of everything – invitations, the decor, the place, the place settings," she said. "If I'm hosting it, I pretty much take care of everything."

Each of the events is highly personalized. Before planning for any event, Williams encourages customers to meet with her for a complimentary strategic session, which involves brainstorming.

"Usually that's when I come up with the greatest ideas," she said, adding that it helps elevate each event and allows the customer to be involved in the planning.

Williams said her first year in business was highly successful and the community has been supportive.

"I just want to be able to have fun and provide memories for people and assistance," she said. "A big part of that is being involved in the community."

Some of the upcoming events Williams is planning include the N.E.W. Dragon Boat Festival at Leach Amphitheater in Oshkosh on Sept. 16 and the Center for Suicide Awareness benefit concert at Simply Country Barn in Freedom set for Sept. 27.

Although anyone can put on a party, Williams said what Whimsical Celebrations provides is more impactful.

"Every time I have an event, it's just the smiles," she said. "It's the laughter. It's people just enjoying themselves and I know what I'm really providing is memories."




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Photo by David Hall

## Signs of the season

Visitors to the Art Bus by Emma are shown how to construct a door sign for fall in Emma Santiago's mobile studio parked outside Lion's Tail Brewery in downtown Neenah last week.

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# Disc golf specialist on steady flight path

By Dan Roherty  
NEENAH NEWS

With disc golf's established place in the Fox Valley's recreational sports world, Brad Zuraski has become a steady source of players' overall needs for plastic, equipment and competition.

Zuraski's Wingz Disc Golf has reached a decade of serving the area's disc golf community from his rural Neenah home and will be marking that milestone with a singles tournament Sept. 10 at O'Hauser Park in Fox Crossing.

The Green Bay native earned a business finance degree in Minneapolis and started a career in that field before coming back to the Fox Valley and Neenah area, where his wife Courtney's family is from and have since been raising their two daughters Addison and Riley. Being a math major helped Zuraski do some career calculations when he first considered making disc golf sales a viable business.

"It became my hobby, but then I realized – because I was good with numbers – I figured I could make it," he said. "So I went out on a limb and tried it, and sure enough was able to make it work."

Wingz Disc Golf LLC formed in 2013 as an online seller of mostly used discs on eBay while Zuraski was a financial analyst for SCA Tissue. By 2017 he was running Professional Disc Golf Association (PDGA)-sanctioned events and making backpacks for the sport in a partnership with Ridge Roller Customs.

He now also runs about 20 tournaments a year, takes appointments at his home shop and has an active wingzdiscgolf.com website while continuing eBay and Facebook sales.



Neenah News

Brad Zuraski has been operating Wingz Disc Golf in the Neenah area since 2013.

"You need to do a little bit of everything to be successful in this business," Zuraski said.

While the recreational sport continues to grow over its roughly 40-year Wisconsin history, Zuraski said the recent pandemic sparked even more interest for those looking for a safe outdoor escape

that was relatively free of the health concerns that restricted most activities.

"During COVID, everyone kind of found disc golf because it was the one thing that you could do," he said.

With the pandemic came supply shortages from manufacturers and higher prices, followed by a surge of online and retail disc golf sales options that tightened the market. Zuraski credits a loyal area following for keeping his disc sales going while diversifying his overall business model.

He said participation in his area tournaments has been steady while the number of people running local competition events has expanded statewide. Zuraski brings his mobile disc shop to his tournaments where players have full access to the expansive variety of drivers, mid-range discs and putters.

Zuraski will have help running the Sept. 10 tournament at O'Hauser, which will give him a rare opportunity to compete in his event while marking the 10-year anniversary.

Sign-up information on the O'Hauser tournament can be found at [discgolfscene.com/tournaments](http://discgolfscene.com/tournaments).

## Gustafson to chair AI task force in Assembly

State Rep. Nate Gustafson (R-Fox Crossing) has been named chairman of the state Assembly's Artificial Intelligence (AI) Task Force, which will explore AI's role in elections, business, government and other aspects of daily life.

The 55th District legislator, who has a background in cybersecurity and information systems, expressed his appreciation for the appointment.

"This task force represents an opportunity to ensure that Wisconsin remains a leader in responsible AI development, benefiting all sectors of our society," Gustafson said in a statement.

The task force will convene public hearings, expert panels and collaborative sessions to gather insights from technologists, ethicists, community leaders and the public to establish a framework to guide AI-related policies and practices in the state.

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# Art supplier company under scrutiny for safety issues

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

An art supply manufacturer is facing more than \$200,000 in fines for safety violations after an employee at a Neenah plant suffered an amputation injury in February.

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) says it found six “serious” violations at Dixon Ticonderoga at 1097 Ehlers Road during its investigation from March 1 through July 27.

OSHA inspectors determined that in February a worker at the Neenah plant suffered an amputation after trying to clean a press used to imprint images in labeling and packaging processes, which lacked required safety guards.

OSHA did not disclose the body part amputated and a Dixon Ticonderoga representative declined to comment on the specifics of the incident.

Since 2020, OSHA inspectors have cited the company’s Neenah facility three times for similar violations.

“For the fourth time in three years, our inspectors found Dixon Ticonderoga exposing workers to severe injuries by failing to make sure dangerous machines

are guarded or de-energized as required,” OSHA area director Robert Bonack said in a press release.

The violations found include:

- Failing to have ladder rungs uniformly spaced, exposing employees to trip and fall hazards.
- Failing to complete a periodic inspection of press energy control procedures at least annually to ensure the procedures were accurate, steps in the procedure are being followed, and the employees involved knew their responsibilities.
- Failing to have a fully enclosed guard on the six print decks, allowing access from the top and behind.
- Securing the expanded metal guards on each of the print decks with a hinge which did not protect from being inadvertently dislodged or removed.
- A repeat violation for failing to document each of the specific procedural steps for de-energization when performing cleaning activities.
- A repeat violation for failing to ensure that employees implemented energy control application steps or equivalent protective measures prior to allowing them to set up the press.

OSHA has proposed \$203,806 in penalties for the violations. According to a notification letter issued to Dixon Ticonderoga on August 15, the company has 15 working days from the date it received the notice to contact OSHA, pay the fine, correct the violations or contest them.

The company, based in Appleton, is one of the world’s largest art and education suppliers, with about 400 employees, including 70 in Neenah.

President of sales and marketing Steve Boyea said in a written statement that the Dixon Ticonderoga management collaborates with members of the business on how to create a safe working environment and uses external resources and experts to improve safety processes.

“Our company has a strong commitment to the safety of our employees, vendors, and customers,” he said. “We focus on everyone going home each day the same way they came to work.”



Photo by David Hall

## Downtown hosts Ultimate Ladies Day

Downtown Neenah will host Ultimate Ladies Day from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 9, which includes a brunch box and fashion show at the DoubleTree by Hilton Neenah.

The event also includes pampering, demonstrations, afternoon events and shopping throughout the downtown district. Participants are encouraged to provide do-

nations of new cozy robes, fuzzy socks, sweatpants, fleece throw blankets and stuffies to support YouthGo’s Cover Me in Cozy program.



Tickets are \$45 and people can register at 722-1920 or neenah.org. Those who spend \$50 downtown receive a \$10 gift certificate.

Free parking is available in the Church Street ramp.

## ‘Tailspin’ signing

Author John Armbruster signs a copy of “Tailspin” at Lyons Fine Books in Neenah last week for an aviation enthusiast. “Tailspin” is about Gene Moran, a World War II B-17 tail gunner who survived a 4-mile fall after his B-17 was shot down. He did not tell anyone about the incident for nearly 70 years until a young history teacher learned of his story.

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# 19th century institutions recalled with historical marker

By Dan Roherty  
NEENAH NEWS

Winnebago County's history of housing its poor, ailing and mentally ill residents in a series of institutions that provided an evolving mix of social care and services over the past 150 years now has a permanent public recognition on the grounds of Park View Health Center.

Winnebago County Historical & Archaeological Society members and public officials dedicated a new historical marker off Butler Avenue in the area that once was home to the Winnebago County Asylum, Sunnyview Sanitarium and county Poor House and Poor Farm.

Society president Randy Domer, who explained the historical background behind the institutions during the dedication Aug. 17, said the need arose in the aftermath of the Civil War, which created a hardship for families of soldiers lost or impacted by the war trying to return to a sense of normalcy. The first national response to that social crisis was the creation of poor farms.

Winnebago County established its poor farm in 1871 on land it purchased in 1865. Additional wings were later added for an insane asylum, from which patients who were physically able provided labor for the farm, producing crops and dairy products either for residents or sold to offset operating costs. Those suffering from mental illness and tuberculosis, as well as those needing care due to aging, poverty, or not able to care for themselves were also treated.

In 1873, the state built the Northern State Hospital for the Insane, just east of the poor farm and asylum. Short-term patients would receive treatment at the state



Neenah News

County executive Jon Doemel and historian Shirley Brabender Mattox unveil a historical marker near Park View Health Center recognizing public institutions that cared for the poor and mentally ill starting in the 19th century.

facility and the chronically ill went to the county institution. The county approved funding in 1893 for a new county asylum designed by noted architect William Waters east of the poor house, which finally segregated the poor from the mentally ill.

The threat of smallpox and tuberculosis in the early 1900s led to construction of the Sunny View Tuberculosis Sanitarium in 1910, followed by a nurses home in 1923. More than 1,800 patients died at the sanitarium from its opening in 1915 until it closed its doors in 1971.

The poor farm's cemetery at the end of Butler just across County Y, now known as Sunnyview Cemetery, has 17 Civil War veterans buried there among about 400 others in graves with small concrete markers but no names. In 2003, community members with help from the Winnebago Genealogical Society were able to

identify burials here.

The poor house became the Winnebago County Home for the Retired in 1953, later named Pleasant Acres, which moved to a new facility in 1967 and became part of Park View Health Center in 1973.

Thursday's public dedication included comments from Winnebago County Executive Jon Doemel and local historian Shirley Brabender Mattox.

Domer credited Mike Elder, county director of facilities, with helping the historical society work through the details of getting the marker established – a process that started five years ago – along with Steve Cummings and Austin Frederick for their work in assembling the historical information.

Domer also thanked the group in attendance on the grounds entering Park View where the marker's brief history and pho-

tos of the buildings reside.

"Sometimes we think at the historical society we're the only ones who realize how important that serving local history is," he said, "but having you all here today I think is just another good example that we're starting to get word out in the community and educating people and informing people about our past, and why it is important to know what that is."

Doemel said these institutions showed the county's long history of support for housing and the stability of its residents. He also praised Elder's choice of locations that highlights "some of the beautiful lands that we have here at Park View so the residents can enjoy it as well as the spectators coming to see it."

Brabender Mattox referred to newspaper reports on the Winnebago County Asylum project that had unanimous county board support for the elevated lakefront location along with the jam-packed dedication ceremony in February 1894 that filled the building with interested residents.

She said Neenah city attorney J.C. Kerwin, later a Wisconsin Supreme Court justice, spoke at the dedication where he noted the efforts of Neenah board members to support and advance the project as an important step in serving the region.

"They looked at the new structure with pride," a newspaper story quoted Kerwin as saying.

"Although the buildings are no longer here, we must save their memories by telling the stories so the next generation and the one after that will know that people in Winnebago County cared and acted to take care of the poor and less fortunate," Brabender Mattox said.

walk the red carpet at the

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# Magnificent migrations can be viewed around area

By Rob Zimmer  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Believe it or not, the migrations of fall have begun and here in Neenah, there are many great places you can take in the wonderful journeys of our birds, butterflies and more.

## Kimberly Point

One of the best places to take in late summer and fall migration is to simply sit along the shore at Kimberly Point and watch the birds go by. Depending upon the time of day, the varieties of birds encountered may change. Early mornings and near sunset are the best, as that is when most birds are most active.

From the shore, watch the water for migrating birds such as waterfowl, purple martins, swallows, as well as common nighthawks and osprey.

Here along the Lake Winnebago shoreline, you'll also see large numbers of migrating Green Darner dragonflies, as well as monarchs, throughout late August and early to mid-September.

The biggest concentrations of migrating dragonflies and monarchs happen in late afternoon toward evening. You may also be fortunate enough to see them arrive at roosting sites along shorelines trees.

## Friendship Trail/Loop

The trails surrounding Little Lake Butte des Mort are an excellent place to see water birds on migration, as well as purple martins, swallows, and several species of herons that slowly make their way south during late August and September.



Photos by Rob Zimmer

Migrating birds and butterflies are active in the area over the next several weeks.

You'll also see shorebirds along the shorelines and low areas in the water, where they feed voraciously on tiny morsels of food using their long legs and beaks to stir up the water and sweep up insects, plant material, snails and mussels.

This is also a great place to watch for monarchs on their southern migration where wildflowers bloom along the shore.

## Wilderness Park

In the forest and wetlands of Wilderness Park, songbirds arrive in breathtaking waves during late August and September. Wood warblers of many species congregate here in the morning after migrating all night. You'll also see thrushes,



such as hermit thrush, Swainsons thrush, wood thrush and veery.

Catbirds, robins, cedar waxwings and other songbirds can be seen here in large numbers during fall migration.

Migrating monarchs can also be seen in the wildflowers along the woodland edge.

## Fox River

All along the Fox River watch for migrating songbirds, waterfowl, shorebirds and more well into September.

A variety of herons and egrets can be seen along the shoreline as they begin to slowly move south. Great egret, green heron, great blue heron and black-crowned night heron can be seen at any time, any place along the river.

Throughout the next several weeks, more and more waterfowl will arrive. Ducks, geese, even the first swans will be arriving over the next month or so.

## Right at home

You can even enjoy the fall migration right in your own backyard. Hummingbird migration is in full swing and will continue throughout September. Putting up a few feeders or enticing them with beautiful wildflowers and annuals is a great way to welcome them to your own backyard.

Monarchs, as well, are attracted to late blooming wildflowers and annuals such as zinnias, cosmos, heliotrope, New England aster, Joe Pye weed, cardinal flower and black-eyed Susans.

If you've got crab apples or other fruiting trees, watch for flocks of robins, cedar waxwings, Baltimore orioles and others to stop by for a snack on their way south.

The seedheads of fading summer blooms attract house wrens, chickadees, American goldfinches, American tree sparrows, and many other birds that need energy and sustenance for their journey south.



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# Teacher turnover

FROM PAGE 1

ACT 10 was signed into law by former Gov. Scott Walker, which gained national attention for stripping collective bargaining from state and local government employees, including teachers. It was signed by Walker in 2011.

“When examining teacher turnover rates on a year-by-year basis, one might expect the years affected by the COVID-19 pandemic to stand out,” the report says. “Various sectors saw elevated worker turnover during the pandemic years, and many policy observers and practitioners expected teachers to follow suit, particularly given the pressures associated with the shift to remote learning and the subsequent return to school buildings.”

The report relies on a sweeping analysis of public school staffing data from the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (DPI) going back to 2009, which researchers used to determine teacher turnover rates for individual districts and the state as a whole. The analysis examined nearly 116,000 teachers at roughly 450 school districts and other K-12 entities over a 15-year period.

From 2009 to 2023, an average of 11.5% of the state’s teachers turned over each year. Coming into the 2022-23 school year (referred to as 2023 in the report), turnover rose to 15.8% – the highest percentage during the years studied. The 2023 rate included the highest levels on record of teachers moving between districts and the second-highest levels of teachers leaving Wisconsin public school classrooms for some other pursuit.

“This effect is especially concerning given our findings that turnover is highest in precisely those schools where students face the biggest challenges and might benefit the most from a stable environment in which to learn,” the report states. “As students recover from the worst of pandemic disruption, that stability may be even more important.”

To further understand statewide teacher turnover, we broke it down into two categories. The first is “moves,” or teachers who move from one Wisconsin district in one year to teach in another Wisconsin district the next year. The other is “leaves,” or teachers who are present in the state public school data one year but do not show up as teachers in the data at all the next year.

In Neenah, the turnover rate for teachers since 2009 is 8.83%. The leave rate in the district was 7.01% while the move-in, move-out rate was a net positive of almost 2%. The data from the study shows the move-in rate for teachers was 3.56% and the move-out rate was 1.82% for a net rate of 1.74%.

The report explains during the 14-year span for the study, the leave rate continued to climb from 1.1% in 2010 to 4.7% in 2023.

“In that 14-year span, only three years saw a decline in the move rate from the previous year. This overall rise is likely also related to Act 10, which diminished the role of seniority in teachers’ work ar-

rangements and compensation,” the report states. “In 2012 and thereafter, teachers who may otherwise have remained in the same district for years could instead switch districts without sacrificing as many advantages associated with the length of their tenure.”

Additional findings:

**Teacher leaves outnumber moves:**

The average teacher move rate was 2.9%, while the average statewide leave rate was 8%. Wisconsin’s leave rate ranged from a low of 6.4% in 2011 to a high of 10.4% in 2012. This 2012 high was tied to Act 10 and was likely driven by a one-time increase in retirements. The leave rate in 2023 was nearly as high at 10.1%.

**Rural, urban retention challenges differ:**

The report highlights how teacher retention strategies may need to vary depending on their location. Urban districts’ primary concern may be teachers leaving the public school classroom or the state entirely.

**Teachers of color most affected:**

Turnover among white teachers, who make up the great majority of the state’s educator workforce, was slightly below the overall state average during the period studied. Meanwhile, turnover among teachers of color was substantially higher. This may reflect, in part, the fact that the state’s Black teachers are concentrated in districts with high turnover rates for teachers of all races.

# Sign ordinance

FROM PAGE 1

note the Novaks have standing in the lawsuit because they’re taxpaying residents of Neenah.

The city argued the purpose of its ordinance is to regulate outdoor sign advertising and display, to protect the safety and welfare of the public, to promote well-maintained and attractive sign displays within the community and to provide for adequate business identification, advertising and communication.

“Allowing Neenah residents to leave random signs up indefinitely would frustrate the city’s goals,” documents state. “For example, prolific and permanent resident signs may obstruct sight lines and confuse the ability to identify signs being utilized for safety or business purposes.”

WMC attorneys wrote that Neenah’s ordinance prohibits signs that advertise off-premises businesses and commercial advertising on parked vehicles, and imposes time-related restrictions for certain signs.

WMC is seeking a declaration that the sign ordinance is unconstitutional and invalid; a permanent injunction prohib-

iting the city from enforcing its sign ordinance; and unspecified damages, costs and attorney fees.

In denying the city’s motion for summary judgment, Judge Daniel Bissett noted the constitutionality of the Neenah sign ordinance is ripe for judicial determination and that the plaintiffs have the elements or conditions met to obtain declaratory relief.

City Attorney David Rashid said he doesn’t comment on ongoing litigation. A telephone conference is scheduled in October to determine the next steps in the case.

The circuit court lawsuit is separate from a federal lawsuit on the same topic that was filed in January by the Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty who is representing residents Tim and Megan Florek.

The Floreks contend the city’s efforts to have signs removed from homes in the Shattuck Middle School neighborhood protesting rezoning efforts are unconstitutional.

In April, a federal judge issued an injunction prohibiting the city from enforcing the sign ordinance during the duration of that lawsuit.

WMC attorneys cited the federal decision in its legal brief.

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Neenah News

SVDP director of operations Jeremy Pingel stands in the new food pantry space.

## Food pantry

FROM PAGE 1

handle the need and doesn't have enough storage to keep up.

"Food insecurity is growing and not going away," he said. "We've all been to the grocery store and seen the prices. And those that are underemployed or under-served – that dollar is stretching less and less."

The lack of cold storage at the existing pantry has resulted in donations from other organizations being turned away. The new location will have a walk-in freezer and cooler, each 40 feet long, and a significantly expanded space for storage.

The walk-in cooler was funded in part by Feeding America. The city of Neenah is expected to provide \$115,000 in Community Development Block Grant funding to assist in the purchase and installation of the walk-in freezer. Although SVDP hasn't yet received that money, the city has been working through federal grant requirements and the pantry is expected to receive the funds after it completes the project.

While the current location requires pantry visitors to wait inside the resale store, the new location will provide a more private and dignified entrance and waiting area, which is important to Pingel, who as a child used food pantries with his mother.

"It was always in church basements and it felt like we were poor," he said. "But this will be great. It'll be a grocery store setting. It's a pick yourself pantry so you can walk around with a shopping cart and pick

what you want."

SVDP's emergency needs program will also operate out of the location, offering utility, rental, gas, and medication assistance and other services.

Pingel said one of the biggest challenges with the location has been fundraising. He noted J. J. Keller, Community First Credit Union, Secura and Bergstrom Automotive have partnered with SVDP to support the pantry.

"We're still looking for as much help as we can get because this is very expensive," he said. "And as we all know, food isn't getting cheaper. Gas prices don't help with that either as they climb."

In addition to monetary donations to support the expansion, the pantry also accepts donations of food and personal hygiene items and needs volunteers.

The move will allow the pantry to be more consistent with the food and hygiene supplies it offers, Pingel said, noting the extra space will facilitate an expanded selection of items and additional frozen and refrigerated options such as meat and vegetables.

The pantry is nondenominational and free to residents, with a form of ID for all household members and proof of residency in Neenah or Menasha required. It is open for limited hours on Wednesdays, Fridays and Saturdays. A full list of pantry hours and a link to donate is at svdpneenah.org.

As the only food pantry in Neenah, Pingel said it's important for SVDP to continue meeting the needs of the community.

"We want to help someone get through this and not be a permanent need," he said. "That's why we're here."

# Calendar of events

### Saturday, Sept. 2

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park

### Monday, Sept. 4

Labor Day Parade, 10 a.m., Menasha's Curtis Reed Square to downtown Neenah

Labor Fest, 11 a.m., Neenah Labor Temple, 157 S. Green Bay Road

### Thursday, Sept. 7

Fused by Numbers: Women's Collaborative Mural, 6 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

### Saturday, Sept. 9

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park

Ultimate Ladies Day, 9 a.m., downtown Neenah and DoubleTree

Neenah Fun Run to End Duchenne, 9 a.m., Memorial Park

Footloose Friday, 10:30 a.m., Neenah Public Library

Author Meet and Greet: Vivian Probst, 11 a.m., Lyons Fine Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Ground Round Live Music Series: Rings Band, 6 p.m., 1010 Cameron Way

### Sunday, Sept. 10

Bruce Carroll, 1:30 p.m., Word Fellowship, 1020 Tullar Road, Neenah

BBQ dinner fundraiser, 3 p.m., Our Saviors Lutheran Church, 809 S. Commercial St.

### Tuesday, Sept. 12

A Day in the Park for the Young at Heart, 9 a.m., Fritsch Park

### Thursday, Sept. 14

Brigade's Open House, 4 p.m., 109 W. Columbian Ave.

### Saturday, Sept. 16

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park

Intertribal Pow Wow, 1 p.m., Shattuck Park

## Business news roundup

Transportation fleets will have more ways to support their legal defense and exonerate drivers in rear-end collisions and sideswipe crashes with new auxiliary cameras from **J. J. Keller & Associates**. They are part of the company's VideoProtects Video Event Management System and Encompass Video Event Management System. The new lineup of auxiliary cameras includes two styles of cargo/utility cameras, side view cameras, and an exterior camera.

Neenah was recently featured in **Business View Magazine**, which features business-to-business profiles, news and opinion pieces with more than 877,000 executive subscribers. The story is based on an interview between community development deputy director Brad Schmidt and Business View editor Karen Sucra. To view a current issue, visit [businessviewmagazine.com](http://businessviewmagazine.com).

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# After 2-0 start, Neenah turns attention to FVA

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

Posting two wins in the nonconference portion of the schedule was a nice way for the Neenah football team to start the 2023 season.

But now is when the real football starts for the Rockets.

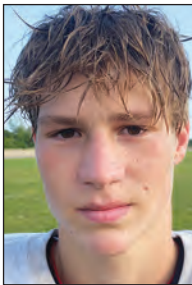
"It feels good to get two wins but all of the teams are going to get harder and harder as we go now," said senior tight end Luke Keller. "Once we get into the FVA, the physicality gets ramped up and we just have to get better every practice."

The Rockets got their final tuneup in for Fox Valley Association play last Friday in a weather-shortened 40-0 thumping of rival Menasha.

Grant Dean rushed for 188 yards and three touchdowns on just 14 carries, while freshman quarterback Ashton Van Beek ran for a score and connected with Keller for a touchdown pass in the win.

The defense also had a bounce-back performance after struggling a bit in Week 1 to keep the Bluejays off the scoreboard.

But other than bragging rights in the longstanding rivalry, the win over Menasha doesn't mean much for Neenah's long-term goals. That pursuit started Thursday night when they traveled to upstart Appleton East to kick off the FVA portion of the schedule.



Keller

Head coach Steve Jung said the team's intensity picked up in preparation for the Patriots as it does every season when the conference games roll around.

"I think so," Jung said about the uptick in intensity. "It's teams we've played for a long time. It's FVA football and every game is a battle. We need to focus on ourselves and keep improving so we can get through the tough schedule that is the FVA."

Despite the likes of Kaukauna, Appleton North and Kimberly on the schedule in the coming weeks, Jung emphasized the

importance of not looking past any team on the schedule. But staying focused on each opponent is something that is easier to do when every week is a matchup against a quality opponent.

"We're fortunate that we have a conference that's tough from the bottom to the top because it does keep the kids focused," Jung said. "We have to play well to go 1-0 (each week) and our mindset has to be there. Each week brings its own new challenges. I think our kids are aware that each week they have to rise up."

Last season, all six conference wins were by double digits – an impressive feat in a league as stacked as the FVA – but that doesn't tend to be the norm in the conference.

The Rockets figure to be in plenty of close games over the next seven weeks and will look to find ways to pull out victories.

"It's just, you can't make mistakes playing in the FVA. You have to trust your teammates and play for each other," Keller said. "Then its 100 percent physicality every play."

ference play Friday night.

St. Mary Catholic is coming off a 20-8 loss to Ozaukee in its final nonconference contest last week and will face one of the favorites to open league play in Johnson Creek.

Both teams enter the game with 1-1 records but the Bluejays enter the game off a 47-14 trouncing of Palmyra-Eagle.

Johnson Creek racked up more than 330 yards and five touchdowns on the ground in the win over the Eagles, led by quarterback Dylan Bredlow. Bredlow averaged 12.1 yards per carry in gaining 193 yards on the night.

The Bluejays defense also had a big night with three interceptions – one of which was returned for a touchdown – while holding Palmyra-Eagle to 252 yards of total offense.

St. Mary Catholic's offense never got going against a physical Ozaukee defense. After a big night in the season opener against Rosholt, the Zephyrs were held to less than 150 yards of total offense by the Warriors.

The lone touchdown in the game for St. Mary Catholic came on an 80-yard fumble return by Ashton Post in the third quarter.

Four of the Zephyrs first six games are on the road, but the team does return home Sept. 8 to face another Trailways contender Pardeeville.

## Zephyrs team look to rebound from loss

It's been a while since the St. Mary Catholic football team had to bounce back from a loss to another Wisconsin team, but that's the boat the Zephyrs are in as they prepare to open Trailways Con-

# Rocket swimmers boast talented, veteran lineup

Neenah News

With a strong nucleus of state-caliber swimmers returning from last season, the sky may be the limit for what the Neenah girls swim team can achieve this season.

The Rockets boast six swimmers that swam at the state meet last year and head coach Carrie Raeth believes that experience will contribute to what the team achieves this season.

"It is a big deal for them to have gained state-level experience so that they can keep that in mind every day at practice," Raeth

## Girls swimming PREVIEW

wrote in an email to the Neenah News. "They can also use it as motivation throughout the season because they want us to be the best team we can possibly be at the end of the season."

The Rockets return three swimmers who competed in individual events at the state meet last season.

Senior Naomi Cortina qualified in a pair of events, swimming in both the 100-yard and 200-yard freestyle events, while fellow senior Emma Bottensek had the highest individual finish by taking 10th in the 100-yard backstroke.

Joining that duo was junior Rylie Bau-

man, who qualified in the 50-yard freestyle.

Neenah also qualified for state in both freestyle relays, which included the likes of senior Alliyah Lima, junior Kacie Stamm and sophomore Anna Mulroy. All three also swam multiple events in the Rockets' regular lineup a year ago.

Raeth also expects varsity newcomers Breleigh Maurer and Mia Lerner to help round out the lineup.

Neenah will also have a strong group of divers to bring to the pool this season, including two who competed at sectionals last year.

Junior Hannah Slabbert was Neenah's top diver a year ago and narrowly missed out on a chance to compete at state, while fellow junior Ceci Pirwitz also dove on the varsity level the entire year and is back as well.

That duo will be joined by freshman Sydney Hansman, who could be competing for a spot on the varsity squad, and Sofia Diaz.

The Rockets will host their first Fox Valley Association meet of the season Tuesday when they host Appleton East.

Neenah finished second in the FVA last season to Appleton North, while the Lightning were the only team to finish ahead of the Rockets at the WIAA Division 1 sectional last season.

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# Rockets' offense erupts in season-opening triumph

By Dustin Riese  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

There is excitement brewing around the Neenah High School soccer team.

Coming off a successful 2022 season and now in their second season under head coach William Krautkramer, the Rockets seemed poised for some big things entering the 2023 campaign.

It certainly got off to that kind of start.

Neenah erupted for four first half goals and rolled to an easy win in its season-opener at home on Saturday, beating Seymour, 8-0, in a nonconference tussle.

"I am very happy with the win, but happier that 23 of our 24 players saw time on

the field today," Krautkramer said. That is extremely important when you look at our non-conference schedule this year. The kids played well and came out focused from the start which played a huge role in our success today."

The Rockets needed just six minutes to take the lead for good as Preston Schamens found the back of the net to start the scoring barrage.

Blake Rhodes and Keegan Vande Hei each scored in the 25th minute to make the score 3-0 before Rhodes – who also picked up two assists in the match – scored again about 12 minutes later to cap the first-half scoring.

As much as the offense was stealing the show, Krautkramer also highlighted the Rockets' defensive effort.

"We are going with a new defense this season and they jumped into our attack right away," Krautkramer said. "That helped open things up for our wings which created some matchup problems for the Seymour defense. If they can continue to play like that, I like our chances to beat anyone in the state as we have the talent to make some noise this season."

The second half was much of the same for the Rockets with Caleb Reddick opening the scoring about five minutes after intermission.

Vande Hei picked up his second goal in the 53rd minute before Miles Hessenthaler made the score 7-0 about five minutes later.

The Rockets then ended the game by the mercy rule in the 65th minute on a goal from Kristian Heyes.

"We have some great seniors on this team, and their leadership is going to guide us this season," Vande Hei said. "The more they can lead, the more confidence the rest of this roster will have once they step on the field. That should lead us to more wins and help us be more successful in the FVA. I like our team's chances this season and I feel very confident in our abilities as a group."

## Prep sports roundup

### CROSS COUNTRY

#### Neenah has strong outing at Jamie Block Invite

The Neenah cross country teams had an impressive run at the Jamie Block Invitational, hosted by West Bend West last weekend.

The unique event was scored by grades, meaning members of the same class were timed against each other.

In the girls races, Mazie Olksowski finished first among the junior girls race, finishing about 54 seconds ahead of the rest of the field. Teammate Brooke Veith finished in sixth place among the juniors.

Neenah had three finishers in the top five in both the freshman and sophomore races. Natalie Schultz, Maddie Schoonover and Elise Braaton finished first,

second and fourth, respectively, in the freshman race, while Natalie Willes, Elsa Gruber and Eme Olkowski took second, third and fourth, respectively, in the sophomore race. Mea Jones added a 10th-place finish for the sophomores.

Lauren Linstedt was the top senior runner for Neenah placing sixth.

On the boys side, Neenah had five runners in the top 10 of the senior race with Wyatt Armock taking second followed by Jaden Leal in third, Charles Fredrickson in fourth, Owen Martin in seventh and Sam Kleisner in 10th.

Leading the juniors was Braedy Klawikowski, who took second, with Harmon Posegate and Nolan Smith placing seventh and ninth, respectively. The sophomores had four runners in the top nine with Zach Verhagen in second, Brayden Willis in fifth, Gideon Benner in seventh

and Jackson Holzheuw in ninth, while the freshmen had one top 10 finisher in Jackson Herres, who took ninth.

#### Zephyr girls collect title at invite

With three runners finishing in the top 10, the St. Mary Catholic girls claimed the title at the 13-team T-Bird Invite, hosted by Iola-Scandinavia.

The Zephyrs finished with 63 points to place first, comfortably ahead of a perennially strong Winneconne team which had 87 points. Bonduel was one point back in third place.

Leading the way for St. Mary Catholic was Lauren Ripley, who placed fourth overall, followed by Claire Higgins in seventh and Adison Dinka in ninth.

St. Mary Catholic's final two scoring runners were Maria Marti in 22nd place

and Haley Gustafson in 28th place.

The St. Mary Catholic boys were led by Benjamin Schoeni who took 13th place. Ethan Auer and Ian Albino finished in 28th and 30th place, respectively, while the scoring group was rounded out by Brandon DeBral in 106th place and Noah Valentine in 123rd place.

The boys placed ninth overall.

### SOCCER

#### Barrientos scores four goals in Zephyrs' win

Kieran Barrientos racked up four goals, including three in the first half, and picked up an assist to fuel St. Mary Catholic's 8-0 win over New Holstein on Tuesday.

Grant Bergstrom and Harry Higgins opened the scoring for the Zephyrs, be-

SEE **Prep roundup** ON PAGE 15

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# Briones brings presence on both sides of the ball

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

In the final regular season game of the 2022 season, the Neenah High School football coaches decided to try something new.

As the Rockets geared up to play Appleton East, the plan was to see how standout outside linebacker Connor Briones would fare playing an interior defensive line position.

The move, well, kind of created a monster. At least for the Rockets' FVA opponents.

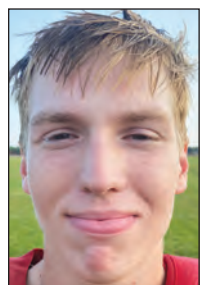
Briones has held down both positions at different times through the first two games of the 2023 season and the senior is happy to contribute any way he can to making the defense successful.

I had mostly played outside but then moved to the d-line for Appleton East to see what I could do there. It worked all right so we decided to see what I could do there this year and see how much trouble I could cause," Briones said with a smile. "I've been moving around a lot on defense. Whatever they need me to do or whatever position they need me to fill that's fine."

Neenah head coach Steve Jung said it's Briones ability that makes him productive no matter what position he lines up at.

"He's really an explosive and athletic kid and he just brings it on every play," Jung said. "No matter how tired he is, he just keeps coming. That's a trait we see in practice and in the weight room."

That's also why the Neenah coaching staff added a little more to Briones' plate this season.



Briones

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In addition to being an anchor on the defensive side of the ball, Briones has taken on a bigger role on offense lining up at tight end often next to Luke Keller, who was an all-Fox Valley Association selection at the position last season.

"It was a pretty big step because I didn't play a whole lot at tight end last year," said Briones, who did have one catch last year for a 21-yard touchdown. "I was up for it and willing to work hard at getting my blocks down and routes ran and things like that.

"At times it gets a little tiring, but I know I have my teammates to lean on, too."

So far this season Briones has two catches for 55 yards, although Neenah has attempted just nine passes in the first two games.

Most of his work on offense revolves around creating holes for the ground game and watching the Rockets' bevy of ball carriers scamper into the end zone.

"That's fun for us," Briones said. "Seeing our guys score means that we did our job and now we get to go celebrate with the people who finished it for us."

As much as Briones has enjoyed lining up on the offensive side of the ball, his heart still lives to play defense.

He finished third on the team in total tackles a year ago with four tackles-for-loss and an interception. Through two games, he is tied for third on the team in tackles while sharing the team lead in tackles for loss.



Neenah senior Connor Briones holds the edge on a running play against De Pere in the season opener. Briones is one of the few players for the Rockets playing both offense and defense this season.

In addition to lining up in multiple positions, Briones also has worked on stepping his game up entering his senior season to help contribute to the Rockets' defense.

"I'm a lot faster off the ball this year and I can read a lot of stuff better so I can get

there quick enough," said Briones, who hopes to play collegiately next season. "I read coverages a little better, see where the ball is and see where my guy is. And I'm

SEE **Senior Standout** ON PAGE 15

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# Senior Standout

FROM PAGE 14

definitely better at rerouting guys coming off the ball.”

Briones will be part of one of the few classes that will experience playing at the legendary Rocket Stadium at the old Neenah High School as well on the turf at the new stadium.

He said it was cool to see all of the new items that were associated with the new homefield and be able to have the experience of playing at both sites.

“To play on both fields and to feel the difference in the energy on both sites is pretty cool,” Briones said. “I think it’s something that sink in more later.”

There would be nothing better than to christen the new stadium with an FVA title – a crown the Rockets shared with Kimberly last season.

It’s something Briones said that he and his teammates thought about playing at the younger levels and worked hard to get to the point where they can compete with the league’s best.

“That’s certainly something we hoped

for,” Briones said. “It’s great to know that we’ve improved over the years and see that we can step up to the challenge. We have been able to help each other get better and now just keep going and going and going.”

As physically demanding as playing in the FVA is, though, there is another side to the week-in, week-out battles.

Briones said that practice allows players to get ready for the tough games but there is also a need for mental preparation as well.

“During the week it’s a lot of physical preparation, but then after practice it’s all mental. See the rep first and know what you have to do,” Briones said. “Like (Coach) Jung says every once in a while, to win the game the second time you have to imagine it the first time.”

And Briones is planning on doing plenty of winning this season and says he and his teammates are hoping to make the first season on the new field a memorable one.

“Playing in the FVA is a lot of competition, a lot of effort being put in and not a lot of jogging,” Briones said. “We’re definitely going out to compete and give it everything we’ve got. We want to show the FVA what we have here.”

# Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 13

fore Barrientos rattled off three straight goals to give St. Mary Catholic a 5-0 lead. Nathan Seiske assisted on one of Barrientos’ tallies.

In the second half Braeden Brenn scored twice before Barrientos notched the final tally to set the eight-goal cushion.

## VOLLEYBALL

### Zephyrs claim Omro Invitational crown

St. Mary Catholic went a perfect 5-0 and finished first at the Omro Invitational on Saturday.

The Zephyrs topped Bonduel (25-14, 27-26), Omro (25-18, 25-14) and Green Bay West (25-10, 25-13) in pool play before knocking off Westfield (25-13, 25-12) in the semifinals. In the title match, the Zephyrs won a rematch with Bonduel, 25-15, 25-15 to take the title.

Lauren Fischer led the Zephyrs with 23 kills and 23 digs, while Audrey Norville added 17 kills and 29 digs.

Sammie Weiss and Stella Virlee finished with 40 and 36 assists, respectively, while Virlee also racked up a team-high nine aces.

# Rockets finish 2-2 at Homestead tournament

Neenah split its four matches at the two-day Homestead Tournament, knocking off Homestead (19-25, 25-21, 15-11) and St. Thomas More (26-24, 25-18), while falling to Kettle Moraine (21-25, 25-20, 15-11) and Hamilton (25-19, 25-22).

No individual statistics were available from the matches.

## TENNIS

### St. Mary Catholic rolls past Wayland Academy

The Zephyrs won all seven matches in their dual meet against Wayland Academy, posting perfect 6-0, 6-0 wins in three of the flights.

Erin Blaney at No. 4 singles won without dropping a game as did the No. 1 doubles team of Emily Vogel and Kassadi Calmes and the No. 3 pairing of Nolie Anderson and Kaylee Sommerfeld.

The No. 2 doubles tandem of Nadia Alexander and Mackenzie Barmash-Turner lost only one game in their win.

Adding singles wins for St. Mary Catholic were Adel Schneider at the No. 1 flight, Audrey Wanless at the No. 2 flight and Alice Cole at the No. 3 flight.



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# Kid Scoop

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE  
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## SMILE POWER

Smile and the world smiles with you! Smiles have the power to make people happy. Maybe that is why millions of people use the smile emoji when sending messages. And with a smile, people from different countries who speak different languages can communicate.

### Just What the Doctor Ordered

Doctors even tell us that laughter can help sick people heal more quickly. All in all, a smile is very powerful.



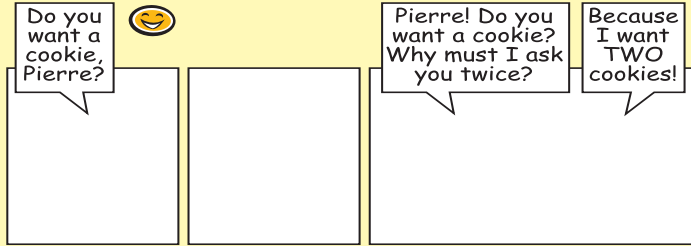
Cut out the word balloons below and paste them in the correct order on the comic strip above.

They were still in the can!  
 How did you get this bump on your head?  
 How could some little peas hurt you?  
 I got hit by some peas.

Standards Link: Health: Identify activities and actions that promote or enhance emotional health.

### Laughter! The Universal Language!

There are jokes from all over the world. What can you learn about people by reading their jokes? Draw your own comic strip using this joke from Martinique.



Do you want a cookie, Pierre?  
 Pierre! Do you want a cookie? Why must I ask you twice?  
 Because I want TWO cookies!

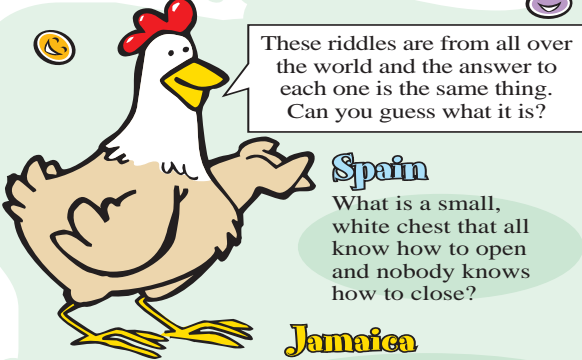
Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

### Comedy Cafe

How many silly things can you circle in this picture?



Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.



These riddles are from all over the world and the answer to each one is the same thing. Can you guess what it is?

#### Spain

What is a small, white chest that all know how to open and nobody knows how to close?

#### Jamaica

What is more useful when it is broken?

#### Zambia

What is an entire little house without a door?

#### Peru

In a pot there are two kinds of food. What is it?

#### Malawi

I have built my house without any door. What is it?

#### Afghanistan

In a bowl of china fixed, two liquids with colors unmixed. What is it?

Have you figured out the answer? If not, color all the boxes with odd numbers. Read the letters that are left and you will know the answer.

2	7	9	6	5	8	4	3	2
A	H	T	N	W	E	G	P	G

Standards Link: Social Science: Compare life in different places and recognize that some aspects of cultures are similar.

How many smiles can you find on this page?

### Extra! Extra! Superlative Fun

Look through the newspaper for three happy pictures. Label one "Happy," one "Happier," and one "Happiest." Repeat this game with other words.

Standards Link: Vocabulary Development: Understand comparative and superlative case.

### Kid Scoop Puzzler

Why does a crane raise one leg when he stands in the water?  
 Put the words in the right order to discover the answer to this joke from Poland.

legs he both down! raised would he Because fall if



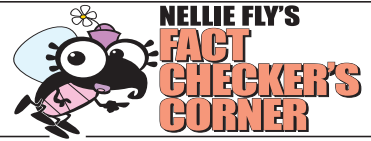
Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

### Double Double Word Search

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

OPEN	COMIC	SMILE	LAUGHTER	FOOD	JOKES	WORLD	QUICKLY	GUESS	ORDER	PEOPLE	SILLY	BOWL	LEARN																																																																												
W	O	D	O	O	F	E	R	A	W	Y	C	P	T	V	L	L	W	O	B	L	O	Q	E	I	A	O	E	C	N	K	R	M	M	N	U	Y	L	I	R	C	D	S	P	S	G	L	P	M	A	I	E	A	S	Z	H	L	O	O	E	U	R	E	W	C	T	I	E	C	L	Q	U	J	O	K	E	S	P	U	U	G	B	F	D	L	R	O	W	F	Q

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



With so much information available in print, on TV and online every day, it is important to know that some information is **true** and some is **false** or misleading.

Sometimes news reports make a mistake. Good journalists will let readers and viewers know of the error as soon as possible. Other times, false information is designed on purpose to make you feel a certain way.

### How do you tell the difference between fact and fiction?

1. Read beyond the story's headline. Headlines can't tell the whole story.
2. Do some research! Go to the library and look up more information. Your librarian can help you.
3. Look for more information online. Be sure to check more than one online site as some sites simply repeat false information.
4. Make sure the publications and websites you use to check facts are trustworthy.
5. Ask a parent or family member to help you understand more about the story.

### FACT CHECKER CHALLENGE OF THE WEEK

One of these statements is true and one is false. Do the research and find out. Then share what you learned with your friends and family!

Smiling makes us feel happier.

TRUE  FALSE

Smiling is contagious.

TRUE  FALSE

Was it easy or difficult to find out if the above statements were true or false? It's not always easy being a News Fact Checker. But it's important to always try to get the **whole** story!

Standards Link: Research: Locate and check information about a given topic using multiple resources.

### Write On!

## What makes you smile?

Write a paragraph about what makes you smile. Give at least three details about this.

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