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Tourist housing rules to be updated

Judge dismisses time limits in city ordinance

By Bethanie Gengler

A circuit court judge dismissed two challenges to Neenah's tourist housing ordinance and ruled that one requirement of the ordinance is inconsistent with state statutes and unenforceable during a hearing last week.

The ruling handed down by Judge Daniel Bissett affirmed that the Wisconsin Re-

altors Association (WRA) had standing to bring the lawsuit on behalf of its members and the issue is ripe for judicial determination.

WRA filed a lawsuit last September, alleging the city's tourist housing ordinance violates state law and landowners' rights to use their property as a short-term rental.

The lawsuit challenged three portions of Neenah's ordinance that it said conflict with the statute: that tourist housing properties must be the primary residence of the applicant, that a tourist housing property may be rented no more than 120 days within a calendar year and that tourist housing permits, once granted, may be revoked by the director of Community Development for cause.

The city contended that representatives of the Realtors Association of Northeast Wisconsin, which is an affiliate of WRA, expressed support for the city's tourist housing ordinance in advance of it being enacted in 2017. From enactment to the date the lawsuit was filed the city received

SEE **Tourist housing** ON PAGE 10



Photo by David Hall

Parade treats

A young girl offers candy to Labor Day parade watchers during the Monday morning annual event that started in Menasha and ended in Neenah. See Page 7 for more Labor Day photos.

Treatment, recovery group works at success stories

Apricity agency marks National Recovery Month

By Jennifer Parmley

September is National Recovery Month, an observance that began in 1989 to educate the public that substance use treatment and mental health services can help people live healthy, rewarding lives.

Apricity, a nonprofit, full-spectrum, state-licensed, alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) certified treatment and recovery program, will celebrate the month by bringing awareness about substance use disorders and highlighting the strength of adults they serve in recovery through their annual fundraising campaign.

Apricity provides inpatient and transitional residential treatment, recovery support services, sober living, and job readiness/soft skills training to individu-

als afflicted with substance use disorders (SUD). Additionally, it provides community outreach and education about SUD, trains recovery coaches and supports patients in 10 regional Ascension and ThedaCare emergency departments and several behavioral health clinics who have experienced an opioid/stimulant overdose or have a history of misuse.

"Recovery is challenging every day for every person and it's a huge accomplishment," said Jill Harp, development director at Apricity. "We like to show that recovery works, that it happens every day, and that others can do it, too."

In addition to highlighting client success stories on social media and other marketing initiatives, the program will highlight stories from community figures such as law enforcement and community advocates.

"Recovery impacts everyone," Harp said. "When people are in recovery, the

community is for the better.'

Apricity recently shared two success stories of clients who have succeeded through its programs.

Emma, 34, received treatment four years ago from Apricity for drug addiction that began in her 20s. Shortly after treatment, she sought Apricity's Contract Packaging recovery supportive, job-training program.

The mother of two admits her social anxiety issues were strong during treatment but in the five years since joining the program, she's come out of her shell and gained confidence. After working her way through the program, she is a team leader, supervising others.

"I love it," she said. "I feel like there are always opportunities for other things to do there. It's different for every person, which I think is really cool."

SEE **Apricity** ON PAGE 10



Photo from Apricit

Emma is a mother of two who has found recovery success since joining the Apricity

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Corrections

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Celebrating 40 years of community building

FUTURENEENAH

What would Neenah be like without The Very Neenah Christmas event or Out to Lunch and evening concerts in Shattuck Park? Without a farmers market to get your fresh produce on Saturday mornings? Without Wisconsin Avenue street concerts to attend with family and friends? Without a vibrant and vital central city?

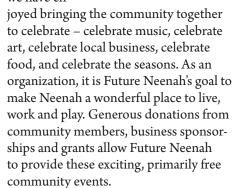
These all represent the work of Future Neenah.

Future Neenah was incorporated in 1983 by a group of dedicated citizens initially focused on a revitalization effort downtown. In the early 1990s the scope expanded to include the Greater Neenah community. Future Neenah has been hosting community-enhancing events and activities as part of our mission since 1992, and we've been the management arm of the Neenah Central City Business Improvement District since 2002.

Last year alone, Future Neenah hosted over 65 days of events with a total attendance in excess of 47,000 people. Those events had an estimated impact of more than \$3.3 million on the local economy.

As part of those events, we brought 90 hours of free musical entertainment to our community.

In 2023, we have en-



Our community's success is due to the generosity of our neighbors and the support of businesses and residents – like you! We encourage you to be the U in commUnity. Future Neenah exists to

bring people together with one common goal: to improve the economic and cultural vitality of the Neenah area.

Whether it's large-scale community projects such as waterfront access, trails, park development, supporting our business neighbors to help them grow, or providing events for your friends and neighbors to enjoy for free - we all work together to keep our community thriving and a welcoming place to do business, raise a family, and visit. Future Neenah is dedicated to quality of life.

There are many ways for you to leave a lasting impact on your community. Supporting Future Neenah today with an investment of your time, talent or resources ensures a strong community for tomorrow. Please consider being a part of Future Neenah's community efforts.

Interested and eager to learn more? Visit neenah.org, call 920-722-1920 or visit our office at 135 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Future Neenah Inc. is a community-driven, nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting the economic and cultural vitality of Neenah.

Downtown event marks Native American culture

The area's Native American culture and history will come alive Sept. 16 in downtown Neenah with a concert and tribal

The day will begin with music by Clinton Miller, a Stockbridge-Munsee Mohican Tribe member, at the Future Neenah Farmers Market.

The annual Neenah-Menasha Inter-Tribal Pow Wow will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. at Shattuck Park. The free event features dancers and drum groups from around Wisconsin. Native American food will be available to purchase.

"Native Americans have a rich musical and dancing tradition and we're looking forward to sharing and celebrating it with the entire Fox Cities community," said Jim Taylor, executive director of the Neenah Historical Society.

The powwow is co-hosted by the Neenah Historical Society and Menasha Historical Society, and sponsored by the city of Neenah, Bay Bank and Future Neenah.

Life term given in stabbing death

Neenah News

A 29-year-old Fox Crossing man was sentenced to life in prison Wednesday for the fatal stabbing of his female roommate in their apartment in 2021.

A Winnebago County jury found Phillip Dellar guilty in May of stabbing Leianna Mule, 30, more than 70 times in the 1100 block of Valley Road.

Dellar called 911 shortly before 7 p.m. July 25, 2021, and told dispatch "someone killed my girlfriend." Responding officers found the main entrance to the apartment complex locked and used a knife to gain

Dellar was found covered in blood, and he and Mule's child was located in one of

Mule was found in a back bedroom lying face down on the floor covered with a

Police conducted interviews with some of Mule's acquaintances and were informed Dellar was abusive and Mule was planning on leaving him.

One woman told police she overheard Dellar tell Mule, "If I can't have you, no



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Neenah Historical Society photo

Tree remembrance

Eighty-nine years ago, a marker was placed to dedicate the Old Council Tree. An oval stone occupies a position on Kimberly Point, about 150 feet from the location of the original wide spreading elm tree. The tree was removed in 1885 to widen the channel for industrial growth.

Edward Jones

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County committee overhaul reviewed

Supervisors would have fewer panel slots to fill

By Bethanie Gengler

The Winnebago County Board of Supervisors will vote later this month on whether to reduce the number of committees under the county board's purview.

The county authorized creation of a special task force in February to evaluate the existing committees and develop suggestions for improvement.

The county board currently has 12 standing committees and three boards under the county executive's purview. The committees have slots for 70 supervisor members, excluding legislative, committee on committees, and minor committees, commissions and boards.

The committees do the preliminary work of drafting resolutions and ordinances, reviewing budget requests and assisting in policy development. Each committee's recommendations are then sent to the full 36-member board for a vote.

The task force conferred with other counties and solicited the opinion of the state legislative counsel and the county corporation counsel. It also surveyed county board supervisors.

Supervisor Jacob Floam said the task force wanted to create a committee structure that was unique to Winnebago

"Essentially, what we were trying to do is create a structure that works for us," he said, "so we talked to a bunch of different people and reached out to different counties."

The task force's recommendation is to reduce the total number of committees to 10. The supervisor member slots in the committees would be reduced to 46. Floam said none of the committees are being eliminated.

"We're not eliminating any functions; the functions still need to remain," he said. "We're just consolidating them into more efficient groupings."

The remaining committees would include Public Works, Judiciary and Public



Floam

Safety, Finance and Administration, Natural Resources, Health and Human Services, Land Conservation, Aviation, Legislative, Planning and Zoning, and Solid Waste.

"Under this proposal, we will still have more committees

than Brown or Outagamie or Racine or Ozaukee - so those kind of similar-size counties - but we feel that we looked at what we could do, we looked at the limitations of what may be going too far and we think that this proposal will help us speed along the approval process for projects," Floam said.

He noted the change will not impact the way the departments hire or the daily county operations.

"The only thing that this would impact for the departments themselves is how they interface with us at the county board when they come for budget requests and when they come for other special measures," Floam said. "The only thing that it would change in how they run their operations is how they work with us. And it has nothing to do with how they execute their own missions."

Citizen members of the committees will still provide input and expertise, which is mandated by state statute. With the restructuring, the task force recommended a rule change that citizen members not be able to chair the new major standing committees and boards because the committees are considered "more powerful."

The task force's work focused on the bodies of jurisdiction over major departments. There are other committees, commissions and boards that were not reviewed, and the task force recommended those entities be looked at in the near future.

Floam said he's thankful to the other committee members for all the work they put into process.

"This is just an opportunity for us to kind of future-proof ourselves by making a more efficient structure that hopefully saves the taxpayer a little bit of money, and get things done a little bit quicker," he said.

Floam gave a presentation on the proposal at County Board's Tuesday meeting. The board is expected to vote on the measure at its Sept. 19 meeting.

"I think this was a well-rounded process," he said. "It was very open, it was very clear, it was very transparent, and I'm proud of the work that we've done and I hope the board adopts it."



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School district works around added spending needs

By Bethanie Gengler NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Joint School District is about 8% over budget while building the new high school and restructuring the middle and elementary schools, but Superintendent Mary Pfeiffer said at a meeting last month that it won't affect taxpayers.

In 2020, voters approved a \$114.9 million referendum, with a total cost of \$155 million, to build the new school, make safety and security upgrades throughout the district and renovate the existing high school to create an intermediate school for grades 5-6 and a middle school for grades 7-8.

Supply-chain issues and construction changes on the existing high school have now put the project at about \$15 million over budget. Pfieffer took up some residents' concerns about the cost at the Aug. 15 Board of Education meeting.

"When you think about 8% over budget, in this timeframe, we've done really well," she said, adding that the district took out a loan at 2% interest that it budgeted for.

"We're going to save our taxpayers over \$30 million dollars over the life of this loan," she said. "I don't think you can underestimate those costs because it's easy to look at what you're over budget, but not put it into perspective."

Several expenses and inflation caused the price increase. The addition of a geothermal system and a fourth gymnasium court was approved in late 2020 at a cost of \$6 million.

Pfeiffer said the geothermal system will be paid off in 13 years.

"It will be paid off because of where we're at with the loan; but I'll also tell you it's a savings of \$300,000 per year," she said.

In July 2021, the rising cost of steel added another \$7 million to the project. Pfeiffer said steel prices significantly increased in the two years since the project went out for bid.

Pfeiffer said the district made a com-

mitment that it wouldn't increase the mill rate - the tax rate that property values are assessed at - by more than 99 cents. For the 2022-23 year, the mill rate decreased by about 9% to \$6.82. That means a property owner with a property value of \$200,000 would pay \$1,364 in property taxes.

"If you look at your tax bill today, our mill rate is lower than when we passed the referendum," Pfeiffer said. "Now, that sounds outrageously crazy, but that's

The new high school opened this week, with the existing high school site at 1275 Tullar Road now operating as Neenah Middle School.

Winnebago County mourns loss of two public servants

Neenah News

A Winnebago County highway foreman and a former member of the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities are being remembered by their colleagues after being killed in a motorcycle accident Sept. 1 in Fond du Lac County.

Paul Delap, 58, succumbed to his injuries at the scene and his wife, Pam, 56, died at ThedaCare Regional Medical Cen-

The Fond du Lac County sheriff's office reported a westbound vehicle driven by a 17-year-old Fond du Lac woman failed to yield at the stop sign on Subway Road at Van Dyne Road in the Town of Friendship and struck the Delaps' northbound motorcycle.

The Delaps were ejected from the mo-

torcycle, the sheriff's office said. The driver of the vehicle was treated at St. Agnes Hospital in Fond du Lac for minor injuries. The sheriff's office said inattentive driving is believed to be a factor in the

Winnebago County officials praised the Delaps as dedicated public servants.

"On behalf of the Winnebago County government and citizens, we remember the Delaps for their years of service to our county," said County Executive Jon Doemel. "Paul had been a dedicated employee of our highway department since 1991 and eventually elevated to the position of paving foreman. Pam was a fierce advocate for people with disabilities and a proud BPDD Partners in Policymaking graduate. Pam was instrumental in the construction of an accessible playground in the city of Oshkosh and spent countless hours volunteering for disability initiatives statewide."

County highway commissioner Bob Doemel remembered his paving foreman by stating, "Paul 'Frenchie' wore his passion on his sleeve. Paul was a bridgetender, equipment operator and strong leader on our team. Whether it was clearing roads of snowfall or ensuring a properly maintained road infrastructure, Paul was always willing to lend a hand."

County Human Services staff, including crisis debriefers, were made available for employees. Crisis and mental health services are available at 920-233-7707.

The county is working to display Paul's plow truck as a temporary memorial. Co-workers erected a memorial with a county hat for him.



Paul and Pam Delap were killed on their motorcycle in a Fond du Lac County crash Sept. 1.



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Crime stats for second quarter of year reviewed

Neenah News

The Neenah Police Department presented recent crime statistics for the second quarter of the year at a Public Services and Safety Committee meeting last month.

Police responded to 6,362 calls for service from April through June, with 749 attributed to traffic stops. Total police calls to service for the first half of the year were 11,878.

The Uniform Crime Reporting Program uses a National Incident-Based Reporting System that categorizes into

crimes against people, which includes murder, rape and assault; crimes against property, which include robbery, bribery and burglary; and crimes against society, which include gambling, prostitution, and drug violations.

In the second quarter, 58% of Neenah's crimes were against property, 29% against people and 13% against society. There were 231 arrests in the second quarter, about the same amount as the first quarter.

There were 302 traffic citations in the second quarter with a combined total of 608 citations issued in the first half of the

year. Second-quarter citations were down by about 33% in comparison with the second quarter of 2022, which may be partially attributed to the city's traffic safety officer being in training.

Parking citations decreased from the first quarter by 45% to 137. Police Lt. Amy Wagner and investigator Paige Kowalski stated at the meeting that the numbers are still low because staff is getting familiar with new parking software. The greatest number of parking tickets were issued on Appleblossom Drive, Primrose Lane and Blue Lot at 214 S. Church St., with a com-

bined total of 73 tickets at those locations.

There were 131 automobile accidents in the second quarter, with a combined total

the second quarter, with a combined total of 269 accidents in the first half of the year. Police noted the city continues to see an increase in accidents, with the majority happening during the daylight hours. Arrests for operating while intoxicated also increased, from eight in the first quarter to 13 in the second.

There have been six fatal overdoses in the first half of this year, with one pending toxicology. There were eight fatal overdoses in the entirety of 2022 and seven in 2021.



Neenah New

Neenah man held in fatal Clintonville stabbing

A 19-year-old Neenah man was jailed in Waupaca County in connection with the death of a 39-year-old Neenah woman who was fatally stabbed Monday in Clintonville.

Clintonville Police Chief Craig Freitag stated in a press release that officers and Clintonville Area Ambulance Service staff responded to a call at 12:30 p.m. at Memorial Circle where they found a woman on the ground. They transported her to ThedaCare Regional Medical Center in Neenah, where she was pronounced dead.

Police said Jordan Peters told them he was riding in the front passenger seat of a vehicle being driven by the victim when he allegedly stabbed her. She was able to get out of the vehicle and call 911.

Peters had recently moved to the Clintonville area from Neenah, police said, and that the victim was visiting from Neenah.

Peters is scheduled to appear in Waupaca County court Monday and while not formally charged, a \$1 million cash bond was set.

Fox Crossing service station robbery suspects sought

Neenah News

Police are looking to identify four people who robbed a service station and assaulted a clerk Aug. 27 in Fox Crossing.

Fox Crossing police officers were dispatched to the Citgo AV Food Mart at 975 Racine Road on a report of a robbery where the group had stolen several products and fled the scene. Menasha police assisted with their K9 unit and were able recover many items of evidence left at the crime scene.

The suspects are described as younger males wearing mostly darker clothing and masks. A brief video of the incident along with still images from the business' surveillance footage were posted online.

Anyone with information on the incident is asked to either contact Detective Megan Hickey at 920-720-7109, via private message on Facebook, the P3 Winnebago County Crime Stoppers app or by calling 920-231-TIPS (8477).

Winneconne accident

A vehicle struck a light pole in the median near the intersection of South Green Bay Road and Winneconne Avenue around 4:30 p.m. last Friday. Police temporarily closed a portion of South Green Bay Road while the debris was cleaned up and the pole removed.





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Seven Thymes shop growing itself into extra spaces

By Jenny Grunwald Neenah News

A Neenah floral and gift shop is expanding just after its first year as a growing small business.

In March 2022, Seven Thymes was just a budding downtown business. Located at 107 S. Church St., the shop will be taking claim to the entire corner area when they move the floral portion of their shop to the space next door at 200 S. Church, while keeping plants and gifts at their current space.

Owner Joelle Miller is aware that a year is not that long and that the floral shop's roots are still somewhat new in the community, but she feels this will allow them to get back to the small details and sense of welcoming that go much further than sales.

"We're not the shop that just pushes inventory out the door, but the type of shop that takes us back to a time and place where customers felt appreciated and where the world's pace just slows down a bit," Miller said.

Having both shops will allow for classes and workshops while making shopping for plants and flowers an all-around learning experience. Seven Thymes strives for a hands-on approach rather than just working for the customer. People can go into the plant shop, choose a potted plant, find out what type of soil and soil additives the plant might need, and even learn to transplant plants into bigger pots – or the staff can do it for them.

Visitors can also make their own custom bouquets, with the option to grab and go from the cooler if the customer doesn't want a full bouquet or is in a hurry.

Jinden Oaks



Photos from Seven Thym

Seven Thymes floral and gift shop is marking its first anniversary by expanding its space and offerings.

It's been challenging for businesses in the past several years with staffing and lack of inventory due to slow supply chain movement. Seven Thymes has experienced similar issues but Miller said it didn't slow them down in the slightest.

"I think in this particular job it's an enjoyable place to work. It's not as difficult for me to find workers as it is for others," she said.

Miller said it's important to sell flowers at a price customers find reasonable because they provide a beautiful aesthetic that can make any room stand out or put emphasis into a setting or celebration. Seven Thymes takes on large events such as weddings, funerals and other celebratory events, but as the shop's only designer, Miller won't take on any more than she

Maintenance-free living

designed to create a



can physically handle.

"I treat customers, brides and families that come into my shop as I would my own. We become closer and walk though that process together, but it's for them, (and) they're just allowing me to make their vision come to life," she said. "I'd love for them to be a part of it and let them make it known that it's not a bother and that I'm not too busy for them."

Miller said Seven Thymes is a place where friends can enjoy each other's company and make memories, and a place where anyone who walks through their door is seen as a friend.

"We are so blessed by the people that come into the shop and the friendships and relationships that develop as a result of that," she said.

"I truly feel that it's Neenah's flower shop, or the community flower shop and plant store, and that I'm just doing the work of running it, but that we all share it. We've all made it possible to get to the space we need to do the work we love."

The expanded location that will soon house the flower and gift shop hopes to be open sometime in October.



Neenah News

When Lovie's Little Free Pet Food Pantry shut its pantry doors in June, it wasn't long after that the pantry was taken over by a different Neenah resident, Jay Klavateer.

Now known as Kazmo's Pet Pantry, the little pantry box that used to be at the Chaganos residence can be found at 121 Alexander Drive when it reopens Monday and is properly named after Klavateer's former West Highland terrier.

"He was always there for people, and I wanted to continue that on," Klavateer said. He said that while the pantry itself is always open, he has scheduled hours for taking special requests on weekdays and asks they be brought to his attention 24 to 48 hours in advance.

The pantry's concept and idea behind it remains the same. It originated as a service to the community.

"It's there for people who are in a tough spot that need a little extra assistance to get by," Klavateer said.

Those who utilized Lovie's could access the ingredients and dietary information of whatever food they were looking for, and that detail will not change. Any dry dog or cat food will be transferred to gallon-sized bags with ingredients and any dietary information included. Those who donate any dry food are free to go the extra mile and put the food they donate in a Zip-Loc bag with the necessary information listed.

"We have been known to give away whole bags of food to people who are in need. People just need to reach out," Klavateer said.

Part of the pantry's services includes making deliveries to those who don't have transportation, and pickup arrangements for items too big to fit in the pantry.

"They can come get it at the front door or I can make arrangements to get the items to those who requested them," Klavateer said.

Kazmo's will work closely with area animal shelters and expand their reach to others in the Fox Valley in the future.

"I would like to put a little spot to hang some flyers on equipment, supplies, food that we're in need of, items we're in need of, stuff like that," he said.

Residents can support the pantry through a LinkTree account found on Kazmo's Pet Pantry Facebook page to see the donation list or choose to donate toward gas for making deliveries. They can also contribute to Kazmo's GoFundMe page.



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Labor Day festivities

Area residents celebrated the holiday last weekend with the annual Labor Day parade from Menasha to Neenah, with one of the parade floats (at right) depicting Neenah's first mayor as the city marks its 150th anniversary. After the parade there was a corn roast and live music at the Neenah Labor Temple on Green Bay Road in Neenah that is hosted annually by the Fox Valley Area Labor Council.



Photo by David Hall



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Neenah News





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St. Mary's program cultivates middle school leaders

By Emily Mulva

Middle-school years are a crucial period in a young student's life, marked by immense growth and self-discovery. It is during this time that young minds are molded and their potential as leaders starts to blossom.

At the heart of this transformative journey is the guidance of educators, such as St. Mary's Catholic Middle School dean of



Dahlberg

students Andrew Dahlberg, who plays a vital role in shaping overall student culture and experiences. Dahlberg oversees discipline, growth opportunities, faith formation and student culture at St. Mary's.

Dahlberg knew there was a chance to create a designated space for leadership at the middle school level, and pioneered a new initiative called Caritas Agendo to foster leadership skills, discipline and personal growth among middle school students.

"Caritas gives students opportunities to talk about leadership and figure out what leadership means to them as middle school children," Dahlberg said. "The whole point of this is for our school culture to be student-led, and not adult-led."

Caritas features a blend of programming – book studies on leadership, discussions on leadership principles and qualities – and inspirational guest speakers from various backgrounds. Past speakers have included Casey Korn, Lawrence University's men's basketball coach, and Tim Bergstrom, chief executive and president of Bergstrom Au-

tomotive

Caritas Agendo's Leadership Council is composed of seventh- and eighth-grade students. "(We are) really focusing on what it means to be a seventh-grade or eighth-grade human, and that you can lead when you are there," Dalhberg explained.

This council operates similarly to a student government, but with an exclusive focus on leadership development through action. Students interested in participating in the Leadership Council go through an application process, which includes submitting teacher recommendations, essays and student voting. This ensures members are passionate and committed to enhancing the school culture through their leadership.

Caritas Agendo is also launching leadership classes for seventh- and eighth-grade students to equip students with the necessary skills, characteristics and values to become effective leaders. Together, these elements provide students with valuable insights into leadership and its relevance in their lives, both within and beyond the school environment. The curriculum emphasizes that leadership isn't solely about taking charge, but also about being a responsible follower and making positive contributions to the community.

"(We are) putting them in more opportunities in eighth grade to be leaders," Dahlberg stated. "Seventh grade kind of learning what it looks like, eighth grade going out and doing it."

As a program in its early stages, Dahlberg remains open to change and aims to incorporate feedback from students and educators to refine and enhance the initiative. This adaptability ensures the pro-

gram stays relevant and impactful for each new group of students.

"This is where they grow the most, and are trying to figure themselves out," he said. "It's a pretty powerful part of yourself, where you fit amongst people. If you don't know that, you continue to try different things and oftentimes mess up, so knowing what's expected and how to get there will help you be a better human. Practice makes perfect, so the earlier we

can start practicing, (the better). You can't expect these kids to be good leaders in high school if they don't practice here."

Dahlberg explains how he came up with the idea, saying, "Our group is called Caritas Agendo, which is leadership in action. So you can't be a leader and let nothing change. You have to do something. It might not be the right thing, but at least you have to do something. And then if it doesn't work, you might try something else."



Photo from Rebuilding Together Fox Valley

A grab bar is installed at a home as part of a fall prevention program involving community partners.

Collaborative approach takes on fall-related injuries

Area fire departments respond every day to someone who has suffered a fall. Many of these falls are preventable.

Those individuals are often connected with home safety modifications and personal health and well-being services to prevent future falls. Rebuilding Together Fox Valley installs grab bars, toilet seat risers, bathtub transfer benches, night lights, and bathtub anti-slip strips at no cost to qualifying homeowners.

Winnebago County's Aging Disability Resource Center ensures that individuals have access to nutritious food, exercise classes and transportation to appointments as another part of those preventive public efforts.

They also see that individuals are using the benefits that might be available through their health insurance. The Winnebago County Health Department provides free home fall risk assessments.

"Falls are not a natural part of aging," stated Erin Roberts, a Winnebago County public health nurse who visits residents in their homes. "There are simple things that you can do to reduce the likelihood of sustaining an injury due to a fall. Things like managing your health from head to toe with eye exams and physicals, engaging in regular exercise to build strength and improve balance, and making your living environment safer."



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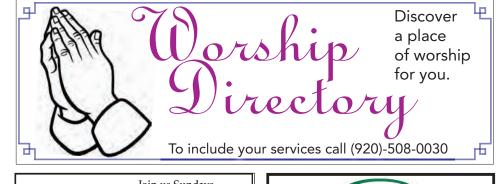
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Deceptive beauty comes with loosestrife problem

By Rob Zimmer
News Contributor

It is late summer and, once again, shorelines and wetlands throughout the area are being invaded by a deceptive beauty.

Purple loosestrife, established in much of our area, is an invasive, exotic species of wetland plant that blooms with stunning plumes of rich purple flowers. As beautiful as it may be, this plant can be a destructive force along local shorelines, as well as throughout Winnebago County and the rest of Wisconsin.

Like many invasive species, those that are not indigenous to our area, purple loosestrife has an aggressive growth habit that can quickly crowd out native wetland plants along our shores and banks.

Massive colonies of purple loosestrife smother native wildflowers and plants such as cardinal flower, water lilies, pickerel weed, Joe-Pye weed, species of smartweed, native sedges, native irises and other plants that provide food and sustenance for wildlife and pollinators.

Chad Casper, director of the Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation Department explains.

"Purple loosestrife is an invasive perennial native to Europe and Asia introduced in the early to mid-1800s. It thrives in wetlands and riverbanks and when left uncontrolled it can lead to ecological problems. It can outcompete native plants that reduces plant diversity which can affect animals that rely on native plants for food and cover."

During late summer, purple loosestrife shows off its brilliant colors with feathery plumes of rich purple blossoms. As beautiful and as tempting as it may be to allow these plants to continue to grow along our shores and even in our own yards and gardens, property owners are encouraged to remove the plants, or, at a minimum, do not allow them to go to seed.

Once a purple loosestrife plant goes to seed, it can produce hundreds of thousands of tiny seeds that are spread by wild birds, mammals, wind and, especially by water. Seeds floating on the water can travel long distances in incredible numbers before being washed ashore where they will quickly germinate and produce new colonies.

Property owners along shorelines here are especially susceptible to invasion by purple loosestrife plants.

Seeds are carried along our rivers, deposited along shorelines and banks, as well as spread by birds and other wildlife into wet areas and prairies.

"Some ways to control purple loosestrife include pulling young plants in late spring or summer before they go to seed," Casper said.

"Herbicides can also be effective if used properly. Another successful option is biological control, which is introducing certain insect species that feed on purple loosestrife and help reduce the growth."

For most of summer, we don't even recognize the plants are there. However, once it begins to bloom, we can see the extent of its aggressiveness.

"To prevent the spread of purple loosestrife it is important to clean footwear and any equipment if you were in a known infested area," Casper said. "It also helps to monitor areas for the plants and address removal early on before they become too established."

Contact the department for assistance with controlling and eradication of purple loosestrife on your property.

"In northeast Wisconsin, the Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Program at Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance is good resource to contact with further questions," Casper said.

Their website is fwwa.org/what-we-do/aquatic-invasive-species.



Rural housing program map updated

Neenah News

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Rural Development division has completed its review of areas that may no longer qualify for its rural housing programs, including in Neenah and Oshkosh.

Minor expansion of the ineligible areas around the city limits of Neenah and Oshkosh include annexed areas since the last periodic review, which was performed in 2017-2018 using 2015 American Community Survey data and are reviewed every five years. The latest review used data from the 2020 census.

USDA Rural Development Wisconsin

Acting Housing Director Lisa Paulson said its Single Family Housing Direct Home Loan Program works with low- and very low-income families in rural areas to assist them in purchasing decent, safe and sanitary housing using a 33-year fixed rate mortgage.

Paulson said a community with a population under 20,000 when not in a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) is an eligible rural community, which means Neenah and Oshkosh are ineligible communities.

The updated rural area map can be viewed at eligibility.sc.egov.usda.gov.





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Calendar of events

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

Commercial Street Pub Crawl, noon, six locations

Intertribal Pow Wow, 1 p.m., Shattuck

Wednesday, Sept. 20

Hollywood Master Directors: Howard Hawks, 1 p.m., Neenah-Menasha YMCA

Thursday, Sept. 21

Author Meet and Greet: Carmen Leal, 4 p.m., Lyons Fine Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.

Art After Dark: Renaissance Faire, 5:30 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass A Durable Dane: The Eddy Hanson

Story, 7 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Friday, Sept. 22

Fused by Numbers: A Women's Collaborative Mural, noon, Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Saturday, Sept. 23

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

Art Mercantile, 11 a.m., The Plaza and Globe Coffee

Business news roundup

Apple Valley Pancake House has opened at 1022 Main St. in Neenah as an American-style restaurant featuring pancakes, waffles, sandwiches, burgers and wraps. Ali Useini, who previously owned Twin City Diner, converted the former Bradke's location and will offer dine-in, takeout and curbside pickup options.

Bona Fide Juicery has opened a Neenah location Aug. 18 on the ground floor of 201 West, a new apartment complex and retail space downtown. The smoothie and juice bar restaurant also has paninis, broths and salads on its diverse menu with other locations in Appleton, Howard, De Pere and Bellevue.



Paper City Pub closes doors on Wisconsin

Paper City Pub permanently closed Aug. 31, according to a social media post made by the business, ending a 25-year run at 212 W. Wisconsin Ave.

"We can't begin to thank all of you who have supported us from the beginning and getting us through COVID," the business posted. "Thank you to our regulars who have helped make Paper City Pub what it is and thank you to the staff for making it possible."

Several patrons commented on the so-

cial media post to express support.

"Sorry to see you go, but I'm so glad for all the good times," Stephanie Mayer commented.

"End of an era," Ryan Renard posted.

"Legendary place," Joshua Jaeger commented. "Lots of great times, just wish I could remember them all."

The business did not disclose the reason for closing and didn't respond to a media inquiry for more information.

4-H honors given at Winnebago County Fair

and Zillges.

Winnebago County 4-H scholarships and awards were presented at the county fair earlier this month in the fairgrounds expo building.

The Judith Gruszynske Memorial Scholarship went to Brooke Zillges of the Winchester club, the Ashton Simpson Memorial Scholarship was awarded to Madison Plungy from Ridgeway, and the Stevenson Memorial Scholarship to Arianna Buehring from Golden

Wisconsin 4-H Key Awards, which recognize 4-H participants who have demonstrated consistent growth, leadership skills and active participation in their 4-H club and community, went to Buehring

State 4-H Leadership Council & Team recognition was given to Evan Numrich from Ridgeway and Finn Lettau from

Tourist housing

FROM PAGE 1

no questions, complaints or other communications from WRA regarding the rental limitations, documents state.

The city conceded that its 120-day rental restriction per year is at odds with state statute. According to the statute, if a residential dwelling is rented for periods of more than 6 but fewer than 30 consecutive days, a local government may limit the total number of days within any consecutive 365-day period that the dwelling may be rented to no fewer than 180 days.

City attorney David Rashid noted the state statute was not enacted at the time the city ordinance was approved.

In April, WRA filed a motion for declaratory and summary judgment and asked the court to enjoin the city from enforcing the ordinance.

Bissett ruled on the motion Aug. 28, denying the challenge to the city's requirement that tourist housing properties be the primary residence of the applicant, noting that state statute defines a residential dwelling but does not define primary residence.

"I wouldn't find that there is anything that has been provided for in the legislature, in its logical reading, in its purpose, or in its spirit, that would prohibit the city of Neenah to have a provision in its ordinance dealing with primary residence," he said.

Bissett granted declaratory judgment to the claim that the city's time limitation of 120 days is in violation of state statute.

"I will therefore find that the second issue, that being the housing tourist property being rented for 120 days - so within a 365-day period – is unenforceable and void as it is preempted by state statute,"

Regarding the ability of the Community Development director to revoke a permit once granted, Bissett said state statute requires people who operate a tourist housing property for more than 10 nights per year to obtain a permit from a political subdivision if that subdivision has an ordinance requiring one, which Neenah

Bissett said case law provides that if an agency has the power to issue permits it also has the power to revoke those permits. He denied WRA's claim to that mat-

Rashid said the court's ruling disposes all the issues in the suit and while the parties could appeal, he doesn't anticipate either will. He said the city will revise the offending part of its ordinance related to the 120-day limit on rental days to make it comport with state statues.

"It was always our intention to amend that provision, but we did not want to do so while the litigation was still pending,"

WRA did not respond to a request for

"I just want to help and pay it forward,"

Krissa also will soon begin working as a house manager at Apricity's Mooring House, a men's residential treatment facility in Appleton that provides a homelike setting where clients can feel safe and supported in a community, while working toward treatment goals and building a network of peers in recovery. Casa Clare, the women's equivalent, is also in Appleton.

To catapult donations that support Apricity's core treatment and recovery programs during Recovery Month, there is a matching gift challenge totaling \$30,000 courtesy of the Boldt Co., U.S. Venture and an anonymous donor. All donations Apricity receives throughout the month will be matched dollar for dollar up to \$30,000.

To donate to Apricity's gift challenge, visit apricity.networkforgood.com/projects/194903-recovery-month-2023 and hit the donate button, or to send a gift: Apricity, 1010 Strohmeyer Dr., ATTN: Recovery Month, Neenah, WI 54956.

Apricity

FROM PAGE 1

Krissa, 35, is another example of success through Apricity, including treatment, recovery-supportive job-training employ-

ment and sober living and transitional housing, after negative experiences with other treatment approaches for opioid addiction beginning in her early 20s.

"I had a lot of bad experiences with counselors in the past," Kris-

sa said. "But then I had good experiences with the counselors at Apricity and I realized there are good counselors out there, counselors you can connect with. That just gave me hope."

Today she is enrolled at Fox Valley Technical College, working toward becoming a substance use counselor.



Krissa

EPA's proposed lead dust rules would impact state

By Farrah Anderson Wisconsin Watch

Aiming to reduce childhood lead exposure, the federal Environmental Protection Agency is proposing a rule that would require property owners to clean up any reportable amount of lead dust detected on floors and windowsills at pre-1978 homes and child care facilities.

The proposal, announced in July, would lower the threshold of lead considered hazardous — and therefore requiring abatement — on floors and windowsills. It would also lower dust-lead clearance levels: how much lead may linger for abatement to be considered complete.

Landlords still would not be required to proactively test for lead under the proposal. In Wisconsin, local health departments typically require lead testing at properties only after a child is found to be lead poisoned. But the EPA rule, if finalized, could reduce the lead exposures of 250,000 to 500,000 U.S. children younger than six each year, the EPA estimates.

The current dust-lead hazard standard is 10 micrograms per square foot (mcg/ft2) on floors and 100 mcg/ft2 on windowsills. The proposal would shrink that

standard to any reportable lead level greater than zero.

Clearance levels under the new rule would drop from 10 to 3 mcg/ft2 for floors; from 100 to 20 mcg/ft2 for window sills; and from 400 to 25 mcg/ft2 for window troughs. The EPA considers those levels the lowest that can be "reliably and effectively achieved."

The changes would ensure more thorough clean-ups at abated properties, said Michael Mannan, director of home environmental health for the Milwaukee Health Department.

"That just means they have to do a better job cleaning and making sure there's even less dust there, which is a good thing," Mannan said.

Lead is a neurotoxin that damages the brain and nervous system, especially in young children. Children can be poisoned by ingesting lead paint, lead-tainted water, soil, dust or other lead-based products.

No level of lead in blood is considered safe for children, according to the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The EPA rule could hold large implications for property owners, said Heiner



Wisconsin Watch photo

A U.S. Environmental Protection Agency proposal would lower the threshold of lead considered hazardous, which would require abatement on floors and windowsills.

Giese, an attorney and lobbyist for the Rental Property Association of Wisconsin. It could crimp housing supply because landlords might be more wary of renting out old homes in Milwaukee for fear of pricier lead abatement, he said.

"I think it's going to make property owners leery of owning any property in an older area where children live, because now you're possibly going to get a lead order which is going to be expensive and potentially lead to liability," Giese said.

The EPA is accepting public comments on the proposal until Oct. 2.

The nonprofit Wisconsin Watch (www.WisconsinWatch. org) collaborates with WPR, PBS Wisconsin, other news media and the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Journalism and Mass Communication.

Local college graduates

The following Neenah students completed degree requirements this spring.

UW-La Crosse

Jack Briggs, bachelor of science, Marketing major

Griffin Congdon, bachelor of science, Finance major; Economics major

Sam Dietrich, bachelor of science, Marketing major

Andrew Elbe, master of science, Physician Assistant Studies

Davis Gostas, bachelor of science, Finance major; Economics major, honors

Noah Oubelkho, bachelor of arts, Archaeological Studies major, honors

Ethan Parker, bachelor of science, Finance major; Economics major, highest honors

Nick Rusch, bachelor of science, Chemistry major

Breckin Sargeant, bachelor of arts, Psy-

chology major Carlos Sevilla, bachelor of science, Nu-

clear Medicine Technology major

Monicca Winters, bachelor of science,

Health and Wellness Management major Emma Witkowski, bachelor of science, Finance major

Clarke University (Iowa)

Kiara Lebouton, bachelor of science, Athletic Training

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Wine walk includes 16 downtown locations

Future Neenah's annual wine walk event is set from noon to 4 p.m. Sept. 30 at 16 locations throughout downtown Neenah. A variety of wines chosen by Sante Wine Bar & Bistro will be offered for participants to sample.

The walk starts at the Future Neenah office to have IDs verified and to pick up

the event package. Two-ounce samples of wine will be offered. Cups must be disposed of before leaving each stop.

Tickets are \$30 with a non-alcoholic/designated driver ticket available for \$15. Call 920-722-1920, stop at the Future Neenah office or go to eventbrite.com to register.





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State-ranked teams set to clash at Rocket Stadium

By Steve Clark NEENAH NEWS

A pair of state-ranked teams will collide at Rocket Stadium in a Fox Valley Conference showdown Friday night.

Neenah, ranked eighth in Division 1, will play host to Kaukauna, ranked fourth in Division 2, in a matchup between two teams that have lofty expectations for the 2023 season.

The Rockets are expected to get a boost with the return of standout running back



Grant Dean, who missed last week's 27-15 win at Appleton East because of injury. Dean has nearly 500 yards rushing and eight touchdowns in the first two weeks.

Neenah head coach Steve Jung said Dean was practicing this

The Rockets, though, will still be without junior quarterback Evan Vanevenhoven, who is still recovering from an injury suffered in the opening week against De Pere. Freshman Ashton Van Beek has started the past two games for the Rockets and ran for three touchdowns and threw

for another in leading the Rockets to the win over the Patriots. "(East) came out with some defens-

es that challenged us and our freshman quarterback made some mistakes. But he hunkered down in the fourth quarter and led the team to a victory," Jung said of Van Beek. "I was impressed with his composure. He's a good leader. The kids respect him, and he does a nice job staying calm in pretty critical and high-stress situations."

Van Beek engineered two fourth-quarter touchdown drives against the Patriots as the Rockets rallied from a one-point deficit entering the final period. He scored on touchdown runs of one and four yards in the fourth quarter.

Since coming on for Vanevenhoven who isn't expected to return for a couple of weeks, according to Jung - Van Beek has gained 182 yards on the ground on 23 carries while connecting on 15 of 25 passes for 277 yards and two touchdowns.

He had five completions to Caleb Schaefer for 141 yards against East, while his touchdown pass was a four-yarder to Connor Briones.

As good as he has been, Jung knows that this week will bring a whole new set of challenges for Van Beek and the Rocket offense.

"Kaukauna is a very good football team and they play very good defense," Jung said. "They are going to give us some challenges."

The Ghosts enter the game after pitching a 35-0 shutout against Oshkosh North, while also picking up wins over Ashwaubenon and last year's Division 2 state runner-up West De Pere in the first two weeks.

The offense is averaging nearly 35 points per game through the first three contests and is led by quarterback Finnley Doriot. The senior has thrown for nearly 800 yards in his first three games this season and has eight touchdowns to just one interception.

Kaukauna features three receivers with at least 10 catches already this season.

They have three really good wideouts

Week 4 games

Fox Valley Association (all games at 7 p.m., unless noted)

x-Appleton East (1-2) at Oshkosh North (0-3) Kaukauna (3-0) at Neenah (3-0 Fond du Lac (0-3) at Kimberly (2-0) Oshkosh West (2-1) at Appleton North (3-0) x-Game will start at 5 p.m.

and Doriot does a really good job at quarterback. He throws the ball well, he scrambles well and that is something against De Pere we didn't defend well," Jung said. "We have to keep working to get better at our pass defense."

The Rockets struggled with a balanced passing game of De Pere in the opener, however Jung feels his defense has made

strides since then.

But coming off a week when the defense faced just two pass attempts against the Patriots, Jung knows Friday will be a big test for his squad.

"It's hard to say where we are because East doesn't throw the ball," Jung said. "De Pere had three good receivers and we struggled with our coverages and letting their receivers get behind us. If we want to be in this game, we can't let that happen."

One thing that should also help the Rockets' effort is returning to their new home turf at Rocket Stadium.

After back-to-back road games, Jung is happy to have the chance to play at home.

"It's always nice to play on the home turf. No doubt about it," Jung said. "Our kids really feel blessed to have such a great facility."

Undefeated Bulldogs provide test for Zephyrs

By Steve Clark Neenah News

After two straight losses, things don't necessarily get any easier for the St. Mary Catholic football team this week.

The Zephyrs will welcome Pardeeville, who at 3-0 is the only undefeated team left in the Trailway Conference, to its home turf Friday night and head coach Josh Young expects to face a tough test against the Bulldogs.

"They are a good team and they have been playing well," Young said. "This week is a little more difficult being a short week, but we brought the team in on Monday and went through some stuff, talked about what happened (against Johnson Creek) and what we are looking forward to this

St. Mary Catholic will be trying to rebound from a tough 58-6 loss against a very good Johnson Creek team last week, in which the Zephyrs had six turnovers and finished with 186 total yards - 176 yards were through the air.

The defense surrendered 294 yards rushing in the loss as the Zephyrs trailed 34-6 at the half.

"Just a lot of mental mistakes and errors on our part, especially on offense, but those we can correct," Young said. "(Johnson Creek) did very well taking advantage of some tipped balls and we had a couple

Johnson Creek quarterback Dylan Bredlow rushed for more than 100 yards in the game and the Zephyrs will have to gear up for another dual-threat quarterback against the Bulldogs in Logan Young.

The junior signal-caller ran for a teamhigh 114 yards in a win over Deerfield last week, while also throwing for 120 yards and two touchdowns. For the season, Young has gained a team-high 403 yards rushing, while generating five rush-

Week 4 games

Trailways Conference (all games at 7 p.m., unless noted)

Pardeeville (3-0) at St. Mary Catholic (1-2) Deerfield (1-2) at Randolph (2-1) Johnson Creek (2-1) at Cambria-Friesland (2-1) x-Fall River/Rio (2-1) at Lourdes Acad. (2-1) x-Game will start at 8 p.m.

ing touchdowns and also throwing for five

"He's a good quarterback and he does run the ball quite a bit but the Johnson Creek quarterback ran the ball well and Ozaukee, too," Josh Young said. "This guy runs a little more than what we've seen but just telling the kids to be disciplined with what they are being taught during the week. Stay in their lanes and fill the gaps."

Having faced running quarterbacks the past two weeks should also help prepare the Zephyrs for what they will see Friday.

"It's been helpful the last couple of weeks to see a little bit of that. Obviously, this week will be a lot more of that," Young said. "They are getting more into how the conference plays."

Not only are the Zephyrs returning home for the first time in two weeks to host Pardeeville, but St. Mary Catholic will also get the chance to play on its familiar turf.

After playing the last two weeks on grass - not that Young sees his squad as a turf-only team - the Zephyrs are looking forward getting back playing on the surface that they practice every day on.

"The last two games have been on grass and not saying we are a turf versus grass team, but the kids are more comfortable on turf at home," Young said. "It will be nice to not have to get on a bus and travel, be able to be at home and have a little more time on Friday."



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Zephyrs' barrage too much for Roncalli

By Dustin Riese News contributor

St. Mary Catholic's talented soccer team keeps on rolling.

The Zephyrs, ranked 10th in the latest Division 4 soccer poll, used three first-half goals to hold off Roncalli, 4-2, in a nonconference match Tuesday night to improve to 5-0 on the season.

"The kids did a fantastic job out there tonight," head coach Elias Efthimiou said. "We played with intensity throughout the first half and did a phenomenal job controlling the ball on the offensive end. We knew Roncalli had a tough time defending balls on the outside so we wanted to get the ball wide and cross the ball back in, which we did a ton of."

It didn't take long for St. Mary Catholic to assert its will on the pitch, generating plenty of pressure in the first few minutes with several shots flying toward goal.

About eight minutes in the pressure finally paid off as Kieran Barrientos played a perfect through ball to AJ Groppel outside the penalty area and the senior gave the Zephyrs a 1-0 lead.

Getting a goal on the board didn't slow the Zephyrs down. Whether it be Groppel, Barrientos, Nathan Seiske or Braden Brenn, Roncalli netminder Jesus Gomez was under duress.

Seiske scored in the 25th minute to give the Zephyrs a two-goal cushion, while Brenn bounced back from some tough misses earlier in the half to put away a counterattack about five minutes later for a 3-0

"We know we have a ton of guys on this team who can score," Groppel said. "The more shots we can put on frame, the better the chances of those shots finding the back of the net. We had a lot of good looks tonight, but their keeper deserves a lot of credit. He made some incredible saves throughout the game and made us work for our goals. Fortunately we did enough to get a few past him to lead us to another victory."

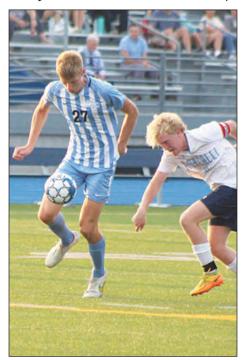


Photo by Dustin Riese

Braeden Brenn works around a Roncalli defender in Tuesday's match.





Photo by Dustin Riese

St. Mary Catholic's Harrison Higgins (4) contains a Roncalli player in the midfield during Tuesday's match.

In fact, Efthimiou thought the Zephyrs could have had an even larger lead at half-

'The one downside was our inability to finish as well as we have in our first few games as we left a few goals out there," the

The Jets trimmed the margin back to two but would not be able to get any closer.

Groppel tallied his second goal of the match in the 73rd minute, while the Jets added a late goal for the final margin.

"When your defense doesn't get a ton of action throughout the contest you are going to have some breakdowns defensively," Efthimiou said. "As a team, we have allowed three goals in five games with two coming tonight. Compare that to our offense where we have scored 31 times and the defense hasn't been very active. It is tough to stay engaged when you are not getting a ton of opportunities, but the kids have done a great job staying focused and getting off to





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Senior Standout is brought to you by: National Bank



Fischer continues to hold court for Zephyrs

By Steve Clark NEENAH NEWS

Like many active youngsters, Lauren Fischer spent her middle school days playing an array of sports.

There was volleyball and basketball, as well as softball, that divided up her time and attention and, at that time, she enjoved participating in all three.

But then something changed.

"Volleyball, I just found a passion for it. It just clicked," said Fischer, now a standout outside hitter on the St. Mary Catholic volleyball team. "Since then, there is something about the game that I love and I just want to play constantly.

'Why spend the time in a sport I don't love when I love volleyball and can play it year around?"

In addition to playing volleyball in middle school, Fischer also started gaining experience at the club level.

That experience, along with her athletic 6-foot frame, made her an obvious choice for Zephyrs volleyball coach Mike Mauritz to add to the varsity roster the moment she stepped foot onto a high school court.

"Being taller was obviously a big reason, but her experience in club allowed her to compete as a freshman," Mauritz said. "We ran her as a middle hitter as a freshman because we needed someone at that spot and she did really well. Then the need changed the next year and we needed her to play outside and she's been there ever since."

Fischer remembered being surprised by the varsity call, but she also wasn't going to shy away from the opportunity.

"Coach Mike was like, 'OK let's go on the varsity court.' And I was like ... I was definitely intimidated by some of the ath-

Senior Standout

letes," Fischer said. "I was nervous a little bit. I think I strive under pressure so I loved the adrenaline of being out there. I was also on a court surrounded by girls who had my back, so that helped."

That team that Fischer played with as a freshman returned almost in full her sophomore year and posted another successful season.

At that point, though, Fischer was just about the only non-senior on the St. Mary Catholic roster, which meant her junior year was with a brand new cast of teammates.

"It was definitely different. I remember sophomore year that last game was rough losing all of those seniors because they were girls I looked up to a lot and I definitely missed them," Fischer said. "Junior year was good. It was a new fresh team and I liked that, too, because we had a lot of potential and new people on the court and it was a lot of girls in my grade."

The Zephyrs captured the Big East Red title a year ago and with a veteran lineup this year, they are looking to do the same.

That's just the start of what Fischer said the team hopes to accomplish.

"I like to aim high and I think we can go pretty far this year," Fischer said. "We also need to stay humble on the court. Every practice matters and every conference match matters a lot. We made posters that read, 'All out, All game, All season,' be-

SEE Senior Standout ON PAGE 15

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Senior Lauren Fischer is in her fourth season of playing varsity volleyball at St. Mary Catholic and is once again spearheading a successful season for the Zephyrs.

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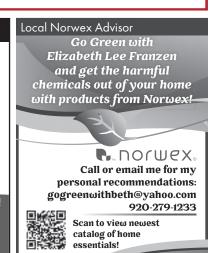
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Prep sports roundup

SWIMMING

Neenah dominates dual with Appleton East

Three different swimmers won two individual events and the Rockets swept the top two places in all three relays as they cruised past Appleton East/Hortonville/Kaukauna 145-40 on Tuesday.

Emma Bottensek, Naomi Cortina and Anna Mulroy each posted two wins for the Rockets.

Bottensek finished first in both the 200-yard individual medley and the 100-yard breaststroke, while Cortina was first in both the 100-yard butterfly and 100-yard backstroke. Mulroy rounded out the trio by placing first in both the 50-yard and 100-yard freestyle races.

Rylie Bauman in the 200-yard freestyle and Alliyah Lima in the 500-yard freestyle were the other individual winners for the Rockets.

The Rockets also finished second in every event with Bauman in the 100-yard butterfly, Lima in the 50-yard freestyle, Addy Benner in the 200-yard freestyle and 100-yard backstroke, Kacie Stamm in the 200-yard individual medley and 100-yard freestyle, Mia Lerner in the 500-yard freestyle and Breleigh Maurer in the 100-yard breaststroke earning the runner-up finishes.

Sydney Hansman also took second for Neenah in diving.

The winning relay teams were: Bottensek, Cortina, Lima and Mulroy in the 200-yard medley relay; Bottensek, Bauman, Stamm and Mulroy in the 200-yard freestyle relay; and Bauman, Lima, Stamm and Cortina in the 400-yard freestyle relay.

GOLF

Neenah ties for fourth at Blackwolf Run

The Rockets finished in a three-way tie for fourth place at a 21-team invitational held at Blackwolf Run on Tuesday.

Neenah finished with a team score of 376 along with Notre Dame and De Pere, three shots behind Hartford. Kaukauna and Divine Savior Holy Angels tied for the best team score with 355.

Aubrey Oitzinger led the Rockets with a round of 84 to place fifth overall. She finished one shot behind a pair of Kaukauna golfers. Ava Roesch of Divine Savior Holy Angels was medalist with a 73.

Other scoring golfers for Neenah were Natalie Quella with a 94 and Anabelle Hodges and Annika Searles each finished with a 99.

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

Neenah rolls past Appleton East

A dominant second set highlighted the Rockets win over the Patriots.

Neenah put up a 25-4 win to claim the second set after taking the first set 25-20. The Rockets clinched the win with a 25-16 win in the third set.

Julian Kuehn finished with nine kills, while Miles Weaver had eight and Trevor Rickets had seven. Kuehn and Weaver also tallied a team-high nine digs in the match.

Ben Donaldson chipped in three blocks and three kills, while Gabe Theisen finished with five aces.

TENNIS

St. Mary Catholic nets win

The Zephyrs rolled past Howards Grove 6-1 on Tuesday.

Individual results were not available.

SOCCER

Rockets notch second straight tie

Neenah played to a 2-2 tie with Appleton North in a Fox Valley Association match on Tuesday.

The Rockets have earned ties in both conference matches this season.

No other information was available from the match.

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Senior Standout

FROM PAGE 14

cause our goal is to put everything on the court and if that allows us to go to state that would be wonderful."

Heading into this week, the Zephyrs were a perfect 9-0, with Fisher leading the team with 30 kills. She also led the team in kills last season when she was a first-team all-conference selection and ranked third as a sophomore.

For Fischer, though, she doesn't view those stats as an individual achievement.

"A great spike comes from my teammates on the court. I never do anything on my own," Fischer said. "When you have a perfect pass and wonderful set, it's great. It's great to have that great spike, turn around and see all my teammates cheering. That's a great feeling."

Mauritz said Fischer's hitting ability is impressive but she brings much more to the court than just stats.

"She's another coach on the floor," Mauritz said. "I find myself taking less timeouts because she is already making the adjustments we would make based on what's happened. Her experience playing at a high level of club (volleyball) gives her a high understanding of the game."

Fischer has excelled with the high-level FC Elite volleyball club based out of Menasha and has enjoyed the experience of playing with the group.

She said that playing high school and club are on two different wavelengths.

"High school is such a bonded team because we see each other at school every day and know each other so well. It's just a fun atmosphere. When we are on the court, we know what we want with each other. We know if someone is down what to do to build them up," Fischer said. "Club is very competitive and I love competing. It's definitely a whole different at-

mosphere and you put a lot of time and effort into your club team. They become a family, but a different kind of family."

Fischer has also had another helping hand when it comes to her development as a volleyball player.

"I feel like my dad (Curt) had a big part in me playing," Fischer said. "He would never force me to play or anything but I could not not touch a volleyball when I would get home so he'd always have a net set up in the backyard and whenever I wanted to, he'd be out there hitting volleyballs and I would be digging them. He'd do anything in the backyard with a volleyball and definitely all of those touches helped me to be the player I am today."

Playing volleyball isn't the only skill Fischer uses her hands for.

She has been taking piano lessons for the past eight years and, although it's not about performing for her, she uses it as a way to deal with the pressures of school and sport.

"It's more of something to come home and it's not anything to do with volleyball or school. It just kind of gets me calm and relaxed," Fischer said. "It's a nice way to calm down after a long day."

Fischer has already committed to continue her volleyball career next fall at the University of Wisconsin-La Crosse and is looking forward to the challenges playing collegiately will throw at her.

But she also has the experience of playing the sport she loves for a long time and that has rewarded her with on-the-court memories as well as off-the-court knowledge.

"I feel like sports teach you how to overcome things that not everyone can relate to," Fischer said. "When you have a long day at school and a team counting on you, it's up to you to show up and be there for your team and be an unselfish volleyball player on and off the court."

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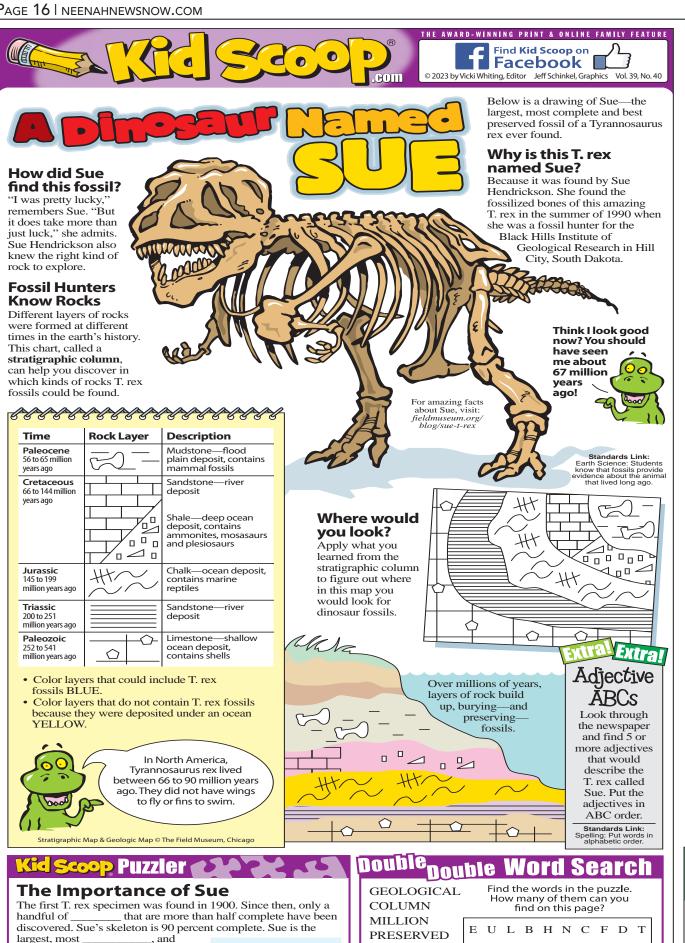
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