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## Judge strikes down some sign rules

### Portions of city ordinance found in legal violation

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

A circuit court judge ruled in favor of plaintiffs Monday, striking down five portions of the city of Neenah's sign ordinance determined to be unconstitutional.

The verdict marks a significant setback for the city, which previously amended its ordinance in an effort to moot the lawsuit and another filed in federal court, underscoring the complex balance between municipal reg-

ulatory oversight and individual freedoms.

The circuit court lawsuit was filed last year by Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce (WMC) on behalf of residents Gail and Margaret Minks, and Gary and Kim Novak, after the Minks received a notice from the city to remove political signs they had in their yard for months.

It closely followed a federal lawsuit filed by the Wisconsin Institute of Law and Liberty (WILL) on behalf of residents Tim and Megan Florek in response to the city's efforts to have signs removed from yards in the Shattuck Middle School neighborhood protesting rezoning efforts for the closed school.

In October, the city repealed and recreated sections of the ordinance to alleviate inconsistencies with a 2015 Supreme Court decision that prohibited the regulation of signs based on their content. The city then moved to have the two lawsuits dismissed.

The federal lawsuit was dismissed as moot by Judge William Griesbach in March. Griesbach also ruled against awarding damages because he noted the Floreks never suffered a completed injury because they never removed the sign from their front yard and therefore no violation of their First Amend-

SEE **Sign ordinance** ON PAGE 7

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Photo by David Hall

## Solar light show

Colorful displays from the Northern Lights were visible throughout the region last weekend, including this view from west of Neenah High School. Solar activity continues to be high this year and a variety of apps are available with information on when, where and how strong the solar wind will hit the Earth.

## Jacobsen Road work underway, housing projects evolving

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Construction on Jacobsen Road in Fox Crossing began last week and will continue through the summer, while work could also soon be underway to build a new residential subdivision with frontage on Jacobsen, bringing an estimated 58 single-family homes.

The road work encompasses Jacobsen from Irish Road to County CB and involves removing the existing road and ditches and installing a new road with curb and gutter. Utility work will include the installation of storm sewer, replacing water service lines from the water main to the curb stop and adjusting the locations of water hydrants.

The village is also constructing a 10-foot-wide trail on the north side of the

road connecting the Jacobsen Road trail west of Irish Road to the County CB trail.

The total project cost is about \$2.1 million funded by special assessments and expected to be completed by late September.

Jacobsen Road will be closed throughout most of the construction, with northbound traffic detoured to Clayton Avenue, West American Drive and County CB; and southbound traffic detoured to Clayton Avenue, Winchester Road (County II) and CB.

At the same time, preliminary plans for the Jacobsen Prairie housing development are moving forward. The development is spearheaded by Good Faith Funding on 16 acres of land purchased from the Neenah Joint School District for \$500,000 last



Neenah News

Road construction was underway last week at Jacobsen and Irish roads in Fox Crossing in advance of a parcel that will be made into a housing development.

SEE **Fox Crossing** ON PAGE 6

# Neenah News

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It is the policy of Neenah News to correct all errors of fact. For correction information call 920-385-4512.

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## Memorial Day procession, event set

Neenah News

The annual Memorial Day celebration set for May 27 will be presented by Twin Cities veterans organizations, which includes Menasha VFW Post 2126, Neenah American Legion Post 33, Menasha American Legion Post 152, the cities of Neenah and Menasha and Village of Fox Crossing.

The event starts at 8 a.m. at the waterfront on Mill Street in Menasha, where tribute is paid to veterans lost at sea. Music will be performed by the St. Mary Catholic High School marching band. There will also be a rifle salute by the Neenah-Menasha Veterans Honor Guard and Taps sounded.

The parade starts at Second and Mil-

waukee streets, proceeds down Milwaukee to Main Street and continues to Tayco Street, then to Commercial Street in Neenah to Main Street, where it ends at Main and Doty.

At about 10:45 a.m., ceremonies move to Oak Hill Cemetery in Neenah for military honors. The event includes a guest speaker, four student speakers from St. Mary's and the school's marching band. Wreaths will be placed at the military monument along with a rifle salute from the Neenah-Menasha Honor Guard.

There is a car show and bake sale from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at Lucky Dog's on Green Bay Road in Neenah and sponsored by American Legion Post 33 in Neenah.



Submitted photo

## Sailing invitation

The Neenah Nodaway Yacht Club and the Fox Valley Sailing School are hosting an open house from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. June 8 at the Riverside Park harbor. The free event will have family activities, tours of sailboats, boat safety instruction and sailboat ride opportunities. Find more information at nnyc.org or foxvalleysailingschool.org.

## Neenah High junior scores perfect on ACT

Neenah High School junior Tony Marose achieved a perfect score on the recent ACT exam.

His 36 composite score represents a combination of the math, reading, science and English scores.

Marose, the son of Andrew and Carolyn Marose who attended Hoover Elementary School, has a 4.0 grade point average and participates in cross country and tennis.



Marose

According to ACT data, 2,542 students nationwide recorded perfect scores in 2023. A total of 1,386,355 students took the exam, meaning 0.18 percent of test takers finished with a 36. The national average is a 19.5.

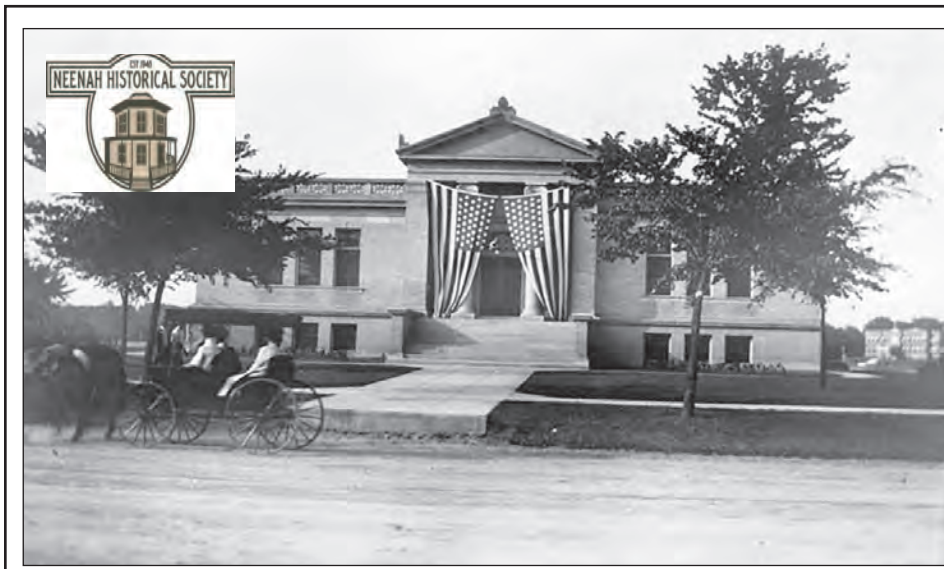
## Downtown trees are decorated in Spring Fling

Future Neenah will host downtown Neenah's Spring Fling of decorated tree beds that will be featured through June 9.

More than 35 tree beds are decorated by businesses and organizations and filled with whimsical art and other items on Wisconsin Avenue from The Plaza to the Neenah Public Library.

Downtown businesses adopt the tree beds, along with other organizations and businesses such as the Neenah Animal Shelter, YouthGo, Neenah Parks and Recreation Department, Neenah Public Library, Simplicity Credit Union and Josh Carter State Farm. The tree beds were decorated starting Saturday and will remain decorated for five weeks.

"We love seeing all the decorated tree beds, there is so much creativity," said executive director Brent Bowman. "We invite you to bring the family and stroll the downtown district to enjoy the spring weather and check them out."



Neenah Historical Society photo

## Early library chapter

The Neenah Public Library turned 150 this year. The early Carnegie library shown was where the present library is located. Theda Clark hospital can be seen in background.

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 <b>August 15</b> The Mavericks Alex McMurray Band Lil' Davy Max	 <b>August 21</b> Danny Seraphine and CTA with former Chicago singer and Bassist Jeff Coffey Child's Anthem The Music of Toto

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# Interim attorney approved during criminal proceedings

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Neenah city attorney David Rashid appeared in court Monday to face charges of sexual assault. Later that day, the city moved to appoint an interim attorney to fill the void while he's on administrative leave.

Rashid, 61, is facing two felonies and a misdemeanor stemming from incidents that allegedly occurred between 2017 and 2022. A judge set a \$10,000 signature bond and imposed a condition barring Rashid from contacting the victim, his former wife who filed for divorce last year.

According to the criminal complaint, the investigation began in August after the Neenah police chief and other local officials received an anonymous email accusing Rashid of abusing his ex-wife.

Appleton police took over the investigation, with the victim denying sending the email but later accusing Rashid of sexual assault during their marriage. Charges were filed April 30, leading the city to place Rashid on paid administrative leave the next day.

Rashid, formerly a Winnebago County assistant district attorney before joining the city in 2022, is represented by Rebecca Castonia and Scott Ceman, the latter being a prominent former Winnebago County prosecutor turned defense attorney.

In advance of the hearing, Rashid's attorneys filed a motion to dismiss the case, arguing that the criminal complaint rests on assumptions and speculation. They also contend the vague dates of the alleged offenses hinder their defense strategy.

The first alleged incident occurred more than six years before it was reported and the most recent alleged incident occurred more than a year before reported.

"One simply has to ask oneself what they were doing on a particular night between January and June of 2017 to experience the complexity of trying to formulate a defense to allegations brought in 2024," the motion states.

Judge Michael Gibbs set a hearing for this Monday to rule on the motion to dismiss.

Meanwhile, the city formed a committee to find cost-effective legal coverage

## Summer Fun Runs will return to Memorial Park

Neenah News

Neenah Summer Fun Runs return for their 29th year in Memorial Park.

Runners ages 14 and under come from across the Fox Cities for four free Sunday evening events. This year those runs will be June 2 and 16, and July 7 and 21, starting at 7 p.m. There is registration onsite starting at 6 p.m. but parents are asked to preregister their children at [neenahfunrun.com](http://neenahfunrun.com), which can be done for all four runs.

Organizer Lee Hillstrom said the participation has been steadily increasing again after the pandemic and now have more than 500 runners at times.

The runs take place close to the George Scherck Shelter on the south end of the park. There are separate groups of ages 6 and under, 6 to 9 and 10 to 14 with boys and girls divisions that all run at different times. Runners 6 and under receive a blue ribbon while the other brackets receive place ribbons.

Runners who complete two runs receive a T-shirt and if they do all four they earn a custom fun run medal. All participants get ice cream, cookies and a slice of pizza.

and approved a plan.

Neenah will enter into a formalized agreement with Menasha city attorney Margaret Struve to assist with current and long-term prosecutorial needs at no cost to the city. Neenah will also contract with retired Appleton city attorney Jim Walsh to provide office hours for a total of eight hours per week at \$125 per hour.

Walsh agreed to cover routine needs including contracts, development agreements, code enforcement issues, pending land sales and Common Council meetings. Walsh started in the interim position Wednesday.

In response to a question on whether eight hours of coverage is adequate for a 40-hour per week position, Mayor Jane Lang said the city will rely more on paralegal Becky DeWitt. In addition, appointments with the interim city attorney will need to be scheduled rather than dropping in during office hours.

"You will have to make sure you're scheduling your time and really being deliberate about what services you're using the city attorney for," Lang told the Finance and Personnel Committee. "I think we can manage it and that was the consensus of the entire team."

As the legal proceedings unfold in the courtroom, the appointment of an interim attorney signifies the city's determination to weather the storm.

"We look forward to entering into the aforementioned agreement with attorney Jim Walsh and we appreciate the support of our city council in the process," Lang said.



Neenah News

## Carnival season

Carnival attractions light up the parking lot outside Lucky Dog's in Neenah on Saturday night. The carnival, which rents the space from the bar annually, ran for a week through this Thursday.

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# City officials outline five-year plan for projects

## Fire Station 31 remodel slated over two years

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Signaling a commitment to infrastructure development and community enhancement, the city of Neenah has unveiled its Capital Improvements Program (CIP) outlining projected expenditures over the next five years.

The planning document was crafted by city officials in collaboration with department heads and utilizing feedback from residents. It delineates a roadmap for projects aimed at enhancing the city and fostering sustainable growth.

In an introductory letter, Mayor Jane Lang wrote that the plan will change from year to year based on needs, priorities and public input.

“We must all remain flexible as we work together towards the best possible outcomes for the city,” she wrote.

One of the significant projects underway next year is a complete remodel at Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue Station 31. Last year, the city projected spending \$5.8 million on the station in 2025. Lang said the city worked with Fire Chief Travis Teesch to extend the project over two years, with the city budgeting \$3 million per year in 2025 and 2026.

“This will help level out our borrowing and create a reasonable approach for the costly but necessary work that needs to be accomplished there,” Lang said.

Another significant expenditure is \$3.1 million for Doty Park for the first phase of seawall replacement, construction and stabilization necessary to prevent the seawall from collapsing into the water. The city is seeking grant opportunities with a goal of garnering 50% of the cost.

“The shoreline repair projects that are included in the Parks and Recreation portion of the CIP for 2025 and beyond are also necessary for the safety of the community, and we’re making every effort to apply for grant support to alleviate the burden on our city borrowing to accomplish those vitally important repairs,” Lang said.

The city is budgeting \$18 million next year to construct a new downtown parking structure, which will be funded from Tax Incremental Financing District 10. Lang noted downtown surface parking lots are also future development sites.

“Any future development or growth that will arise in our downtown will occur on those surface lots, making it imperative that we create available space with the

construction of a ramp to offset the lost surface parking,” she said.

The parking ramp is included as a holding place, with Community Development Director Chris Haese noting that he is unsure when the appropriate time to construct it is.

“We continue to monitor the impacts of COVID on our downtown parking system and for indications of a return to normalized parking demands,” he said. “We also continue to evaluate redevelopment projects in the downtown that will likely consume surface parking supply. Both factors will need to be considered at great length prior to investing substantial funds in the construction of a new parking structure.”

Other 2025 expenditures:

- Just under \$4 million for street projects, which includes \$2.4 million to reconstruct Commercial Street/Winneconne Avenue and \$1.3 million for construction on Bergstrom Road (County G to Breezewood Lane).
- \$1 million for Arrowhead Park improvements, which will be funded in large part by past year’s carry forward funds, with \$186,564 budgeted.
- \$365,000 to replace windows and windowsills and upgrade the HVAC system at the city hall administration building.
- \$253,000 for upgrades to city garages, primarily at Tullar Garage but also including \$40,000 for Cecil Garage.
- \$210,000 for Neenah Police to finish remodeling the station.

2026 expenditures include:

- \$7.2 million for street projects, including \$1.7 million for construction on Wisconsin Avenue (Oak Street to Lakeshore Avenue), \$1.2 million for Reed Street (Cecil Street to Washington Avenue) and \$1.1 million for Elm Street (Cecil to Division Street). Reed and Elm are listed in



Lang



Rasmussen

the plan as holding places, with the roadwork dependent on what develops at the former Shattuck Middle School location.

• Just under \$1.8 million for Parks and Recreation, which includes \$900,000 for the first phase of shoreline protection and

stabilization in Kimberly Point Park, with the city planning on applying for grants to help offset the cost.

• \$500,000 for locker room upgrades at Neenah Police Department.

• \$312,000 for continued Tullar Garage upgrades.

2027 expenditures:

• Just under \$4 million for street projects including \$1.4 million for West Cecil Street (Green Bay Road to Tullar Road) and \$1.3 million for Congress Street (Cecil to Doty Avenue).

• \$3.5 million for Parks and Recreation, which includes \$2.5 million for phase two shoreline improvements in Doty and Kimberly Point parks.

• \$500,000 for the fire department for remodeling Station 32.

• \$387,000 for continued Tullar Garage work.

• \$125,000 for a cremation mausoleum at Oak Hill Cemetery.

New this year is the city’s borrowing method. While the city would previously borrow money at the beginning of the year, Finance Director Vicky Rasmussen said the city is now borrowing in the latter half of the year.

“By borrowing before projects began,

the city might have borrowed for things that didn’t come to fruition, causing us to pay interest on something we don’t have,” Rasmussen said. “So, this year it was imperative that we changed the process to now borrow after the fact when a project is complete, or near completion, so that we can tighten up our borrowing.”

General obligation debt refers to municipal bonds secured by the issuer’s taxing power, meaning the issuer pledges its ability to raise taxes to meet its debt obligations.

Rasmussen explained that the city was able to reduce general obligation debt borrowing by approximately \$4 million this year compared to 2023.

Ideally, Rasmussen said good fiscal management involves a municipality’s general obligation debt equaling the amount being paid off. This year the city reduced the gap to about \$1.8 million, down from a \$7.7 million difference last year.

The overall expected expenditures in 2025 come in at just over \$42.7 million, with the city planning to borrow just under \$20 million.

Rasmussen noted that while the CIP does show \$20 million in borrowing next year, she and Lang will be meeting with department heads to tighten up spending.

“Before preparing the 2025 capital budget Mayor Lang and I will conduct meetings with the department heads to discuss the projects at hand and make some tough decisions on prioritizing these projects,” she said.

Rasmussen said the CIP demonstrates that the city is carefully considering short-term needs and long-term goals, with fiscal responsibility guiding decision-making.

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# Calendar of events

## Friday, May 17

Campfire with Cops, 6 p.m., Memorial Park  
 Cave Paintings and Sit Kitty Sit, 9 p.m., Cranky Pat's, 905 S. Commercial St.  
 Grey Fedora, 7 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive, Fox Crossing

## Saturday, May 18

Plant and Garden Sale, 9 a.m., Neenah Animal Shelter  
 Electronics Recycling Event, 9 a.m., 1495 Tullar Road  
 Neenah Street Party, 2 p.m., 134 W. Wisconsin Ave.

## Sunday, May 19

Sunday Concert Series: The Chalk Down Trio, 2 p.m., Neenah Public Library

## Monday, May 20

Big Band Reunion, 7:30 p.m., Cranky Pat's, 905 S. Commercial St.

## Friday, May 24

Mary Ann Nagan art gallery event, 5 p.m., The Hang Up, 204 W. Wisconsin Ave.

## Saturday, June 1

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

## Sunday, June 2

Family Day, 11 a.m., Octagon House

## Thursday, June 6

Live Music Series: Jesse & James, 5 p.m., Batley's Grill & Bar,

## Sunday, June 8

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park  
 Learn to Sail and Sailing Open House, 10 a.m., Riverside Park

## Tuesday, June 11

Neenah Community Band Concert, 7 p.m., Riverside Park



Photo by David Hall

## Junk in the Trunk event

Registered vendors rented parking spots to sell their treasures Saturday morning in the Neenah Pool lot for the first Junk in the Trunk event offered by the Neenah Parks & Recreation Department.



Neenah News photo by Bethanie Gengler

## Sunday setting

Clouds and colors provide a picturesque background to Sunday's sunset in a natural setting outside Neenah.

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## Fox Crossing

FROM PAGE 1

year. The location is on the north side of Jacobsen just past Irish Road, with the west side abutting Prairie Lake Circle.

The houses will be considered workforce or affordable housing, with the engineer noting at a village meeting that the homes will be priced between \$300,000 and \$350,000 and all with an attached garage.

According to village officials, any home below \$350,000 is considered affordable, with the average price of a new home in Fox Crossing more than \$400,000, some selling for well over \$500,000 and waterfront properties going for more than \$1 million.

The village re-assesses properties each year, with residential properties seeing an average increase of 9.16% this year and commercial properties seeing an average increase of 24.7%.

Eighteen of the proposed homes in the subdivision will front on Jacobsen Road, with those driveways crossing the village's planned trail. The developer is planning for a 30-foot setback between the property line and structure.

Concerns from residents about speeding and the increase in traffic along Jacobsen with the development has village officials considering reducing the speed limit from 35 miles per hour to 25.

Director of community development George Dearborn said the development will be constructed in phases, with the first homes fronting on Jacobsen Road.

"They like to do that so they can generate revenue so they can afford the rest of it," Dearborn said, adding that the portion

will also be more costly because of the roads being put in.

Good Faith Funding will extend Gavin Road into the development, connecting to the newly created Americus Street, which will cut through a central portion of the subdivision.

The site is adjacent to the Church Pond, a parcel that the village owns and installed a stormwater pond, gravel roads, water, sewer and stormwater utilities in preparation for selling it for a housing development.

The Jacobsen Prairie engineer noted at an earlier meeting that he hoped to meet the village's stormwater requirements by utilizing Church Pond. Dearborn said the developer is no longer planning on using Church Pond and is modifying the preliminary plat to design a small treatment pond on site.

Fox Crossing has a land dedication requirement in its ordinance, whereas new developments are required to donate land within or near the location to ensure that adequate park and open space areas are available, or pay a fee in lieu of land. Dearborn said the Parks Department is requiring the fee rather than the land dedication because there are other parks such as O'Hauser reasonably close to the development.

Another 58 acres of land at West American Drive and Irish Road in Fox Crossing is owned by the school district which has listed it for sale for \$3.95 million. Dearborn said the village considers the site a prime location for multi- and single-family homes, with some commercial space fronting on Irish Road.

"We continue to try to encourage affordable housing but it's getting more difficult," he said.

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Submitted photo

The Fox Valley Chorus performs at the regional Sweet Adeline competition in Rochester, Minn.

## Fox Valley Chorus takes home first place

Neenah News

The Fox Valley Chorus took first place at the regional Sweet Adeline competition May 2-4 in Rochester, Minn., where about 400 choral members from Wisconsin, Minnesota, North Dakota, Iowa and Canada competed.

The 28 performing members of the Fox Valley Chorus opened with "Beer Barrel Polka," complimented by German attire and staging. The chorus earned the privilege of a 10th appearance on the Sweet Adeline International stage in Columbus, Ohio, in October 2025 among more than

30 regional winners.

Women singers are invited to visit the chorus when it resumes Tuesday evening rehearsals May 21 in Neenah. Those interested can email foxvalleychorus@gmail.com, visit foxvalleychorus.org or its Facebook page.

Prior musical experience or ability to read music is not necessary. Any woman of average singing ability can find a part that fits her voice range.

For over 50 years, the Fox Valley Chorus has been a prominent part of the Fox Valley musical family, performing for functions throughout the community.

## Log Your Loops season starts on holiday

Neenah News

Future Neenah's sixth annual Log Your Loops initiative to get people out and enjoy the Loop the Little Lake Trestle Trail begins Memorial Day, May 27, and runs through Labor Day, Sept. 2.

Loop the Little Lake Trail includes two trestle bridges that close the Little Lake Butte des Morts loop of 5 kilometers through the cities of Neenah, Menasha and the Village of Fox Crossing.

Loop users can log their distances as they bike, run, walk or skate the trail. For

those registering 50 loops in those 99 days, they will receive a T-shirt. Registration is required for the free program.

"The community loves this challenge as it keeps them motivated for that race they are training for or for that last five pounds they want to lose," stated Future Neenah executive director Brent Bowman, who said 1,200 people signed up last year. "We love hearing all the stories and we are expecting another big year."

For more information, visit neenah.org or call 920-722-1920.

## Sign ordinance

FROM PAGE 1

ment rights occurred.

Around the same time the city filed for dismissal of the circuit court lawsuit, WMC filed an amended complaint, arguing that the repealed and recreated sign ordinance continues to be unconstitutional.

Specifically, WMC challenged five sections of the ordinance banning speech on parked vehicles and trailers, banning off-premises signs, limiting residential property to one portable yard sign, imposing a 30-day limit on portable yard signs and requiring a permit for signs.

The city argued that WMC did not have standing to bring the lawsuit because the Minks voluntarily removed their signs and therefore haven't suffered any injuries. In response to the five challenges, the city contended that the claims required hypothetical or abstract disputes that courts do not adjudicate.

At a hearing Monday, Judge Daniel Bissett noted the complexity of the city's sign ordinance, which is 21 pages long.

"I've been a lawyer, court commissioner

and judge for over 30 years so I've read a lot of ordinances, a lot of statutes, a lot of regulations, and this one is right up there with some of the most confusing ones that I've had an occasion to try to work through," he said.

He noted the ordinance is unclear on who makes the determination as to what constitutes a negative impact to public welfare and what signs require permits.

"It is vague and does not provide at all narrow, objective or definitive standards for whether a permit is necessary in a particular situation and I do think it does provide unfettered discretion to the municipality for making those decisions," he said.

Bissett granted summary judgment to WMC on all five of its challenges, deeming those portions of the sign ordinance unconstitutional, invalid and unenforceable.

WMC attorney Scott Rosenow noted during the hearing that in these types of civil rights cases courts will often award attorney fees to the plaintiff's lawyers and WMC has 30 days to seek fees.

The city also has the option to appeal, in which case attorney fees would be stayed pending the results of the appeal.

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# Reichenbacher all smiles in helping lead Zephyrs

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

Rhiannon Reichenbacher is a key component for the St. Mary Catholic softball squad, spending just about equal time in the pitching circle as well as anchoring the infield defense at third base.

But if faced with playing just one of the two positions, Reichenbacher has little hesitation in where she would find a permanent home.

“I’d let the coaches choose,” Reichenbacher said, smiling from ear to ear. “Honestly, I would tell them to put me where they want me.”

The smile Reichenbacher displayed when answering wasn’t linked to that response only. The senior can have an entire conversation flashing the grin – a look that would challenge anybody in the vicinity to be grumpy.

It’s a trait natural for Reichenbacher and it’s something that definitely affects those around her.

“We had Senior Night and that was one of the things I said about her. She is coming every day, whether its practices or games, with a smile on her face,” St. Mary Catholic head coach Jennifer Rodman said. “That’s really contagious with our team. They become happy because she’s such a bubbly person and being a leader on the team, that’s huge for us.”

Reichenbacher has a unique love and passion for softball and will never hesitate to work on her game.

“Some days people will be like they don’t



Neenah News

St. Mary Catholic senior Rhiannon Reichenbacher is one of the leaders on a successful Zephyr softball team and has played a key role as both a pitcher and a hitter this season.

want to go to practice. Me, I want to go to practice,” Reichenbacher said. “I want to be there to grow and get better and be there with my teammates.”

Reichenbacher has a special bond with one of her teammates as she shares the pitching circle and the third base position with fellow senior Nevaeh Saringer. The two have combined to pitch all but three innings for the Zephyrs this season.

That bond is something that Reichenbacher places high value on and knows that either can count on the other at any point during a game.

“If we are in a stressful moment, I will look at her or she will look at me and it will be like ‘Yeah, you got this.’ We just like to have each other backs,” Reichenbacher said. “It’s been amazing to grow with her the last four years and know you can count on someone else.”

Making sure she leaves a legacy in that regard is something that is important to Reichenbacher.

That desire fuels her work with the younger players in the program and is part of the reason she would like to coach on some level in the future.

“I definitely try to pass my knowledge on to the younger ones because I want them to

## Senior Standout



fall in love with what I fell in love with,” Reichenbacher said. “I tend to try to help out the youth and teach them my skills so they can go grow in their journey.”

Softball isn’t the only sport Reichenbacher plays at St. Mary Catholic.

She was also a starter on the Zephyrs’ volleyball team that made it to the WIAA State Tournament last fall. It’s an experience that she will always remember.

“Being my senior year, it was a big goal to get to the Resch (Center for the state tournament) and to think that we completed it, that’s incredible,” Reichenbacher said. “It was such a cool experience and I’m so glad I had the opportunity.”

As much as she enjoyed volleyball, softball is definitely her sport.

She started playing t-ball as soon as she was able and began pitching right away on a team coached by her mom.

“It did come natural, but I did have to put in a lot of work to be where I am at today,” Reichenbacher said. “The love and the want to keep coming back is instilled in me.”

Rodman got a first-hand look at that desire earlier this season – maybe one of the few times Reichenbacher wasn’t smiling.

“She had a little (hitting) slump and I think she was kind of mad about it,” Rodman said. “She wanted to stay after practice and hit more. That’s her mentality. She wants to do whatever she can to get better.”

With the season nearing its end, Reichenbacher knows that the end of her competitive playing career will be coming to an end as well.

It’s not that she is going to completely step away from playing sports – she adamantly said that is not a possibility – but knows it is time to take it in a different direction.

“I want to keep up with intramurals and having fun with sports,” Reichenbacher said. “It’s really important to give yourself a break and let yourself have fun doing something that you love with the stress of life.”

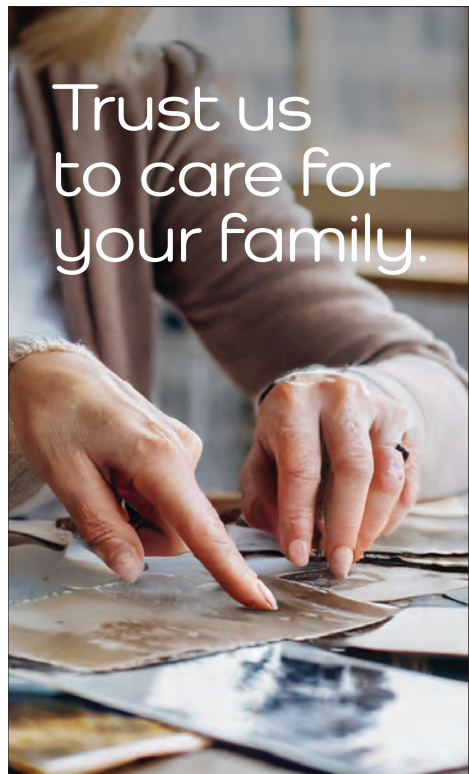
Reichenbacher plans to attend Winona State University and study nursing in order to follow in the footsteps of her grandmother.

“My grandma was a nurse and a nursing instructor so I would look up to her when I was younger,” Reichenbacher said. “COVID had an impact on me, too, with what nurses did. If I can do something to help the people in my community, then that would make me overjoyed.”

Helping young softball players grow, helping her community and even helping family members to the “Reichenbacher Water Ski Team” – being on the lake is a fun summer activity that she enjoys with her extended family – there is a common thread between them all.

Reichenbacher wants to help others and she will likely do it with a smile on her face.

“It comes from my family and my loved ones,” Reichenbacher said. “I look up to them a lot and I see how much they have a passion for helping others affects other people and I just want to make the same difference.”



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# Mathe, Rockets take down Lightning

By Dustin Riese  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Neenah overcame a rough first inning to claim a 6-2 win over Appleton North on Tuesday evening, securing the Rockets' 10th win in Fox Valley Association play this season.

"We started off very slow and flat tonight," head coach Steve Gross said. "Once we got rolling to erase that early deficit, we started to play much better ball the rest of the game."

Starting pitcher Kyleigh Mathe was touched up for two unearned runs in the first inning but bounced back to strikeout 10 in the complete game.

The sophomore allowed three hits in the first inning after a Rocket error allowed the lead-off batter to reach base. But she stranded runners at second and third to minimize the damage and then blanked the Lightning the rest of the way.

"Kyleigh did a great job fighting back after her rough first inning," Gross said. "She made some really nice midgame adjustments that helped lead to soft contact most of the night."

It didn't take long for Neenah's offense to draw back even and was aided by some Lightning miscues to get their first two runs across.

The first Neenah run scored on an error while another came home on a wild pitch to cap a two-run second inning an even the score.

Taelyn Bauer's RBI-groundout in the third inning pushed Neenah in front and the Rockets kept the lead the rest of the way adding a pair of runs in the fifth inning before tacking on another run in the sixth for the final margin.

Bauer opened the fifth-inning rally with a one-out single and then scored when Carson Harwood followed with a double. Harwood advanced to third on an Olivia McNulty single before the Marley Koepel grounder brought her home.

Mathe helped her own cause by adding an RBI-single in the sixth inning for the Rockets.

"We have had some ups and downs this season," Gross said. "Despite that, this group has continued to be resilient and they have always found ways to bounce back."

With the postseason looming and the Rockets entering the WIAA tournament off back-to-back sectional trips, Neenah hopes to stay on the roll they have been



Photo by Dustin Riese

Neenah pitcher Kyleigh Mathe fires a pitch to the plate against Appleton North on Tuesday. Mathe struck out 10 in leading the Rockets to a win.

on.

The win over Appleton North was the Rockets' fifth victory in their last seven games and Gross hopes his team can keep that momentum going.

"Each game leading up to the next is go-

ing to be important," Gross said. "We've just got to keep our focus on us and what we need to do to continue to make a deep playoff run. It's important for us to make sure we are playing our best ball at this point in the season."

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# Prep sports roundup

## TRACK AND FIELD

### Neenah girls second, boys third at FVA meet

Mazie Olkowski won two events and the Neenah girls placed first in a pair of relays as the Rockets finished second at the Fox Valley Association meet held Tuesday in Fond du Lac.

The Neenah boys also took first in a pair of relays and finished third overall.

Olkowski teamed with Rachel Dietrich to finish 1-2 in the 1,600 meters and then posted another victory in the 3,200 meters for the Rockets. Dietrich picked up a win in the 800 meters and then anchored the winning 1,600-meter relay team, which also included Celia Gentile, Julia Rangel and Ava Schalow.

Gentile had an impressive showing in her first FVA meet, taking first in the long jump, second in the 100 meters and then joining Brynn Fox, Lilly Granditzke and Abbie Fischer in winning the 400-meter relay.

Lydia Delene picked up a second place in the shot put and took third in the discus – the only competitor to place in the top five of both throwing events – while Avery Gentile finished second in the high jump, and Fox added a fifth place in the 100 meters.

For the boys, Neenah posted its relay wins in the two longest races.

Braden Loudon, CJ Fredrickson, Alex Thayer and Owen Wise teamed up to win the 1,600-meter relay, while Nathan Johnson, Sam Kleisner, Aidan Apa and Owen

Martin were the winning foursome in the 3,200-meter relay.

Grant Dean and Wyatt Armock each had strong showings at the meet. Dean won the 400-meters, while placing fourth in the 100 meters and Armock finished first in the 3,200 meters and took third in the 1,600 meters.

Wise added a second place in the 400 meters, while Thayer and Loudon finished third and fourth, respectively, in the 800 meters. Jaden Leal in the 3,200 meters and Will Radies in the triple jump were each fourth and Luke Jung took fifth in the discus.

Kaukauna ended Kimberly's run of seven straight FVA boys titles, edging the Papermakers 128.5-127 for the title after a post-meet scoring change.

The Ghosts also won the girls title, racking up 161 points with the Rockets scoring 122 points to finish five ahead of Kimberly for second.

### Zephyr girls capture Big East crown

Lauren Ripley placed in the top three in three different events and Nolie Anderson had a strong showing in the throws to lead St. Mary Catholic to the title at the Big East Conference championship hosted by Mishicot on Monday.

The Zephyrs finished with 108 points to claim the title, finishing comfortably ahead of second place Kohler (95 points) and third place Manitowoc Lutheran (91 points).

Ripley claimed the lone individual win for the St. Mary Catholic girls, taking first in

the 800 meters. She also finished second in the 1,600 meters and took third in the long jump.

Anderson, the reigning Division 3 state discus champion, finished second in the discus and third in the shot put. Claire Higgins also had a strong meet taking second in the 400 meters and third in the 3,200 meters.

Other top finishers for the Zephyrs were: Moorea Steckling, third in the 300-meter hurdles; Lucy Norville, fourth in the 100-meter hurdles and 300-meter hurdles; Madeline Weninger, fourth in the pole vault; Luci Nackers, fifth in the 200 meters; and Norah Lee, fifth in the 400 meters.

St. Mary Catholic also took second in the 3,200-meter relay, third in the 1,600-meter relay; and fifth in the 800-meter relay.

The boys were paced by a strong showing in the pole vault with Ashton Post winning the event, AJ Groppe taking third and Noah Valentine finishing fifth.

Braeden Brenn added a fourth in the 300-meter hurdles, Nathan Seiske was fifth in the 800 meters and the Zephyrs took fourth in all four relays.

The Zephyrs finished sixth with 56 points, one behind Cedar Grove-Belgium and three behind Ozaukee.

## BOYS LACROSSE

### Neenah drops pair of one-point contests

The Rockets lost a pair of one-goal matches in the past week, losing to Hud-

son 5-4 on Saturday and dropping a 7-6 decision to Appleton on Monday.

Four different players scored goals against Hudson with Brandon Price, Jackson Brown, Ben Carey and Drew Green finding the net. Brown and Carey also picked up assists.

The Rockets also lost to Shakopee (Minn.), 11-7 on Friday, despite getting four goals and two assists from Brown. Evan Hans added two goals and two assists, while Owen Grotenhuis also scored in the match.

Carey, Macsen Selch and Alex Alatorre registered assists.

## GIRLS LACROSSE

### Rockets suffer losses to Notre Dame, Wausau East

The Neenah girls lacrosse squad dropped a pair of games last week, losing to Green Bay 12-1 last Thursday before falling on the road at Wausau East, 7-3, on Monday.

## SOFTBALL

### Neenah finishes 1-1 at Oakfield Tournament

The Rockets lost to Horicon 6-2 in the first round of the Oakfield Tournament on Saturday, but came back to edge Campbellsport, 3-1.

SEE Prep roundup ON PAGE 11

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# Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 10

Callie McElroy and Marley Koeppel each drove in runs in the win over the Cougars, while Jillian Matheny had a double for one of five hits for the Rockets.

In the loss to Horicon, Koeppel drove in a run, while six different players each had one hit – including a double by Taytum West. Five of the six runs Horicon scored in the game were unearned.

The tournament capped a stretch of six games in four days for the Rockets.

Neenah beat Appleton East 10-7 on Friday, with Taelyn Bauer and Olivia McNulty each going 3-for-4 with two RBIs. Kyleigh Mathe added a pair of hits and Aubrey Oitzinger chipped in two RBIs as Neenah scored seven runs in the top of the seventh to earn the win.

The Rockets were held to just a Parker Zipperer single in a 1-0 10-inning loss to top-ranked Kaukauna on Thursday. Mathe struck out 12 and allowed just six hits in the loss.

Neenah started the stretch with a sweep of a doubleheader from Appleton West, winning games of 11-0 and 14-0.

Bella Coulman went 3-for-4 and scored three times in the opener, as Zipperer, Bauer, McNulty, Mathe, Matheny and Eliana Schultz each chipped in two hits. In the second game, Oitzinger went 3-for-3 with three runs scored and two RBIs, while Zipperer, Coulman and West each had two hits.

West threw a five-inning no-hitter in the opener and allowed just two hits in five innings in the second game. She struck out 17 batters in the two games combined.

## Zephyrs pound Tigers in doubleheader sweep

St. Mary Catholic dominated Howards Grove in a Big East Conference doubleheader on Tuesday, winning games of 15-3 and 19-0 to run its winning streak to five games.

Rhiannon Reichenbackert went 4-for-5 with three runs scored and three RBIs in the Game 2 win. Emily Vogel and Samantha Weiss each added three hits and Nevaeh Saringer had two as the Zephyrs totaled 15 hits in the game.

Weiss pitched three innings and struck out three to earn the win.

Last week, St. Mary Catholic scored seven runs in the bottom of the sixth inning to beat Manitowoc Lutheran, 7-1. Adel Schneider and Saringer each had two hits, while Reichenbacher drove in two runs and was the winning pitcher, finishing with eight strikeouts.

## BASEBALL

### Zephyrs continue hot streak with easy win

St. Mary Catholic ran its winning streak to nine games with an 18-1 thumping of Hilbert on Monday.

The Zephyrs scored 11 runs in the second inning to key the big win, as Fisher Mackenzie, Colin Nigl, Mason Wagner and Grant Brazzale each finished with three hits. Brazzale also had three RBIs, while Mackenzie, Nigl, Justin Ernstring and Noah Decker each drove in two runs. Decker and Luke Fairweather added two hits each.

Brazzale struck out five and allowed just four hits in the win.

On Saturday, the team made a memorable trip to the Field of Dreams in Iowa and beat second-ranked Laconia, 6-1.

Nigl struck out eight and allowed just four hits in six innings to earn the win, while Mackenzie struck out three in the seventh to earn the win.

Fairweather, Mackenzie, Joe Pirillo and Aidan Birling each had two hits, while Pirillo drove in three runs in the win.

St. Mary Catholic also picked up a 6-5

win over Manitowoc Lincoln, as Pirillo and Birling each had two hits.

## Rockets thrive during busy week

Neenah went 4-2 in the past six days, playing every day but Sunday.

The Rockets beat Kaukauna, 6-4, on Tuesday despite getting just two hits. Andrew Carlson and Mack Krause each had hits, while Krause also drove in two runs for Neenah, which benefited from seven walks and three Kaukauna errors.

Neenah pulled out a 5-4 win at home against Oshkosh West with Luke Bolvin notching two hits.

On Saturday, the Rockets beat Ashwaubenon 5-4 with Ethan Van Dyke going 2-for-4 with two RBIs, while falling to De Pere, 5-4, despite two hits from Will St. Clair.

Last Friday, the Rockets scored 10 runs in the fourth inning in a 15-1 win over Appleton West. AJ Price was 3-for-4 and Payton Miller and Van Dyke each added two hits. Price allowed just one hit and fanned nine in five innings.

The Rockets also lost to Hortonville 1-0 last week. Krause allowed just three hits and struck out five in the loss, and lost 9-2 to Oshkosh North, with Price picking up a pair of hits.

## SOCCER

### Rough match for St. Mary Catholic

Sheboygan Christian/Lutheran was too much for St. Mary Catholic, handing the Zephyrs an 8-0 loss in a Big East Conference match.

The Crusaders scored five goals in the first half and finished with 16 shots on goal.

### Rockets post win, two ties in FVA matches

Neenah collected a 1-0 win over Appleton east on the road on Tuesday night.

The Rockets also notched a pair of ties last week, playing Fond du Lac to a 1-1 draw last Thursday and tying with Kaukauna, 1-1, on Wednesday.

## TENNIS

### Neenah finishes 2-2 at Sun Prairie invitational

The Rockets posted wins over Nicole and Sun Prairie United to finish 2-2 at the Sun Prairie Invitational on Saturday.

Carl Hein went 4-0 at No. 1 singles to lead the Rockets, winning three of his four matches in straight sets.

Brady Lawatsch at No. 2 singles finished 3-1, while Harrison Traeger was 2-2 at No. 4 singles. Tristan Yun and Hunter brown at No. 2 doubles and Luke Grassl and Henry Farrell each added two wins.

Neenah also picked up a 7-0 win over Oshkosh West on Monday, six of the matches in straight sets. Joe Schultz at No. 3 singles and Harrison Tanger at No. 4 singles each posted 6-0, 6-0 wins in the match, while Grassl and Farrell lost only one game at No. 3 doubles.

## GOLF

### Zephyrs finish ninth at Big East Conference meet

St. Mary Catholic shot a team score of 398 to finish ninth among the 11 teams at the Big East Conference meet held Tuesday at Riverdale Country Club.

Ethon Moschea led the Zephyrs with a score of 91, followed by Mason Uhleabrauck with a 97.

Dawson Radosevich with a 102 and Wyatt Birling with a 108 rounded out the scoring golfers for St. Mary Catholic.

Sheboygan Lutheran won the team title



Photo by David Hall

## Salute to team players

St. Mary Catholic Schools baseball hosted its third annual First Responder game Monday, inviting professional emergency workers from throughout the area to attend and help with the game. First responders took the field for the National Anthem with players, who wore special uniforms for the occasion.

with a score of 323.

### Rockets drop dual meet to Kimberly

Ryan Geary shot a round of 40 at Ridge-

way Country Club to lead Neenah in a loss to Kimberly on Monday. Kimberly won the event 158-178.

Cartyr Simonson added a 43 and Cooper Zinda finished with a 45.

# Classifieds

Call 920.486.1616 to place your ad  
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## Get Caught Reading

**Get Caught Reading** is a campaign to promote the fun of reading books!

The *Get Caught Reading* organization provides posters to schools and libraries that show Olympic stars, entertainment stars and even popular book characters reading for fun.

Can you get caught reading this month?

For information on how to get these posters go to [getcaughtreading.org](http://getcaughtreading.org)

Circle the kinds of books you like to read.

SPooky STORIES
ADVENTURE STORIES
MYSTERIES
SCIENCE FICTION  
FUNNY STORIES
HISTORY
ANIMAL TALES

Color these readers. Then draw what they might be reading about in the thought bubbles.

How many reading glasses can you find on this page?

Circle the places where you like to read.

Draw a picture of your favorite kind of book in your favorite place.

Reading isn't just for reading books, it is also reading recipes, directions, games, letters and more.

### Scrambled Book Titles

Unscramble the titles of these famous books. Have you read any of them? You can find them at your local library.

**HAARS, NAPLI DAN LATL** by Patricia MacLachlan  
**REWEH HET ADEWSILK SEND** by Shel Silverstein  
**MAJSE NDA HTE TAGIN CHEAP** by Roald Dahl  
**YARDI FO A PIWYM DKI** by Jeff Kinney

**Extra! Extra!**  
**What's black and white and READ all over?**  
 Look at one page of the newspaper. Circle every word you can read in red. Pretty soon your newspaper page will be black and white and red all over—just like the riddle!

Standards Link: Research. Use the newspaper to locate information.

### Kid Scoop Puzzler

#### Silly Book Puns

A **pun** is a play on words. Read the book titles below and then draw a line from the book title to the author's name that makes a funny pun. For example: *The Arctic Ocean* by I.C. Waters.

**WORLD'S BEST MAGIC TRICKS** by Lotta Money  
**HOW TO MAKE A BILLION DOLLARS** by A. Stronaut  
**SCUBA DIVING FOR BEGINNERS** by Abby Cadabera  
**BACK DOWN THE ROAD** by Duncan Under  
**MY JOURNEY TO THE MOON** by U. Turner

Standards Link: Follow simple written directions.

### Double Double Word Search

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

CHARACTERS  
 READING  
 RECIPES  
 LETTERS  
 CAUGHT  
 TITLES  
 BOOKS  
 WHITE  
 PLACE  
 MONTH  
 GAMES  
 PAGE  
 PUNS  
 WORD  
 GET

S	R	E	T	C	A	R	A	H	C
K	G	E	C	A	L	P	E	T	C
O	G	A	U	S	E	M	A	G	
O	T	G	H	G	W	O	G	N	T
B	I	R	E	H	N	O	I	A	A
D	T	I	I	T	N	D	R	G	P
C	L	T	H	A	A	M	P	D	U
L	E	T	T	E	R	S	A	I	N
G	S	N	R	E	C	I	P	E	S

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

## Kid Scoop Together Get Caught Reading Poems

Finish each poem to discover where each person likes to read.

When I settle down to read,  
 I like something soft  
 To rest my head.  
 That's why my favorite place to read  
 Is in my cozy \_\_\_\_\_.

It's quiet where I read  
 And that makes me so merry!  
 The place I go to read  
 Is at my local \_\_\_\_\_.

Reading is fun.  
 It makes me feel free!  
 Especially at the park  
 In the shade of a \_\_\_\_\_.

Far from the shore,  
 I read wearing a coat  
 Because it get's chilly  
 Reading on our \_\_\_\_\_.

My favorite books are thrillers  
 And they can give me quite a scare.  
 That's why I keep a very bright light on  
 When reading in our easy \_\_\_\_\_.

I like to read adventure books.  
 They're really quite dynamic!  
 But I kick back to read them  
 While relaxing in a backyard  
 \_\_\_\_\_.

When I read,  
 I try to sit up straight.  
 My mom says,  
 "Please don't slouch."  
 But it's hard to do that because I read  
 while sitting on our fluffy \_\_\_\_\_.

Standards Link: Identify words from context clues.

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