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Walmart files fifth lawsuit against city

Retail giant continues property tax challenges

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Retail giant Walmart has filed another lawsuit against the city of Neenah over the assessed value of its West Winneconne Avenue storefront.

The Arkansas-based Walmart Real Estate Business Trust is seeking to lower the assessed value of the property by \$5.07

million for 2023, which would reduce the retailer's property taxes.

The suit was filed July 22 and joins six lawsuits Walmart has filed against municipalities across Wisconsin this year and more than 30 filed in the state last year aimed at reducing its tax burden through a contentious "dark store" strategy.

Walmart and other large retailers challenge local tax assessments by arguing that the value of their properties should be assessed as if they were vacant "dark" properties. Walmart's legal team asserts

that by assessing properties based on their use as functioning retail spaces, the city is imposing an unfair tax burden.

The company claims this practice leads to an overestimation of store values, which results in higher property taxes than necessary; municipalities argue the strategy shifts more of the tax burden from commercial property owners to homeowners and small businesses.

This is the fifth time Walmart has sued

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Fake buyers

ID fraud used for illegal auto purchases

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Photo by David Hall

Theatrical comedy

Riverside Players' 68th year of Theatre in the Park featured Ken Ludwig's "Lend Me a Soprano" at Riverside Park pavilion over the past two weekends, which was directed by John Zhang.

City's first female police captain breaking barriers

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Police Department has achieved a historic milestone with the appointment of Amy Wagner as captain of operations, marking the first time in its 151-year history that a woman has joined the command staff.

Wagner, 48, grew up in Green Bay and graduated from the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.

She earned her rank by serving Neenah for 25 years, a community that together with wife Kathy and sons Oliver, Elliott and Finley has become home.

"I love the city, I still love the job, I still learn every day," she said. "I love the support that our police department has from our community."

For Wagner, there was no defining moment that led to her decision to pursue a career in what is traditionally a male-dominated field.

"I wanted something different every day, I did not want routine and I wanted to make a difference," she said.

In recent decades, about 20% of officers employed by the Neenah Police Department have been women, exceeding the 13.1% nationwide average in 2021, according to Statista.

The very first female officer with the Neenah Police Department was Rhonda Jagla, who was hired in 1981 and resigned in 1989, just 10 years before Wagner was hired.

SEE **Police captain** ON PAGE 8



Neenah News

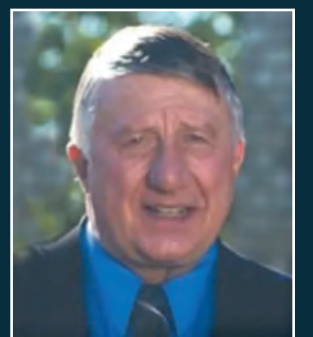
Police Capt. Amy Wagner, Neenah's first female command staff member, started her career with the city in 1999.

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County Fair features variety of affordable fun

NEENAH NEWS

Winnebago County Fair organizers want visitors “Strollin’ the Fair Without a Care” at this year’s event that opened Wednesday and runs through Sunday while pointing out the entertainment value it offers to families.

A \$15 daily ticket is a pass to grandstand shows, live bands, family entertainment, unlimited carnival rides, exhibits and barns, and free parking. Tickets can be used for any one day of the fair.

Compared to the price of an average movie or concert ticket, or admission to many events or venues, fair organizers said with Family Entertainment offerings included with the price of admission in recent years it has become one of the best summer fun deals around.

“We understand that families have a lot of options for where to spend their money, so if they choose to spend it at the Winnebago County Fair we want to provide the best value possible for their money,” said Jody Bezio of the Winnebago County Fair Association.

Bezio said this year they’re bringing back fan favorite Royal Legacy Family Circus and adding magic shows to a daily lineup that also includes pig, duck and goat races, Nick’s Kids Shows & Barnyard Adventure, trout pond fishing, chainsaw woodcarving and mini-golf.

Today (Friday) is Veterans Day at the fair with free admission to those with proof of military service.

Gate charges begin at 9 a.m. daily when the exposition building opens. Family and children’s entertainment begins by 11 a.m.

The grandstand lineup includes traditional county fair acts – rodeo, tractor pulls and a demolition derby – along with



Winnebago County Fair photos

Children’s activities and demolition derby are just some of the variety of fair offerings this year.

local music cover bands play nightly in the Music Village.

Mr. Ed’s Magical Midways brings the carnival rides from 1 to 10:30 p.m. Friday: (closed for safety check from 4-5 p.m.), noon to 10:30 p.m. Saturday: (closed from

4-5 p.m.), and noon to 4 p.m. Sunday.

Today is Senior Citizens’ Day (ages 55 and older) \$5 admission until 4 p.m. Children ages 3 and get in free unless riding carnival rides, where height restrictions apply.

Jobless rate rises in region for June

Neenah News

The Oshkosh-Neenah metropolitan area and Winnebago County saw a jump in its unemployment rate from 2.8% to 3.1% between May and June, according to preliminary data from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Last June’s jobless rate in Oshkosh-Neenah MSA and Winnebago County was 3.3%.

The non-seasonally adjusted data shows jobless rates in Metropolitan Statistical Areas rose in all of Wisconsin’s 12 metro areas over the month but were still lower or unchanged compared with the previous year.

Unemployment rates increased in all of Wisconsin’s 35 largest cities over the month year and were lower or unchanged compared with the previous year.

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Use of AI workforce tools is focus of regional event

Neenah News

The Fox Valley Workforce Development Board (FVWDB) will present a Winning With Wisconsin workforce event in the region from 8 to 10 a.m. Aug. 8 at the Fox Valley Technical College (FVTC) Riverside Campus in Oshkosh.

Employers and community leaders are invited to join state and local workforce leaders in the latest of a series of events dedicated to relevant workforce topics. Kurt Wismer, an educator from North Fond du Lac, will lead a session on the essentials of AI and how these new tools will save time and make days more productive.

During the session, attendees will be led on an exploration of the fundamentals of AI, its mechanics, prompt generation techniques, and crucial ethical considerations.

“Following record-breaking job numbers and historically low unemployment, Wisconsin employers and education lead-

ers need workforce development resources and programs now more than ever,” DWD Secretary Amy Pechacek said.

The 11 workforce development areas have integrated business service teams that work with employers on strategies to recruit qualified workers, retain employees, access workforce planning resources and attract a broad pool of skilled candidates.

The 2024 series will build on the events offered in 2023 and cover new topics, including youth employment, artificial intelligence, and innovative ways to attract, develop, and retain top talent development programs.

The two-hour educational session is free and breakfast will be provided, but pre-registration is required at foxvalleywww.eventbrite.com. For more information, call/text Bobbi Miller at 920-470-0837 or email bmiller@fvwdb.com.



Neenah News

Fix-it team

Repair Cafe Fox Cities brought in a variety of volunteer talent to work on residents' items in need of fixing Sunday afternoon at the Neenah Public Library. The first-time free event that is catching on nationwide was an opportunity to bring in items for fixers to attempt to work on, including computers, phones, small appliances, electronics, sewing and mending, jewelry and watches.

Calendar of events

Friday, Aug. 2

Winnebago County Fair, 8 a.m., Sunnyview Expo Center grounds

Saturday, Aug. 3

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

Kids' Triathlon, 8 a.m., Neenah Pool

Winnebago County Fair, 8 a.m., Sunnyview Expo Center grounds

Bonfire in concert, 9 p.m., Willie Beamon's, 2590 County II

Sunday, Aug. 4

Winnebago County Fair, 8 a.m., Sunnyview Expo Center grounds

St. Margaret Mary parish picnic, 10:30 a.m., 620 Division St., Neenah

Tuesday, Aug. 6
National Night Out and Movie in the Park, 5:30 p.m., Memorial Park, Neenah

National Night Out, 5 p.m., O'Hauser Park, Fox Crossing

Neenah Community Band concert, 7 p.m., Riverside Park pavilion

Wednesday, Aug. 7

Downtown Neenah Blood Drive, 8 a.m., DoubleTree Neenah Hotel

Evening Concert Series: Karen's Hit List, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park

Thursday, Aug. 8

Out to Lunch Concert Series: Randy Peterson, 11:30 a.m., Shattuck Park

Live Music Series: Amelia Ford, 5 p.m., Batley's Grill & Bar, 1010 Cameron Way

Saturday, Aug. 10

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

Brennand Airport Fly-in, 9 a.m., 3282 Breezewood Lane

Glass Arts Festival, 10 a.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Neenah Animal Shelter Walk for Pets, 11 a.m., 1010 Cameron Way

J+ Band, 6 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive, Fox Crossing

Sunday, Aug. 11

Team Hope Walk – Fox Valley, 10 a.m., Riverside Park

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Former school site cleared to make room for helipad

Neenah News

The clearing of the property across from ThedaCare Regional Medical Center-Neenah, which previously housed Roosevelt Elementary School, is nearly complete, with only the final landscaping touches remaining.

Construction work to raze the site began a year ago to make way for the ThedaStar air medical helipad and emergency landing area, which is 1,000 feet away.

Lynn Detterman, Senior Vice President of ThedaCare South Region, said the team needed to balance the significant amount of rain seen in the area this summer with completing some of the construction steps.

The 100-year-old school situated on 2 acres adjacent to the hospital was slated for closure after the 2022-23 school year as part of the district's restructuring plan. Local businessman John Bergstrom and other community members purchased it for \$1 million in 2022 and donated the site to ThedaCare.

The helipad was completed last July,



Photo by Dave Hall

The ThedaStar air medical helicopter is shown at the hospital adjacent to the parcel formerly holding Roosevelt Elementary School.

moving its landing spot and hangar from near the W.G. Bryan Bridge to a site near the Emergency Department for rapid transfer of patients.

That September, a resident on East Forest Avenue contacted police to file a noise complaint against the helicopter.

Bergstrom said that other uses for the

property – including housing – were initially considered but due to concerns over the proximity of the helipad it was determined the best use would be to demolish the building, clear the site and landscape it.

Those driving by on E. North Water Street may have noticed that a monument has been installed facing the hospital.

“No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted,” the monument’s inscription reads. “In honor of the decades of service provided by our hospital volunteers. Your spirit, energy and commitment deeply touches our community. God bless you all.”

The monument was placed by a hospital donor to honor ThedaCare’s team of volunteers who provide support for patients, families and team members.

“Volunteers provide thousands of hours of service throughout the ThedaCare system,” Detterman said. “Our volunteers help the hospital system function each day and they are a critical part of helping provide exceptional care for our communities.”

Bergstrom said last year that future uses for the Roosevelt site could change, though Detterman said at this time there are no updates to share.

“At the Neenah campus, expansion is impacted due to the river on two sides of the hospital,” she said. “When the opportunity was presented to acquire this adjacent property, we knew it was a good opportunity. We are grateful to John Bergstrom’s ongoing support of ThedaCare, as he facilitated the purchase.”

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Neenah-Menasha Meals on Wheels is a community collaboration of Valley VNA Senior Care, the Neenah-Menasha Emergency Society, and ThedaCare Regional Medical Center-Neenah.

Auto dealership fraud scheme targets local business

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

A fraud involving the use of a stolen identity to purchase a vehicle has made its way to Wisconsin, with a Neenah automotive dealership the target.

Headlines in Florida, Utah and New York have warned of the scam in recent months. It involves a new car buyer who communicates with a dealer electronically or over the phone to purchase a vehicle and have it delivered to a different location.

These individuals use stolen identities to secure financing and complete the purchase, driving off with a new car and leaving an unsuspecting identity-theft victim with the bill.

Last October, Danielle M. Shelton, 45, used the identity of a 70-year-old woman to purchase a 2022 GMC Sierra over the phone from a dealership in Neenah, according to a criminal complaint.

Shelton sent an email with her driver's license that had a Maryland address. During the credit application process, an

initial loan application fell through after she had trouble answering some of the questions. A different lender approved \$65,734 in financing.

Shelton was able to purchase the truck without ever entering the dealership and have it shipped out of state.

On Jan. 19, the dealership contacted police after a woman called about a bill she received for a truck payment and denied purchasing the vehicle.

The lender's findings revealed inconsistencies in the application and signatures and informed the dealership it needed to pay back \$60,000.

The picture on the driver's license was of a younger female and didn't match the date of birth listed in 1954. The city listed on the application was in Texas, but the address was in Maryland.

The buyer's employment was listed as



Shelton

nursing, but a credit bureau reported she was a housekeeper. Among other inconsistencies, one of the phone numbers listed on the application had a report of fraud on it.

Police were informed that the dealership received notice about the vehicle having a VIN inspection completed in Maryland and it was at a Chevrolet dealership in Texas. Investigators worked with Dallas police to set up a plan to have Shelton pick up a loaner vehicle and she was taken into custody at that time.

Shelton is facing felony charges in Winnebago County of theft by false representation and misappropriating identification to obtain money. A warrant was issued for her arrest last week after she failed to show up to court for an initial appearance.

District Attorney Eric Sparr said a few similar cases of identity fraud have been prosecuted by his office in recent years.

Third party identity fraud is one of the most common frauds targeting auto dealerships, according to Experian. While

auto dealers have an obligation to thwart financial schemes, residents can also take proactive steps to safeguard themselves against identity theft.

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection recommends that residents monitor their credit report for any unauthorized activities, such as unfamiliar transactions, to detect and deal with potential fraud early.

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Voter ID information available from DMV

Neenah News

Ahead of the Aug. 13 primary, the state Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds U.S. citizens how to obtain free identification that is valid for voting for those at least 18 years old by the next election.

Forms of identification include a driver's license, identification card, military or student ID card. There is no separate voter ID and a federally compliant REAL ID card is not required for voting purposes. Anyone unsure if their identification or qualification meets the requirements can visit the Wisconsin Elections Commission at bringit.wi.gov.

A list of the required documents to bring to a DMV Customer Service Center is available at wisconsindmv.gov. If the required documents needed for an ID are not readily available, DMV has a process

for U.S. citizens to obtain the necessary information.

Questions can be answered at DMV's toll-free hotline at 844-588-1069. Information regarding voter eligibility, poll locations, voter registration information or other election information can be directed to elections.wi.gov.

Start the application at wisconsindmv.gov or at the DMV Customer Service Center at 2301 Omro Road in Oshkosh or 711 W Association Drive in Appleton.

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Search state waters for invasive species

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and UW-Madison Division of Extension invite the public to help search for aquatic invasive species across the state Aug. 10.

Snapshot Day monitors designated sites for invasive plants and animals that may threaten the state's wildlife and water ecosystems. Coordinated by UW-Extension in partnership with the DNR and the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network, Snapshot Day is entering its 11th year of collecting data to help inform and guide management and control activities.

Volunteers will meet at a local training site of their choosing to learn how to identify invasive species before heading out to monitoring sites with event partners. Go to dnr.wisconsin.gov/newsroom for sign-up information.

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Sesquicentennial exhibit earns award

Neenah News

The Wisconsin Historical Society announced the 2024 winners of the annual Board of Curators Awards, including the Neenah Historical Society and Menasha Historical Society being honored with the Museum Exhibit Award for the city's sesquicentennials.

The awards recognize individuals and organizations for exceptional work aligned with the society's mission to connect people to the past by collecting, preserving and sharing stories. The Board of Curators, which is the governing body composed of elected and appointed

members, received 40 nominations this year

Neenah and Menasha's historical societies were recognized for a museum exhibit with a budget greater than \$5,000 for "Neenah and Menasha Sesquicentennials: Two Cities, One Community" in Neenah.

"The awards are an opportunity to identify and promote some of the wonderful achievements of the past year that have helped Wisconsinites connect with history," said Christian Overland, the Ruth & Hartley Barker Director and CEO of the Wisconsin Historical Society.

High school students gain foundation scholarships

The Neenah Joint School District has awarded \$63,700 in scholarships to 49 Neenah High School seniors supported by funds held within the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation.

Recipients, who were honored during a ceremony in May, were chosen by a volunteer committee of the school district. The winners were selected based on work in

the classroom, extracurricular activities and community involvement. To view the lists of recipients, visit OshkoshAreaCF.org/blog.

Support for any of these funds can be made with gifts at OshkoshAreaCF.org or checks sent to the foundation at 230 Ohio St., Suite 100, Oshkosh, WI 54902. For more information, visit FoxRiverScholarshipCenter.org.



Photo by Mark Neuman

History brought to life

Isabel Johnson is portrayed by Lexi McCarthy during the Neenah Historical Society's annual Cemetery Walk last Thursday in the Oak Hill Chapel. The early Neenah residents impacted by Johnson's marriage to Neenah's Charles R. Smith, America's wealthiest widower in the late 19th century, were the focus of the historical program.

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Coffee shop owner brews up connections in community

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

During a time when many coffee shops blend into the urban landscape, one local gem stands out for brewing more than just a good cup of coffee.

At Shellattes, situated on Doty Island central to Neenah and Menasha, connections are made over what owner Shelly Baeten describes as the two C's: coffee and community.

Shelly recently announced she plans to transition into semi-retirement and reduce the business' hours after more than a decade of serving up coffee and conversation in the Fox Valley. Though the shop's hours are being slightly reduced, Shelly said she and the business aren't going anywhere.

Shelly, 62, and husband Ken opened Shellattes in 2011 in a 130-year-old building that previously housed several other coffee shops and a bakery.

Shelly is the face of the business while Ken is the payroll supervisor, maintenance man and early-morning brewer.

Though initially the couple lived in Appleton, about 10 years ago they moved into space above the shop.

"So it's like that little Italian grandma who used to live upstairs and all the grandkids would come over for lunch on Sundays," she said.

A picture of Shelly's own Grandma has hung on the wall since opening. A "fabulous" cook, baker and cake decorator, Shelly has tried to emulate her.

"That smell of the coffee percolating; you'll see particularly old percolators around here, and I think of Grandma then," she said. "I think Grandma would be

proud."

Sitting at a table in a lovely little reading room at the shop early this week, Shelly does indeed exude the warm, caring, grandmotherly traits that attract patrons and employees who keep in touch years later.

She started in food service as a teenager and later transitioned into the corporate world while raising her family. Son Chad, 35, lives in Little Chute and daughter Katie, 36, lives in Neenah.

Blending the elements of a coffee shop, bistro and bakery with a community living room, bookstore and resale boutique, the cozy atmosphere has made Shellattes a favorite spot for many in Neenah, a city that Shelly has grown to love.

"It's very homey; it's nice going outside and someone drives by and beeps," she said. "It's nice being able to greet people in the store. I like the small-town feel."

Knick knacks, decorations, collectables and art adorn the shop, most of it for sale. The items make the space more welcoming and give people something to talk about – pots from her late mother's house, a coffee urn and tea pot from a thrift store that matched the set her grandma used to have, Sanka mugs that remind her of her late father making his cup of Sanka in the morning.

"So it's just things that make me happy and it makes the community happy, as well," she said.

Most important to Shelly are the relationships she has forged and memories made over the years.

"The happy ones, sad ones, but also great memories of those customers who came in every single day, or once a week, or even



Neenah News

Shelly Baeten talks with a customer recently inside Shellattes on Doty Island.

once a month," she said. "It's just nice to have that. My family has grown a lot."

A group of regulars shows up almost every morning to support the shop. Its founding member, Burton Rosenthal – known at the coffee shop as Butter Rum Burt – passed away in 2022. Shelly visited him in the hospital before his passing and was mentioned in his obituary.

Another regular customer and member of the group was Kai "Pita" Kotobalavu, lead singer of Unity the Band and a well-loved community member. Kotobalavu lost his battle with cancer early this year. An art piece with his likeness is now displayed at Shellattes to honor his memory.

"You know, there are happy times, but also when you lose someone, they're like a family member you're losing," she said.

Tim Bergstrom of Bergstrom Automotive is a regular there. He said Shelly takes the time to make all her patrons feel special.

"She welcomes all with her great big smile, stops the world by being present with you in an all too busy world and then

gives you the gift of leaving in a better mood because she shared her positive and caring heart with you," he said.

Sunlight streamed through the windows and the rich aroma of coffee filled the air Tuesday as Shelly strolled through Shellattes, stopping to greet several customers by name and chat.

"I think what's changed a lot in our communities is social skills, and being able to communicate and be able to talk to people, and so I do really treasure that about having a place where everyone's welcome," she said.

Having lost her mother last year and her father in 2017, Shelly said family is even more important to her. She hopes to use her extra time traveling and with family and friends. Her daughter Katie, an employee and regular face at the shop, plans to carry on the family business.

Humble and hardworking, Shelly has become a cherished member of the community, turning her regulars into a close-knit family and making each visit feel like coming home.



Neenah News

Shelly Baeten opened Shellattes with husband Ken in 2011.

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Police captain

FROM PAGE 1

Though Wagner acknowledged that joining the department was intimidating at first, colleagues welcomed her with open arms.

“The women that I started with were showing me the way and guiding me, and all the guys turned into my brothers and watched out for me and showed me the right way to do things,” she said.

Fresh out of college in her early 20s, she had much to learn.

“This job is not black and white; it is very gray, and no two calls are the same and no two situations are the same, and just trying to do the best for that specific situation is what I’m always trying to do,” she said.

She was hired during a time when open police positions would often receive hundreds of applications.

In recent years, in the wake of several high-profile police brutality incidents and the Black Lives Matter movement, officers across the country have faced greater scrutiny and there has been a decline in police officer applicants.

“Even when things were horrific in other

parts of the country, we always felt the support here,” Wagner said.

For 23 years she patrolled the streets of Neenah, moving up the ranks to sergeant and lieutenant.

“There’s extra pressure to work harder than everybody else and do better than everybody else, to prove that you deserve to be here,” she said.

Though it wasn’t easy, failure was not an option because “I felt if I failed, I made all the women look bad.”

She credits the support of her family for getting her through the tough times.

“There were times where I wasn’t sure if this is what I wanted to do and times where we have to reevaluate and think, is it worth the family struggles? And is it worth the missing holidays and missing family events? And to realize it is for me. It’s worth it.”

There have also been the rewarding moments, such as when she engages with a resident and achieves her goal of making a meaningful impact.

“It’s the rare occasions that people will stop you and thank you for something that you did for them,” she said. “It’s years later, that you don’t think about at the time, a decision to arrest or not arrest makes a dif-

ference. I’ve had people thank me for both: “Thank you for arresting me, I changed my life after that.”

In 2022, Wagner was promoted to investigative service lieutenant, a position that allowed her to focus on solving cases, supporting victims and coming to successful resolutions.

“When I was on patrol it’s so much more fast paced that you just have to go from call to call, but you don’t necessarily have that time to connect like you do when you’re back here,” she said.

Over the past two decades, Wagner has worked under four police chiefs and seen many changes in policing, the biggest being the advancements in technology.

“To have the full-blown capabilities of computer access in your squad to do research and look things up, to body cameras and squad cameras, cellphones, you know, technology with how we solve cases, is completely different today than it was 25 years ago,” she said.

Her accomplishments include being a member of the SWAT team, field training officer, peer support team member, firearms instructor, crisis intervention team member, critical incident stress debrief peer, sta-

tion dog supervisor, field training officer supervisor and serving on several committees.

Assistant Police Chief Jeff Bernice said staff knew that Wagner was the right person for captain because of her strengths, values and professionalism, adding that she possesses the ability to immediately connect with a person and establish a trusted relationship.

“Amy will serve as a pillar of strength to many young children and both women and men because she is a true law enforcement professional,” he said. “She has the highest ethical standards, the courage to do what is right, the spirit of a warrior and she follows Chief Olson’s directions of treating everyone with dignity and respect to the uppermost degree.”

Wagner admits she doesn’t like to be in the spotlight. But by breaking barriers, she has become a role model for young women to look up to.

“Find your passion and stick with it,” she advised. “There are times you’re going to feel like you’ve failed, but get back up and keep going. We’ve all made mistakes, but it’s what you do and what you learn from those mistakes.”

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Dark stores

FROM PAGE 1

Neenah, challenging the property assessments each year from 2019-2023. The lawsuits from 2019-2021 were consolidated into one case that seeks to lower the assessed value from \$11.49 million to \$8.14 million each year. The lawsuits challenging the 2022 and 2023 assessments seek to lower the value from \$11.59 million to \$6.52 million.

“Upon information and belief, the 2024 assessment was not uniform with the assessment of other properties in the city and state and therefore violate the Uniformity Clause of the United States Constitution,” Walmart wrote in its complaint.

Though the city has not yet filed its response to the latest lawsuit, attorneys for Neenah previously argued that Walmart fails to state any facts supporting the allegation that the assessment of the property is not uniform with other properties in the city and throughout the state.

Walmart is seeking a refund of taxes paid plus interest. If Walmart were to prevail in all its lawsuits against Neenah, the reduced assessments would result in a total refund of \$436,641 for 2019-2023, without interest calculations.

Community Development Director Chris Haese said that due to the ongoing lawsuits the city is limited in information it can provide but if adjustments are needed to Walmart’s tax bill, “the deficit created will unfortunately have to be covered by the balance of Neenah’s taxpayers.”

In a similar series of legal battles, Walmart and the city of Oshkosh reached settlements in 2019 and 2023 to resolve six disputes related to the retailer’s property assessments, with Oshkosh reimbursing Walmart a total of \$191,400.

Last year, the Wisconsin Supreme Court issued a decision that undermines the dark store legal strategy, ruling that the city of Delavan’s assessments of the Lowes location were not excessive and the value of dark and distressed properties is not comparable to an occupied, operating property.

The ruling was expected to muzzle Walmart’s dark store lawsuits in the state but the retailer has continued filing them, focusing on jurisdictions that may have different interpretations and applications of the law.



Neenah Historical Society

Onaway tradition

Camp Onaway, the island in Waupaca’s Chain of Lakes, has been home to Neenah Brigade campers for more than 115 years. Purchased by S.F. Shattuck in 1910, the early camp experience was devoted to “roughing it.”

Local college graduates

The following Neenah students completed degree requirements at the **University of Wisconsin-La Crosse** in May:

- Bim Ademi, Bachelor of Science, Finance Major
- Ashlyn Brown, Bachelor of Science, Communication Studies Major
- Abby Fruendt, Bachelor of Science, Public Health and Community Health Education Major
- Bryce Henderson, Bachelor of Science, Management Major; Finance Major
- Abby Rudolph, Master of Science, Physician Assistant Studies

The **University of Wisconsin-Eau**

Claire had 1,360 May 2024 graduates from its Eau Claire and Barron County campuses, including these students from Neenah:

- Gwyneth Ellenberger, Arts and Sciences, BS, Psychology and Criminal Justice
- Jordan Hildebrandt, Arts and Sciences, BA, Biology
- Erin Mansfield, Arts and Sciences, BA, Political Science
- Kya Meunier, Arts and Sciences, BS, Biology
- Stephanie Much, Arts and Sciences, BS, History
- Kierstin Schroeder, Arts and Sciences, BS, Biology and Spanish

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Neenah Parks and Rec recognizes top tennis performers

The Neenah Parks and Recreation Department recently recognized the top performers for its summer season.

Earning Most Valuable Player Awards in their respective divisions:

- Ivy beginner class: Sally Sander.
- Ivy advanced beginner class: Henry Lee.
- Southview beginner class: Max Nimtz.
- Southview advanced beginner class: Lucas Kane.
- Intermediate class boy: Aemin Hartzheim.
- Intermediate class girl: Catherine Champa.
- Advanced class boy: Mercer Moss.
- Advanced class girl: Paige Vickman.

In the league playoffs, senior league winners were Mercer Moss, Eric Hein, Ryan Stamm, Noah Sabatke, Colin Thresher. The junior league winners were William Lepp, Davis Eichman, Simon Lepp, Grant Meyer, Rylan O'Brien, Layne O'Brien and Vivian Tanger.

In the tennis program city tournament, the following champions were crowned:

- 10 & Under Girls Singles: Catherine Champa.
- 12 & Under Girls Singles: Hattie Han-

- kel.
- 12 & Under Girls Doubles: Lane O'Brien and Hattie Hankel.
- 14 & Under Girls Singles: Paige Vickman.
- 14 & Under Girls Doubles: Paige Vickman and Rachel Thomas.
- 16 & Under Girls Singles: Calin Fiesburg.
- 16 & Under Girls Doubles: Paige Vickman and Rachel Thomas.
- 10 & Under Boys Singles: William Lepp.
- 12 & Under Boys Singles: William Lepp.
- 12 & Under Boys Doubles: William Lepp and Aemin Hartzheim.
- 14 & Under Boys Singles: Mercer Moss.
- 14 & Under Boys Doubles: Eric Hein and Joseph Buttron.
- 16 & Under Singles: Mercer Moss.
- 16 & Under Doubles: Joseph Buttron and Fritz Staner.
- Men's Singles: Steve Reilly def. Zack Bitter, 6-3, 6-3.
- Men's Doubles: Judd Stevenson/Dave Risgaard def. Steve Reilly/Kyle Tanger, 6-0, 6-0.
- Women's Doubles: Valerie Narveson/Taylor Lackey def. Lori Hein/Marsha Day, 6-1, 6-1.



Award winners and playoff and tournament champions in the Neenah Parks and Recreation Department's summer tennis season were recognized recently.

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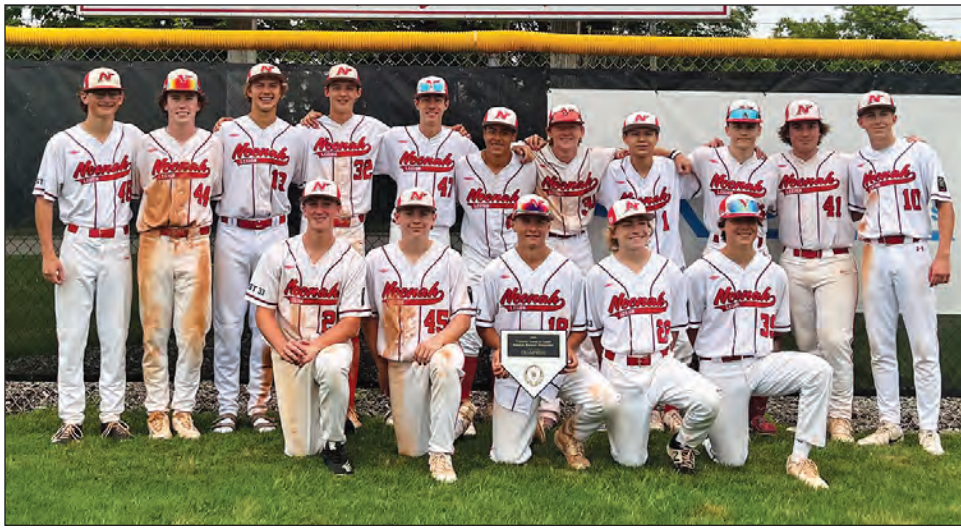
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Submitted photo

Regional champs

The Neenah Junior Legion baseball team went 5-0 at the regional tournament in Seymour recently to claim the tournament crown. Neenah scored at least nine runs in four of the five games, while earning a pair of shutout wins. The team beat Manitowoc Legion twice in the tournament, while also scoring victories over Oshkosh, Kaukauna and Kimberly. By winning the regional title, the team advanced to the state tournament in Baraboo where Neenah beat West De Pere, but lost to St. Mary's Springs and Baraboo to end their season. The team consisted of Brody Staffeld, Ashton Vanbeek, Brayden Schwerin, Brett Walther, Cameron Diekfuss, Cashtin Tiedt, Colin Martin, David Linstedt, Davidson Rhodes, Devin Pasic, Isaac Babbitts, James Buchanan, Kaden Leiton, Lukas Copeland, Luke Fairweather, Max Gerken, Owen Pire and Tyson Huss. The team was coached by Dave Huss, Tim Tiedt and Travis Pire.

Neenah Legion ousted at regional tourney

Neenah News

The Neenah Legion baseball team had its season end at the Class AAA regional tournament in Appleton last week with losses to Manitowoc (6-2) and the Appleton Doubledays (17-4).

In the tournament opener, Neenah rallied for two runs in the top of the seventh but couldn't notch anymore against the eventual tournament champions.

Wilson Balthus, Ty McNeely and Blake Griesbach had the only hits in the game for Neenah, while McNeely and Griesbach drove in the runs.

Griesbach was saddled with the loss on the mound for Neenah despite not giving up an earned run in the game. He scattered seven hits and struck out four in the game but Neenah committed five errors in the game.

Against the Doubledays, Neenah rallied from a four-run deficit to tie the game at 4-4 after six innings before Appleton erupted for 13 runs in the top of the seventh to earn the win.

Dustin Dorton-Clohessy had a two-run double in a three-run sixth inning that tied the game, while Balthus and Hunter Hilgers also had RBIs.

Obituaries

Mary Petra Ziolkowski Rolph

Mary Petra Ziolkowski Rolph peacefully passed away on July 9, 2024 at Mayo's St. Mary's Hospital in Rochester, MN following complications from brain surgery.

Mary was born on December 4, 1951 in Neenah, WI to Gertrude and Peter Ziolkowski. In her early years Mary learned ballet and piano and she was a talented writer even in grade school. Mary and a few friends from St. Margaret Mary's school started the Blue and Gold Clarion, the school newspaper in which she wrote and illustrated chapters to an ongoing mystery. Mary graduated from Neenah High School in 1970. She was part of the creative staff of the Neenah Rocket Echoes, a publication of art and poetry in which her art was featured.

In 1973 Mary married Mark Rolph and they made their home in Neenah. Mary's artistic eye and love of Tudor became a passion project, filling their home with the perfect furnishings and antiques. Years later they built a weekend home in Pepin, WI and again Mary showed her talent for design and curating to make a cozy log cabin.

In 1993, after many years in secretarial roles, Mary became a Corporate Travel Manager. This role combined Mary's impeccable planning, people and professional skills. She was a leader in the industry and was the Wisconsin Chapter President of National Business Travel Association 1998-1999.

In 2000 Mary founded Mary Rolph Resources and enjoyed a successful business

in corporate meeting and travel planning until she retired.

On October 11, 2013 Mary married Frank Ariss, a charming British fellow that stole her heart. They split their time between Nicollet Island in Minneapolis and Pepin, Wisconsin, eventually leaving the city behind for full-time living in Pepin. They took great joy in creating beautiful gardens, including an apple orchard, boating, photography, cross country skiing, they enjoyed birds, bunnies and deer, watching sunsets and eagles flying around the lake. Celebrating was an art form and oh how they enjoyed the holidays, both the British and American traditions, birthdays and every single 11th of the month during their 17 years together.

To know Mary was to adore and be adored. She was a steadfast, loving friend with a heart of pure kindness. She had great fondness of animals and loved many pets in her life, including Mischka, a cat who is equal parts feisty, particular and cuddly. Mary loved history, travel to England and in recent years became an avid reader.

Mary was preceded in death by her parents, and husband Frank.

Mary is survived by step-children Tristram Ariss and his children Ali Ariss and Amelia Ariss; Nathan Ariss; Charlotte Ariss (Jim Levine) and daughters Brittany Ariss, Madeline Canaday (Kyle) and Samantha Levine. Sister-in-Law Brenda Briden, nephew Damian Briden (Julie), nieces Rachel Briden (Mark McCluskey) and Sarah Palmer (David), and many cherished friends.

A celebration of Mary's life is pending. Memorials in Mary's name are encouraged to Feral Friends of Lake Pepin, P.O. Box 23, Pepin, WI 54759.

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Celebrating the Joy of Faith Through Love and Service

Join us on Sundays at 10 am. All are Welcome!

Sunday Worship Services
10:00 AM & 8:00 PM
17ED Oldie Buggy Drive, Neenah, WI

APPLE VALLEY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
www.applevalleypres.org

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TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Worship Times: Saturday 6PM, Sunday 8am & 10am & 11am
987 Oak St., Neenah

www.trinityneenah.net [Facebook.com/TLNeenah](https://www.facebook.com/TLNeenah)

First United Methodist Church of Neenah Menasha

~Worship with us on Sunday mornings at 9:00 am~
All are welcome!

108 West Doty Avenue, Neenah • (920)725-0166
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www.foxvalleychurch.net
The Brigade in Downtown Neenah

Fox Valley Church of Christ
109 W Columbian Ave Neenah, WI

Growing Together in Christ | Serving in Faith | Sharing God's Love

Our Savior's Lutheran Church
Worship Times: **Saturday 5PM, Sunday 9AM**
809 S Commercial St, Neenah 920-725-3956 www.our-saviors.org

Come worship with us. All are welcome here!
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**To advertise in the
Worship Directory, call
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First Presbyterian Church
200 Church St., Neenah, WI 920-725-4391 www.firstpresneenah.org

**Join us for worship on Sundays at 9:15 a.m.
ALL ARE WELCOME**

Kid Scoop

THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE
Puzzle answers, recipes, videos and more at www.kidscoop.com
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The Summer Olympic Games Are Back!

This summer, the world turns its eyes to Paris, France. Why? That's where the Summer Olympics will be held starting on Friday, July 26 through Sunday, August 11, 2024.



Who's there?

Take a look at the logo for the Paris Summer Olympic Games. At first, you'll see the Olympic flame and the Olympic rings. But take a closer look.

Do you see a face and hair? This is the face of a goddess that is seen as the symbol for liberty and wisdom in France.

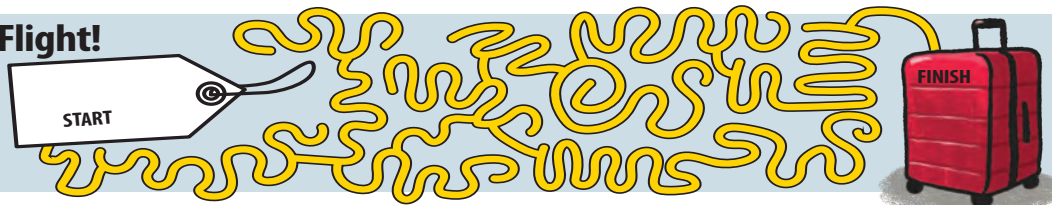
Use this code to reveal her name.

- = A
- = I
- = N
- = E
- = M
- = R



Don't Miss Your Flight!

Imagine you're flying to Paris, but you forgot to attach your nametag to your suitcase. Write your name on the tag, then follow the maze to find your suitcase.



Pictograms

It is said that a picture is worth a thousand words. At the Olympic Games, a picture is worth a thousand words in hundreds of languages.

Pictograms are simplified pictures or symbols. There is one for each sport to help people from all over the world understand what is happening. For example, this pictogram represents the Olympic sport of judo.



Do the math to match each pictogram to the name of the Summer Olympic event that it represents.

18 - 3 = **BOXING**

11 + 11 + 11 =

24 + 6 =

41 - 9 =

14 + 14 =

3 + 6 + 2 =

9 + 9 + 9 =

5 + 2 =

8 + 9 + 1 =

3 + 3 + 6 =

17 - 4 =

22 - 12 =

- 12 = Rowing
- 11 = Football (Soccer)
- 13 = Table Tennis
- 18 = Breaking
- 7 = Artistic Swimming
- 33 = Badminton
- 28 = Marathon Swimming
- 30 = Archery
- 27 = Basketball
- 10 = Weightlifting
- 32 = Golf
- 15 = Boxing

Extra! Extra!
The Great Symbol Search
 Look for five symbols in today's newspaper. Show them to a friend to see if they can tell what the symbol represents.
 Standards Link: Connect artistic representations to meaning.

Explore more at olympics.com

Kid Scoop Puzzler

The 2024 Paralympic Games

This is the logo of the 2024 Paralympic Games.

Athletes with physical disabilities from around the world compete in the Paralympic Games every four years alongside the Olympics. In fact, Paralympics means "alongside the Olympics."

The Paralympics began 64 years ago. What year was that?

1 9 _ _ _

Standards Link: Math: Calculate sums and differences to 100.

ATHLETIC WORD SEARCH

Find the words in the puzzle by looking up, down, backwards, forwards, sideways and diagonally.

GYMNASTICS
 WATER POLO
 BASEBALL
 SWIMMING
 SURFING
 SAILING
 KARATE
 TENNIS
 SOCCER
 TRACK
 CANOE
 GOLF
 JUDO

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

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

Kid Scoop Together: Olympic Quiz

Read these questions to a family member. How many did they get right?

- What do the five rings of the Olympics mean?
 - Five Cities
 - Five Countries
 - Five Continents
- What does the Olympic Motto "Citius, Altius, Fortius" mean?
 - Smarter, Stronger, Faster
 - Swifter, Higher, Stronger
 - Better, Bigger, Bolder
- According to the Olympic Creed, the most important thing in the Olympic Games is not to win but ...
 - to play fair.
 - to win big.
 - to take part.
- Where is the Olympic torch first lit?
 - Athens
 - Greece
 - Olympia
- Women were first allowed to compete in the Olympics in what year?
 - 1800
 - 1900
 - 2000
- The 2026 Winter Olympic Games will be held in:
 - Italy
 - Germany
 - Norway
- Which of the following is NOT a color of one of the Olympic rings?
 - Blue
 - Purple
 - Black
- All the participating countries sent female athletes for the first time in which Olympics?
 - 1976 Montreal
 - 1984 Los Angeles
 - 2012 London

- 1. Five continents
- 2. Swifter, Higher, Stronger
- 3. To take part
- 4. Olympia
- 5. 1900
- 6. Italy
- 7. Purple
- 8. 2012 London

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