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Photo from Brucks family

Jack Brucks of Neenah was recognized as the American Motorcyclist Association's Youth Racer of the Year in 2023.

Young motorcycle racer excels at need for speed

By Tim Froberg
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

In his "Top Gun" movies, Tom Cruise's Maverick character talked about a need for speed.

Neenah's Jack Brucks can relate – even though his wheels never leave the ground.

Brucks is just 15, but he has already emerged as one of the nation's top flat track amateur motorcycle racers.

Keeping up with Brucks' accomplishments isn't easy. Keeping up with him on a dirt track is even tougher.

Brucks has a racing resume packed with impressive feats. He is a seven-time na-



Brucks

tional champion in his age and bike class, a six-time district champ, a national youth rider of the year recipient (2023) and a two-time American Motorcyclist Association flat track youth rider of the year (2020 and 2023).

Brucks currently races with a Husqvarna 450 cc, the flagship racing machine in the Husqvarna lineup. In competitive racing events that usually consist of six to eight laps on a flat track with no jumps, Brucks hits speeds up to 120 mph.

"Honestly, it doesn't feel like I'm going that fast," Brucks said. "When you're riding on that big of a track it feels like you're going 30 miles an hour. Everything seems so slow."

It may seem slow to an experienced rid-

SEE **Jack Brucks** ON PAGE 8

Immigration pact trains deputies

Sheriff's department joins on ICE agreement

Neenah News

The Winnebago County Sheriff's Department has entered into an agreement with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) to assist in federal efforts that have been stepped up against immigration, joining eight other Wisconsin counties that have signed agreements with ICE.

The sheriff's department signed on as part of the 287(g) warrant services officer model. Under the agreement, ICE trains, certifies and authorizes local law enforcement to serve and execute administrative warrants on noncitizens in jail. ICE provides deputies with eight hours of training for detaining undocumented immigrants facing felony criminal charges.

Sheriff John Matz said the program does not diverge from its current policy on handling arrests that involve citizenship status.

"We're going to keep doing what we've always done," Matz told the Herald when asked about the new agreement.

He said when someone is arrested, the department processes criminal charges and uses a citizenship portal to check statuses.

"If we are unable to determine their status and they are here illegally, we report them to ICE and they make a determination if they should be held," Matz said.

If ICE determines individuals should be held, they are put on a 48-hour administrative hold, giving federal officials 48

SEE **County arrests** ON PAGE 7

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N-M firefighters see record call volume for second year

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue (NMFR) responded to a record number of calls in 2024 for the second year in a row.

Firefighters responded to 3,555 calls last year, surpassing the previous year's record by about 5%. This marks the highest number of responses in the department's history and represents a 48% increase from 2014 and an 85% increase from 2004.

According to Fire Chief Travis Teesch, the increasing number of calls could be attributed to the area's aging population.

Emergency medical service (EMS) calls to nursing homes and community based residential facilities continue to outpace those from other areas of the city.

"I just think that's the nature of fire and EMS," he said. "You rarely see a year where they go down."

Firefighters are trained at the emergency medical technician (EMT) basic level,



Teesch

with some trained at the first responder level, and handled 2,524 medical emergencies last year, providing care until an ambulance arrived to transport the person to a hospital. Seven people were successfully resuscitated by firefighters during the calls, typically due to cardiac or respiratory emergencies.

Medical emergencies made up about 71% of total calls in 2024, with fire calls amounting to only about 2%, according to the NMFR annual report, which provides data on incidents that firefighters respond to.

NMFR includes four stations: Station

31 on Breezewood Lane and Station 32 on East Columbian Avenue in Neenah; and Station 35 on First Street and Station 36 on Manitowoc Road in Menasha.

The stations responded to 84 fires in 2024, half of which were structure fires amounting to about \$2.1 million in losses. NMFR also responded to 56 motor vehicle accidents and 81 spill calls.

The average turnout time – from when firefighters receive a call to when they leave the station – was a minute and 14

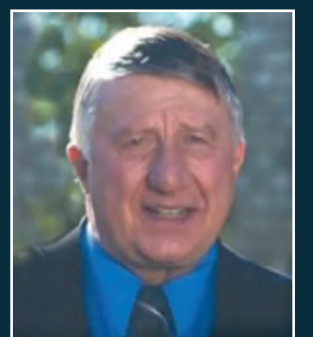
SEE **N-M Fire Rescue** ON PAGE 6

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Corrections

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

About the newspaper

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Animal shelter director announces retirement

Neenah News

After 35 years serving in the nonprofit sector, Neenah Animal Shelter executive director Cynthia “Cindy” Flauger announced she will retire effective Dec. 31.

Flauger was hired as Neenah Animal Shelter’s first full-time executive director in July 2020 at a time the organization was positioning itself for strategic growth, including the launch of a capital campaign to build a new facility to meet the growing animal welfare needs of the community.

“I have been blessed to be a part of the Neenah Animal Shelter during such a

transformative time in its history. NAS is well positioned for the future,” Flauger said. “While it’s hard to step away from something I am so passionate about, I know in my heart it’s time for a new ED to lead the organization into the next chapter. With that said, I remain committed to the mission and future success of NAS.”

Board president Mary Setton stated, “On behalf of our organization, I want to thank Cindy for her dedication, passion and leadership. She started with the Neenah Animal Shelter during COVID; she hit

the ground running and helped us navigate during the pandemic.

“Just before the world went on lock-down because of COVID, we had embarked on a capital campaign to build a new shelter. Cindy’s hard work and dedication to the campaign and building of a new facility is greatly appreciated.”

Neenah News, Herald win statewide awards

Neenah News

The Neenah News and Oshkosh Herald received a total of 12 awards in the Wisconsin Newspaper Association (WNA) Foundation’s 2024 Better Newspaper Contest that were announced Friday at the annual convention in Madison.

Division C first-place honors for General News went to staff writer Bethanie Gengler for a Herald story about the state’s judicial ethics complaint process and a Neenah News story about school safety policies in the Reporting on Local Education category. Freelance contributor Patti Lee was awarded first place in the Feature Story Profile category for a story about a Menominee tribal elder.

Second-place honors went to Herald reporter Jonathan Richie in the Local Education category, freelance photographer Michael Cooney for Feature Photo in the Herald and David Hall for Spot News photo in the Neenah News.

Other third-place awards went to Gengler for General News Story, Feature Story Non-Profile and Reporting on Local Government, and an honorable mention for Localized National Story.

Lee also took third place in the Localized National Story category for a story about educational programs in the Fox Valley related to Earth Day.

The Herald staff was recognized for General Excellence among Division C weeklies with an honorable mention award.

The 2024 Newspapers of the Year were the Superior Telegram (weekly) and Wisconsin State Journal (daily).



Neenah Historical Society photo

Auto headquarters

The building at 216 N. Commercial St. in Neenah was built in 1959 and originally home to Winnebagoland motors. In 1968 it became Hesser Oldsmobile until 1975. This image from 1968 is from the Munroe Studios collection.

PLEASE VOTE

Frank Cuthbert

For Neenah Alderman

District 3

- Background: U.S. Navy Veteran with a B.S. from Southern Illinois University and 40 years in the aviation industry as an Operations Manager and Completions Executive.
- Dedication to the City of Neenah: Works at the library and volunteers for community events like the Neenah Pow Wow Canoe Ride, Winterfest, and Carpenter Preserve. Led a task force to standardize QR codes for Oak Hill Cemetery’s military memorials.
- Paid for by Frank Cuthbert.

Corrections

ATLAS GUIDE, MARCH: Woodey’s Bar & Grill has its annual Woodey’s Walleye Tournament on Saturday, May 10. The date was incorrect on Page 10. Mikey Koziczkowski, owner of Wait...What...? LLC, had his name misspelled on Page 5.

April 1st

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School board hopefuls discuss district issues at forum

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

Five candidates for three seats with three-year terms on the Neenah Joint School District Board of Education participated in a public forum hosted by the Winnebago County League of Women Voters last week in advance of the April 1 election.

The board candidates include incumbents Lauri Asbury and Tara Brzezinski, previous school board member Tom Hanby, and newcomers Eric Fredrickson and Kenneth McNeil. School board vice president Sarah Moore-Nokes is not running for re-election.

Asbury has served on the Neenah school board since 2016, is the parent of two Neenah graduates and a longtime resident and volunteer in the community with experience in advertising, policy advocacy and serving on nonprofit boards.

Brzezinski has three children in the district, including a son with special needs. She is actively involved as a child and parent advocate, serving on the Wisconsin Board for People with Developmental Disabilities, serves as a special education coordinator at her church and mentors students in the district.

Fredrickson is the father of two young sons, one currently in the district and one soon to attend. His career is as a quality engineer, focused on processes and optimization. He is also an active volunteer with the Northeast Wisconsin Chinese Association.

Hanby's son graduated from Neenah High School. He said he has attended nearly every school board meeting for the past 21 years, even when not serving on the board. His most recent term ended when he lost his seat in the 2023 election and failed to secure a seat in last year's election.

McNeil is the parent of two children attending Neenah schools. He has 17 years of professional experience in aviation and manufacturing with an IT background. He recently completed a master's degree and is working on an autism teaching certification.

The candidates discussed issues such as retaining qualified staff, changes implemented by the new superintendent who started in the position last July, diversity and inclusion, book selection for school libraries, achievement gaps, school safety policies and the impact of school vouchers.

Select questions and portions of each candidate's answer are below in alphabetical order. A full recording of the forum is available on the Winnebago LWV YouTube page.

What is the best way to retain excellent teaching and office staff?

Asbury: "I would work to create an inclusive, open culture and a supportive environment. I think that's huge, and we are working on that. The most important thing would be to involve teachers in decision making."

Brzezinski: "We need to make sure that, you know, we're supporting our teachers as well, because they're the ones that are teaching our students. A lot of times, they aren't there for the money, because teachers don't make a lot of money, and they're not there for that. They're there for the students. And so retaining them is to make sure that if they need help, that we're finding a way to get them that help, that we are making sure that if they need additional staff, or they need additional aides in there, that we're trying to figure out a way to help them with that."

Fredrickson: "I think there are opportunities for more flexible policies with educators.

Perhaps use of PTO could be different, more flexible to make things a little bit easier for them. Salary is always another issue. They certainly work very hard for the salaries that they make. I know currently, salaries and benefits are 72% of the budget for our district, so it's challenging to find more room for salaries, but it needs to be a priority."

Hanby: "The one thing I think that the district has had some struggles with over the past decades that I've been involved in, there's an enormous difference between listening and hearing. We can run listening sessions until we're blue in the face, but we have to hear our groups of people, whether we're talking about our staff in this question, or our parents, or our students. We have to not only listen to them, we have to hear them, and we have to, when possible, involve their thoughts and feelings into our conversations that we have as we choose their workplace, their school place, et cetera."

McNeil: "I know that one of the concerns we have is finding enough qualified teachers to support CAP (college advancement program) courses. Incentivizing that would be a great way to encourage teachers to stick around, as well as allowing them to go to conferences. I agree that a flexible PTO would be a good way to approach that, but at the end of the day, they have to feel respected."

Superintendent Dr. Steve Harrison is new to the district this year. Which change that he has made impressed you the most, and which area would you like to work with him on in the future if you're elected?

Asbury: "I think our two main goals with Dr. Harrison have been the way he's engaging the community and with our staff in developing this positive culture for staff. He's involving them in the decision making in a way that is really going to help. We've gone through a lot of change, and I think he's really the right person for the job right now. He's bringing a lot to the table for the community."

Brzezinski: "One thing that I would love to work with him on is actually the literacy. We have Act 20 (Wisconsin reading law) that's coming in, and just really working with him to make sure that we have the data that we're collecting for that, make sure that the staff that actually works in the literacy department is actually involved with that data, and that their voices are heard to better correct what we're using."

Fredrickson: "I think there's a lot of opportunity with internal report cards. We've all seen the district report cards, and that information is important, but I think we could collect data internal to our district in a more timely manner and respond to it quicker. That would lead to better outcomes with our students. I think the data is there, and I think a bit of analysis would really help our students and direct what we're doing."

Hanby: "The fact remains, is what I've seen thus far an improvement on, is an openness towards open communication,

transparency and, you know, laying the cards on the table, and letting people see it like it is, and then additionally letting them have a say as we go along, or an input at least. And primarily, that's the goal that I've been trying to achieve, honestly for the last two decades, to make our district more transparent, more open."

McNeil: "So unfortunately, Dr. Underly (superintendent of public instruction) at the state level has devalued the district report card with her changes, and I think that one of the things that was brought up at the most recent school board meeting that I really agree with, that Dr. Harrison was advocating for, is removing compensation and bonuses based on that report card, since it's now a flawed measure and it's also a lagging indicator. So I think that is a great improvement."

Should the Board of Education play any part in determining which books are selected for school libraries and classrooms, and if they do, how would you ensure a balanced approach to school libraries?

Asbury: "The board itself makes the policies, but they do not select the materials. We also have very strong internal expertise and procedures that we follow when picking and selecting our materials. We want to make sure that we can have really great materials for our students to have access to. If parents are concerned about that or have a question, we have an open-door policy and a very straightforward procedure."

Brzezinski: "We can find out why a decision was made and it wasn't made. There are some books that are actually in the library that are kept behind the shelf. So, behind the desk, and those are kept because that com-

mittee felt that with that book, it needed to stay behind the desk. So I do think that we do. It is our job as a board to listen and trust that committee in what they do."

Fredrickson: "I don't think the board should ever vote to remove books from our libraries. I think that's a working-level decision that's best left to the building administrators and the district administrators. We have very talented and experienced librarians in our district to select the materials in our libraries and I think they're doing a very good job. It is the role of the board to set policies as to what materials are in our schools, including our libraries. So to that extent, I support both the board's responsibility to writing those policies and approving those policies, with input from our educators, including our librarians."

Hanby: "I would have to say that the reality is we probably have not chosen books that are controversial enough. Because, considering the number of buildings that we have and the number – thousands and thousands of books that we have – we have a very limited amount of book challenges. In general, when you compare with the amount of books we have and the amount of those that rise to the board level that are unresolved, is so minimal that the question is probably coming from the opposite field. But the reality is, we probably haven't gone out on the limb as a district far enough, opening up reading to students."

McNeil: "So absolutely, the board has a role to play in determining the appropriateness of educational material. It's spelled out very clearly in the existing policies. The policy gives parents the right to inspect education materials. It gives them the clear procedure to challenge those materials at the building level and then at the district level."

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Clayton borrowing for debt, town hall expansion

By Bethanie Gengler
NEENAH NEWS

The Town of Clayton is issuing \$12.5 million in general obligation promissory notes to borrow money to repay debt and fund a new town hall.

The initial 2025 resolution considered by the Clayton Town Board of Supervisors at a meeting last week was for the sale of \$24.6 million in promissory notes, which was reduced to about half and unanimously approved by the board.



Geise

Clayton, which is unincorporated, has faced annexation from neighboring municipalities. The town failed at achieving incorporation as the village of Larsen in 2021, which would establish legal boundaries to prevent annexation.

That same year, Clayton entered into a deal with Fox Crossing to supply water and transfer wastewater from the town. Clayton paid Fox Crossing \$11.5 million, with the agreement that Fox Crossing would not annex any part of Clayton for

10 years.

Clayton chairman Russ Geise said the city is planning for the future and seeking ways to mitigate land loss through annexation.

“We do have agreements in place with Fox Crossing, but there’s other forces out there that still would like to annex in parts of Clayton, and we’re trying to look down the road five years from now and find out the best way to stop this incorporation,” he said.

The borrowing is to balance the budget due to debt Clayton accrued when the town entered into the deal with Fox Crossing.

“Well, we got that infrastructure in place, so that’s where most of the debt we took on came from,” Geise said.

About \$1.1 million of the funds will be set aside to begin moving forward on plans to acquire property for relocating the town hall closer to the town center, which he said will bolster efforts to become incorporated.

“One of the reasons we didn’t succeed in our incorporation is Larsen itself, where we have our town hall, was not considered a town center,” he said. “We need something more on the east side of town, where the growth actually is, for us to try

for incorporation again. We need a town center and we need the town hall to be part of that.”

In addition, Clayton staff is starting to exceed the capacity of its town hall.

“We’re just outgrowing where we’re at because we’re adding more staff all the time and we are limited in space,” he said. “So it’s not that we won’t keep people at our current location, but we’ll just expand out. Whether we continue to think about building, buy something else, we’ll just sell the land we’ve owned for a number of years over there close to (Hwy) 76, but not quite on 76. But we’re still looking at the options here.”

Pre-sale review and approval by the Town Board was completed last week, with a meeting to award sale of the notes on April 2 and an estimated closing date

of April 23. Between May 1-9, Clayton will be required to repay the holders of the older debt.

Clayton, with a population of 4,524, has a lower overall debt burden of 2.3% when compared with Neenah, which has a 3.9% debt burden, and Oshkosh, which has a 5.65% debt burden.

The town’s mill rate, which is the rate that property values are assessed in “mills” per \$1,000 of equalized value, decreased by 63 cents in 2024 to \$9.83, meaning a resident with a property valued at \$200,000 was assessed by Clayton for \$1,966 in taxes last year.

Geise said that because the funds from the promissory notes will primarily be used for Clayton’s debt service, he doesn’t expect the borrowing to have much of an impact on the 2025 mill rate.

Wisconsin Idea Week to be marked in county

Neenah News

Extension Winnebago County is celebrating Wisconsin Idea Week from April 7-11 with a theme of Pathways for Exchange. This statewide event connects the University of Wisconsin-Madison with communities across the state.

The extension is hosting a Program & Partner Fair from 5:30 to 8 p.m. April 10 at 625 E. County Y, Oshkosh, that will show-

case local programs and partnerships. Badger Talk keynote speaker Dean Sommer will talk about how Wisconsin became the cheese state starting at 6:30 p.m.

Registration can be done through winnebago.extension.wisc.edu and is encouraged to ensure there are enough supplies for attendees.

Featured partners should sign up for the fair by April 1.

Calendar of events

Friday, March 14

Scott Dercks, 7 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive

Monday, March 17

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

Tuesday, March 18

Kathryn Wedge pop-up art show, 6 p.m., Ballroom at The Reserve, 116 S. Commercial St.

Wednesday, March 19

Kathryn Wedge pop-up art show, 6 p.m., Ballroom at The Reserve, 116 S. Commercial St.

Thursday, March 20

Spring Shop & Stroll, 3 p.m., downtown Neenah

Art After Dark, 5:30 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

“Growing up Neenah: Stories from the

History Harvest, 6:30 p.m., Public Library

Friday, March 21

Mike Kubicki Trio, 7 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive

Saturday, March 22

B.D. Greer, 8 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive

Sunday, March 23

Neenah Community Band Spring Concert, 3 p.m., Neenah High School PAC

Monday, March 24

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

Tuesday, March 25

Film Series: “Some Like it Hot” (1959), 1 p.m., Neenah-Menasha YMCA
Movie Talks: “Oppenheimer,” 6:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Friday, March 28

Melissa Chakar Trio, 7 p.m., Xe 54, 1350 W. American Drive

Saturday, March 29

Outagamie County Master Gardener Association spring garden conference, 8 a.m., Bridgewood Resort Hotel, 1000 Cameron Way



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N-M Fire Rescue

FROM PAGE 1

seconds. Response time, which is the total time it takes for the first engine to arrive at the scene of an emergency after a call is received, averaged about four minutes.

Firefighters inspected 2,788 commercial buildings for fire safety, which resulted in a 94% compliance rate, an increase of 24% over the previous year. About 64% of the buildings inspected were in Neenah and 36% in Menasha.

There were 493 simultaneous incidents, where two or more units respond to a call.

"I think it's probably average for a department our size," Teesch said. "It's definitely something we want to just keep an eye on to see unit overutilization and where we're doubling up."

Teesch explained that when a serious fire call comes in, three or four stations are responding. To avoid causing accidents by having too many units responding emergently, they have a tiered approach.

Staffing levels remained a challenge last year with the department operating at or near the National Fire Protection Association recommendations of 17-21 personnel on each of its three shifts. Though NMFR had five new recruits in 2024, the department also faced significant losses due to retirements.

"But when we had those five recruits, it was because we had five retirements and we lost 162 years of experience with the guys who retired," Teesch said.

With the new recruits and existing staff, Teesch said NMFR focused on extensive training to make up for the departures, logging 20,893 hours in 2024, which included three multiagency training sessions with fire departments in Kaukauna, Grand Chute, Oshkosh and Fox Crossing. The training resulted in a new certified fire



Photo from NMFR

Firefighters participate in a training exercise involving a burning building.

investigator, instructor, officer and three auto extrication technicians.

NMFR also supported regional emergency response as part of Wisconsin's Urban Search and Rescue Task Force, known as Wisconsin Task Force 1, which was deployed to North Carolina to assist with flood relief efforts after Hurricane Helene. It was a first for the local team, with NMFR staff joining first responders from Appleton, Fond du Lac, Green Bay, Janesville, La Crosse, Oshkosh and Superior to assist with search and rescue.

Looking ahead, Teesch said NMFR is focused on a remodel of Station 31 to coincide with a new training tower. The remodel project is still in the planning phase and will deal with long-standing issues with the aging facility, including concerns over mold. Previous cost estimates put the remodel at about \$6 million, though Teesch said updated estimates may come in much higher due to rising costs. The training tower is estimated to cost about \$1 million

and is partially funded by a \$500,000 grant from the county's Spirit Fund.

Additionally, Teesch said the department is working with policy management firm Lexipol to ensure operating guidelines and policies are up to date and compliant with federal, state and local regulations.

Teesch praised NMFR's contributions to the community, noting the Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Local 275 Charitable Foundation gave more than \$40,000 to charities last year. The foundation also operates the Neenah-Menasha Santa Float each year, with volunteer firefighters spreading holiday joy to neighborhoods in both cities.

Looking back at 2024, which was Teesch's first as chief of NMFR after the retirement of Kevin Kloehn, he said he is pleased with the performance of staff and firefighters.

"It's a great place to work," he said. "Our firefighters are awesome. They train hard. They're committed."



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Teen gets probation in burglary, methamphetamine cases

Neenah News

A Neenah teenager received probation for his role in a home invasion burglary and during a traffic stop where he was trying to get rid of more than 300 pills.

Keyontae J. Harris, 18, was facing 50 years in prison when he walked into Winnebago County Judge Scott Woldt's courtroom last Friday. He was released on probation after spending nine months in the county jail.

Harris was charged with armed robbery, physical abuse of a child, burglary in one case and several drug-related charges in a second case.

Harris moved to the Fox Cities less than a year before being arrested. He moved from the Atlanta area after his father told him there were high-paying jobs here. Harris' attorney, Trisha Fritz, said Harris has a 2-year-old daughter he helps support.

Court documents alleged Harris pepper-sprayed and robbed a 15-year-old victim. Fritz told the court Harris did make bad decisions as the victim was selling Harris clothing and shoes.

Fritz alleged that once Harris gave the victim money for the items, the victim did not provide the items and Harris came back to the house to take the items. The victim told

police they were pistol whipped by Harris.

Woldt said this was the first case in his 21 years on the bench that a person in custody has earned a high school diploma and commended Harris on using his time in jail properly.

Harris received five years of probation that is being withheld, which means if he violates the terms of his probation he will be back in court and could be sentenced to a maximum of 27.5 years.

A plea deal between the state and defense had Harris pleading no contest to possession with intent to deliver methamphetamine and burglary of a building or dwelling. The

remaining counts were dismissed and read in for sentencing purposes.

When given an opportunity to address the court, Harris admitted his mistakes, accepted responsibility for his actions and said the last year in a new community has been difficult for him.

Nash recommended Harris receive two to three years in prison for the counts linked to his no contest pleas while Fritz argued probation would best suit Harris.

Assistant District Attorney Amanda Nash called Harris' actions "serious crimes" that were committed in a short period of time since Harris moved to the area.

County arrests

FROM PAGE 1

hours to pick them up from the jail.

"All the 287(g) does is gives our deputies training for administering these administrative holds," Matz said.

Winnebago County Executive Jon Doemel did not know about the agreement before it was announced but said he trusts Matz to make these decisions.

At a Judiciary & Public Safety Committee meeting last month, Matz indicated he would be signing agreements under the 287(g) warrant services model and the jail enforcement model, though no agreement under the jail enforcement model was signed as of early this week.

Under the jail enforcement model, local law enforcement agrees to cooperate with ICE to identify, process and remove undocumented immigrants with pending criminal charges who are arrested by state or local law enforcement.

Supervisor Kate Hancock-Cooke noted

at the meeting that if the federal government asks for assistance in immigration enforcement, the county has the right to refuse compliance. She questioned whether noncitizens who have already served their sentence could be targeted for arrest.

Matz responded that based on his belief, noncitizens who have completed their sentence would be arrested, adding that the sheriff's office will follow lawful orders and he doesn't believe they will be given any unreasonable requests.

He also referenced a bill introduced in February, Senate Bill 57, which would require Wisconsin sheriffs to request proof of legal status from individuals held in a county jail for an offense punishable as a felony. The bill also requires sheriffs to comply with detainers and administrative warrants received from the Department of Homeland Security for individuals held in



Matz

the county jail for a criminal offense.

Matz said the bill would allow the sheriff's office to seek reimbursement from the federal government for costs associated with holding noncitizens, which can include medical bills. He noted there was a recent situation involving an individual serving an eight-month sentence for a felony conviction who needed medical care. Costs for the medical care and overtime for a hospital guard came to \$6,000.

Matz said the county has no intention of starting to do raids and roundups, such as visiting farms or businesses and demanding documents from workers, or stopping people on the street.

"ICE at this time is only interested in those who have committed a felony and that's it," he told the committee.

The ACLU of Wisconsin criticized the actions of Winnebago County and Washington County, whose sheriff's department also entered into the agreement last week, joining those in Brown, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Marquette, Sheboygan, Waukesha and Waushara counties.

"Trump's chaotic, unfair and inhumane immigration policies will harm and destabilize Wisconsin's families, communities and economy – especially in parts of Wisconsin where local law enforcement agencies collaborate with ICE," said ACLU senior staff attorney Tim Muth.

The ACLU urged local sheriffs not to enter into more 287(g) agreements and to withdraw from existing agreements.

"The reality is that cooperation with ICE makes our communities not only less welcoming to immigrants, but also makes us all less safe," ACLU wrote on its website.

Matz called those views fearmongering and advised people not to believe unverified stories on social media.

"Please know that we're going to continue doing the right thing as we've done for years," he said.

ACLU Wisconsin officials said the agreement can embolden police to engage in racial profiling, such as arresting and jailing a driver instead of issuing a ticket, based on the driver's perceived race or immigration status.



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Jack Brucks

FROM PAGE 1

er like Brucks, but he's moving at an incredibly fast clip. He competes in two or three events per month at different sites across the country. He travels to the competitions with his parents, Luke and Katie Brucks, since he's not even old enough for an automobile driver's license.

Luke, a competitive motorcycle racer in his younger days, serves as Jack's bike mechanic. Luke and Katie own a farm in the Neenah area where Katie teaches horseback riding. A quarter-mile dirt racetrack has been built on the farm to keep Jack sharp for his riding events. Jack does his own prep work with the track, dragging and watering it on a regular basis.

"I have a lot of confidence in my dad's work on the bike," Jack said. "He's the one who got me started. But he kind of lets me do my own thing out there."

Jack is a farm boy who does his share of chores while being home-schooled due primarily to the demands of traveling for racing competitions.

"Jack is a normal, goofy teenage boy who has a real passion for racing," Katie said. "He was going to so many competitions that we were kind of forced to have him home-schooled if he was going to stay competitive. And that's what he wanted to do. He says he doesn't miss (school) dances or football games. He's not a traditional athlete. His older brother, Willie, who competes in football, wrestling and track, is."

"A lot of weekends, we're a family divided. I'll stay home on the farm, take care of the horses and go to Willie's events and Luke will go on the road with Jack."

Jack has been competing on two wheels since age 4 when he began ice racing on Lake Winnebago with a Yamaha PW 50. He still manages to squeeze occasional ice races into his busy flat-track racing schedule.

"It's completely the opposite of dirt-track racing," Jack said. "I like ice, but I'm faster on dirt."



Photo from Brucks family

The Brucks family and racing team have helped put together national championships in amateur motorcycle racing for Jack.

Jack's riding competitions come with significant risks. Accidents happen.

Brucks had a serious crash in 2020 at the age of 11 at the prestigious Colin Edwards Texas Tornado Boot Camp that he attended to learn more about riding. Jack was thrown from his dirt bike in a race after hitting a tire used to mark the path of the track. The bike landed on his hip.

Jack sustained multiple injuries, breaking his right wrist, three ribs, a finger and his hip. Jack needed four surgeries and spent several weeks in a wheelchair before he was able to walk unassisted again. He underwent eight months of physical rehabilitation before returning to win his second AMA amateur motocross national championship trophy at Du Quoin, Ill., in the ages 7-11 class and 65 cc stock class.

Jack has been told that he will eventually need a hip replacement.

"After the crash, there was question

about whether he would ride again," Katie said. "And it was up to him if he wanted to ride again."

Jack added: "That whole thing kind of sucked. It was pretty scary."

Even though he made a remarkable recovery, Jack's riding events will always pose more danger than the average sport. Katie and Luke will continue to let him drive, providing he still has the desire.

"I'm a horse girl and I know what it's like

Watershed cleanup effort registration begins

Neenah News

Registration is open for northeast Wisconsin's largest annual volunteer cleanup effort led by the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance.

The Fox-Wolf Watershed Cleanup set for May 3 recruits more than 1,600 vol-

to do high-risk things," Katie said. "Again, we left it up to him if he wanted to ride again. He's just like me. If I would have broken a hip from falling off a horse, you wouldn't have been able to stop me from getting back on a horse.

"I know what it's like to have passion for what you are doing. I trust his ability and his bike mechanic – just like I would trust myself and my horse. I mean, he could get hurt walking across the street."

Jack's goal is to become a professional racer and he's already close to accomplishing that. A Florida-based professional race team known as 1st Impressions has added him to its new amateur program for the 2024-25 racing season. Jack plans to turn pro in 2026 with 1st Impressions when he turns 16.

"They're basically a pro team sponsoring a promising youth with hopes that as soon as he turns 16, he will be their pro rider," Katie said. "When that happens, he will become a paid competitor and they will supply everything for him."

"It's been his goal to race professionally since he could walk. He has this passion to ride and he's really good at it. We're extremely proud of him – not that he's just a good racer, but that he's overcome a catastrophe."

Jack's more immediate goal is to win the prestigious Nicky Hayden AMA Horizon Award, which is presented annually to outstanding amateur riders in flat track, motocross and road racing. It generally recognizes the most promising amateur racer about to turn pro.

"I would like to win that, stay on a team and not break my hip again," Jack said with a chuckle.

unteers of all skill levels tackling trash and debris. Supplies will be provided, including gloves, trash bags and safety gear.

After the cleanup effort at multiple locations there will be a family-friendly picnic. Register at fox-wolf.org/cleanup.

Business news roundup

Valley VNA Senior Care has named **Taylor King** as its new in-home care director. She will oversee all aspects of Valley VNA's in-home care business and community resource programs, the Neenah-Menasha Meals on Wheels program, and foot care clinics. With 10 years of experience in health care, King holds a bachelor of science in nursing from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, specializing in in-home care and hospice services.

Girls on the Run Northeast Wisconsin has appointed **Tania Spofford** as its

new executive director, bringing more than 20 years of leadership experience in the nonprofit sector. "I am committed to creating opportunities for young people to thrive and eager to advance the mission of Girls on the Run in Northeast Wisconsin," Spofford said. She will lead the organization's strategic growth, program expansion and community partnerships across its nine-county service area. Her background includes leadership roles in human service agencies, regional health care systems, nonprofit collaboratives and youth-focused initiatives.

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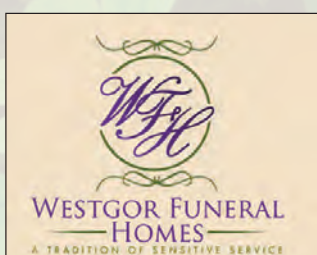
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Zephyrs topple Lancers to land state tournament trip

By Steve Clark
NEENAH NEWS

As the final seconds ticked off the clock in last Saturday's WIAA Division 4 girls basketball sectional final at Oconto Falls High School, the St. Mary Catholic bench – which at that point housed the players who would usually be on the court in crunch time – was simply aflut-
ter with excitement.

After three years of making it to sectionals, including a trip to the sectional final two years ago, the Zephyrs were finally getting over the hump and heading to the state tournament.



Neenah News

St. Mary Catholic's Autumn Crowe pushes the ball up the court ahead of a Manitowoc Lutheran defender Saturday.

"I think that motivated us," senior Emily Vogel said of the previous sectional appearances. "We know what it's like to be on the losing end so it was great to be on the winning side and be going to state."

"All of us have worked so hard for this. It feels so good for all the seniors and for everyone on the team to know that the hard work pays off."

St. Mary Catholic earned the trip to the Resch Center for the state tournament by beating Big East North rival Manitowoc Lutheran, 65-54, Saturday afternoon. It was the third meeting of the season between the two schools who shared the conference title after the teams split the first two meetings.

The trip marks the third time the program has advanced to the state tournament, the last time coming in 2009 when the Zephyrs won the state title.

"I'm so pumped. We have been waiting for this for four years. We are so ready," senior Nolie Anderson said after the win over the Lancers. "Especially this group of seniors and I, with this being our last chance, we were pushing for it that much more. We really wanted it."

St. Mary Catholic never trailed in the second half, but Manitowoc Lutheran did score six straight points to tie the game at 34 just over two minutes into the stanza.

Autumn Crowe answered the Lancers' run on the next Zephyrs' possession by draining a 3-pointer to give St. Mary Catholic the lead for good.

Lauren Ripley, who led the Zephyrs with 18 points, then knocked down



Neenah News

Lauren Ripley looks to make a pass while being double teamed during last Saturday's sectional final against Manitowoc Lutheran.

SEE **Zephyrs win** ON PAGE 11



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Neenah can't keep pace with Kaukauna in second half

By Joe Matzek
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Neenah stayed a step ahead of Kaukauna in the first half of Saturday's WIAA Division 1 regional final, making seven three-pointers and playing solid defense against the state's fourth-ranked team.

But the Rockets scored only 21 points in the second half and their season ended with a 63-54 loss to the Ghosts.

Kaukauna opened the second half with an 11-4 run, taking the lead at 39-37 on freshman Tyler Schwalbach's three-pointer.

Neenah never regained the lead.

The Rockets kept the game close until the last few minutes. Joey Daun's fadeaway jumper from the baseline cut Kaukauna's edge to 47-46. That led to a pivotal sequence, where Luke Jung grabbed a loose ball on defense and called timeout while falling to the court.

But the Rockets missed a contested shot and Keegan Van Kauwenberg responded with a three-pointer to increase Kaukauna's lead to four.

It was an example of several possessions where the Ghosts blocked shots or forced a bad shot when the Rockets tried to drive the lane.

"We took some poor shots where we got to the rim and drew lots of attention, (but) we didn't kick it back (outside)," Neenah coach Lee Rabas said.

The Ghosts (23-3) pulled away after a three-pointer from Jonah Roehrig made it 55-48 with just 2:20 remaining. Neenah couldn't get closer than six points the rest of the way.

Neenah (16-10) held its own in the opening half, trading baskets with Kaukauna before grabbing the lead at 19-18. The Rockets sank four three-pointers the

rest of the half to take a 33-30 halftime lead.

Two of the four treys in that stretch came from junior center Roan Koeper, which was remarkable given that he entered the game 0-for-1 from behind the arc this season.

Koeper, averaging 6.2 points, scored 12 of his career-high 17 points before halftime and seized the moment, Rabas said.

"We said before the game, 'To win this game, some of you in (the locker room) have to do some great things, some memorable things,'" Rabas said. "I've been here long enough now that I can share with them a Matt Jung story or a Jackson Schloemann story, guys that weren't our stars but stepped up and made big plays that win games, and (Koeper) did that tonight. He took a big step forward tonight and we're excited that we have him back next year."

Neenah defended Kaukauna as well as any team this season, holding the Ghosts below their season average of 79 points in each of their three games and winning their first matchup, 66-56 on Dec. 17. Even in defeat Saturday, the Rockets' defense kept them in the game while their offense fizzled in crunch time.

Van Kauwenberg, a UW-Green Bay commit who scored at least 30 points in four of his last five games, scored a game-high 22 points for Kaukauna.

Rabas said that the Rockets gave Van Kauwenberg a few too many open looks.

"In the first half, we let Keegan get to his spots too much," Rabas said. "We let him go left and get to his pullup (jumper), which is absolutely the last thing we wanted to happen."

Daun scored 12 points and Jung added 10.

Prep sports roundup

BOYS BASKETBALL

Balanced offense lifts Rockets to regional win

Roan Koeper and Luke Jung each posted double-doubles and Neenah had four players finish in double figures in a 71-62 win over Hortonville in a WIAA Division 1 regional semifinal last Friday night.

The Rockets led 29-28 at halftime before pulling away in the second half to knock off the Polar Bears on their home court.

Jung and Nick Schultz each scored 15 points to lead Neenah, which finished 20-of-35 at the free-throw line in the game. Schultz also led the team with seven assists.

Benjy Bell finished with 14 points Koeper chipped in 11 points. Koeper and Jung each grabbed 10 rebounds in the game for the Rockets.

Zephyrs fall to Eagles in regional semifinal

Preston Fields nearly posted a triple-double but St. Mary Catholic couldn't

rally from a 12-point halftime deficit in a 74-60 loss to Southern Door in a WIAA Division 4 regional semifinal last Friday night.

Fields finished with 22 points, 12 rebounds and eight assists in his final game for the Zephyrs.

Mason Uhlenbrauck added 20 points for St. Mary Catholic, which finished just 2-of-20 from 3-point range in the loss.

Southern Door, which was seeded second in the regional, went 23-of-33 from the free-throw line in the game, while the Zephyrs were just 10-of-15.

GIRLS BASKETBALL

Zephyrs stifle Bears in sectional semifinal

St. Mary Catholic held Bonduel to just 14 points in the first half and forced 26 turnovers in the game in earning a 57-35 win in a WIAA Division 4 sectional semifinal at Green Bay Southwest last Thursday.

Autumn Crowe hit 4-of-5 from 3-point range and finished with a game-high 22

points to lead the Zephyrs, who led 35-14 at intermission before coasting in the second half.

Emily Vogel added 18 points, 10 rebounds and a team-best seven steals in the win for St. Mary Catholic, while Nolie Anderson added eight points and 10 rebounds.

The Bears finished 0-of-9 from 3-point range in the game.

Cold-shooting night sinks Rockets in loss

Neenah shot just 25 percent from the field and fell to top-seeded Eau Claire Memorial, 64-44, in a WIAA Division 1 sectional semifinal played in Stevens Point last Thursday.

The Old Abes shot 46 percent from the field.

Rowan Klesmit totaled 19 points and Ellie Buss finished with 12 points to lead the Rockets. The duo also combined for seven of the team's nine 3-pointers in the game as Neenah finished 9-of-28 from behind the arc.

Neenah trailed 35-21 at halftime.

BOWLING

Neenah bowlers fall short of advancing at state

Neenah's three individuals as well as the girls team fell short of advancing out of qualifying at the state high school tournament held at Rolling Thunder in Neenah and Revs Bowl in Oshkosh.

The Neenah girls were one of 14 teams to compete and finished ninth after the 15-game qualifying round with a total of 2,511.

The Rockets posted high games of 215 and 214 in the Baker-style format, but finished more than 200 pins short of qualifying for the finals.

In individual competition, Miley Young rolled a 553 series with a high game of 233 and Braelyn Boss tallied a 513 series with a 183 marking her best game, but neither moved on to the semifinals.

Braden Wendt was the lone Neenah boy state qualifier and he rolled a 574 series, including games of 199 and 195, but also fell short of moving on.

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Zephyrs win

FROM PAGE 9

3-pointers on consecutive possessions to stretch the lead to 43-34 with 13:44 remaining.

“It drives me nuts shooting that many threes. I’d rather just work the ball for a good shot,” St. Mary Catholic head coach Jeff Chew said. “But we hit some big threes today and that helped us with the game for sure.”

Ripley led the shooting barrage knocking down five of the team’s nine 3-pointers and has stepped up her shooting in the postseason.

The senior had made just 18 3-pointers during the regular season, but has knocked down a total of 14 in the five playoff games and is shooting 45 percent from behind the arc in the tournament.

“I’ve been practicing my 3-pointers outside of practice and I think it’s paying off,” Ripley said. “I’m really proud.”

Ripley’s driving layup a couple of minutes later gave the Zephyrs their first double-digit lead at 49-39, before two baskets from Anderson and another hoop from Crowe stretched the lead to 55-41 with 8:45 remaining.

The Zephyrs were able to break the game open despite not using its usual full-court pressing defense against the Lancers.

Although St. Mary Catholic started the game in its standard manner, foul trouble forced the team to scale things back a bit.

“A lot of us were in foul trouble so we didn’t press the second half,” said Ripley, one of three Zephyrs to finish with four fouls. “We just had to play good half-court defense.”



Neenah News

Above: The St. Mary Catholic girls basketball team celebrates their WIAA Division 4 sectional title after knocking off Manitowoc Lutheran in Oconto Falls last Saturday.

At right: Emily Vogel looks to put up a shot in the first half against Manitowoc Lutheran.

Vogel, the team’s leading scorer who finished with nine points and 11 rebounds, was one the Zephyrs stung by fouls and was forced to sit on the bench for roughly four minutes down the stretch.

“That was hard,” Vogel said. “It was good that we had people come off the bench and step up today. It was a big part of our win.”

Even with Vogel on the sideline, the Lancers were never able to threaten the Zephyrs’ lead in the final minutes.

St. Mary Catholic was able to carve large chunks of time off the clock on their offensive possessions.

“If they weren’t going to guard us then



we may as well try to take 30 seconds or a minute off (the clock on a possession),” Chew said. “It wasn’t the initial plan but we had a double-digit lead so let’s make them guard us. It’s just the way the game played out.”

Vogel went 3-of-4 from the foul line in the final four minutes, while Crowe and Ripley also made free throws as St. Mary Catholic made enough to keep Manito-

woc Lutheran at bay.

“It came down to who wanted it more,” said Anderson, who led the team with 13 rebounds to go along with her 14 points. “We came out after halftime and did what we needed to do. We relied on each other and got it done.”

St. Mary Catholic trailed for all of 17 seconds in the first half but 3-pointers from Brityn Voss and Ripley lifted the Zephyrs to an 8-3 advantage less than four minutes into the game.

Crowe, who finished with 14 points, 12 rebounds and six assists, then scored five straight points to spark a 9-2 run for a 17-10 lead, while another Voss’ 3-pointer in the final minute of the first half helped the Zephyrs take a 32-28 advantage at halftime.

That set the stage for St. Mary Catholic to take control in the second half.

“I think the key was to just being aggressive,” Vogel said. “The last couple of games we’ve played well in the first half and then kind of slowed down in the second half, so we knew we had to play a full game in this one today and we did that.”

With that, the Zephyrs were able to exorcise the demons of the last couple of years and return the St. Mary Catholic program to the state tournament.

“I think (the previous sectional losses) definitely helped,” Ripley said. “We’ve learned from our mistakes and we have been working as a team better this year. We have all been working really hard.”

Have a story idea? Promotions or expansion at your business? Community or school program to highlight?

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BLOOD MOON

What is a blood moon? It sounds a little spooky! But it's really nothing to worry about.

Hi! I'm Earth! Sometimes, I block the sun's light from reaching the surface of the moon.

Wow! How rude!

When that happens, it's called a lunar eclipse.

The word lunar means having to do with the moon. That's ME!

A blood moon happens when just the right amount of light passes through my atmosphere during a lunar eclipse.

Dust particles in the air can make the moon appear reddish or brownish in color.

But it doesn't last very long. A lunar eclipse is over within a few hours.

This is an unusual look for me!

Cool!

Standards Link: Science: Use a model to understand eclipses.

How to Watch the Eclipse

The blood moon will be visible in most of North America on Thursday, March 13 and Friday, March 14. Here are the times to watch for it. With a family member, circle your time zone.

- Eastern Daylight Time (EDT): 2:26 a.m.–3:31 a.m. (March 14)
- Central Daylight Time (CDT): 1:26 a.m.–2:31 a.m. (March 14)
- Mountain Daylight Time (MDT): 12:26 a.m.–1:31 a.m. (March 14)
- Pacific Daylight Time (PDT): 11:26 p.m. (March 13)–12:31 a.m. (March 14)
- Alaska Daylight Time (AKDT): 10:26 p.m.–11:31 p.m. (March 13)
- Hawaii Standard Time (HST): 8:26 p.m.–9:31 p.m. (March 13)



Extra! Extra!

Describe the Moon

Look through today's newspaper for five adjectives that describe the moon. Write them here:

Standards Link: Language Arts: Identify adjectives.

Kid Scoop Together Make an Eclipse

Work with a family member to make an eclipse at home.

- Stuff you'll need:
- Flashlight or a desk lamp
 - Basketball
 - Baseball



STEPS:



1. One person holds the basketball, which represents Earth.



2. Another person holds the baseball, representing the moon.



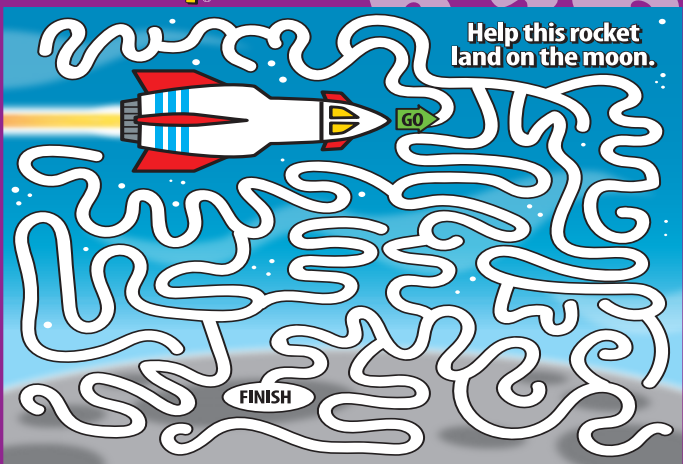
3. In a dark room, point the light at the basketball.



4. The person holding the baseball moves it into the shadow of the basketball. That's a total lunar eclipse!

Standards Link: Science: Create a model to explain scientific concepts.

Kid Scoop Puzzler



Double Double Word Search

- AIR
- BLOCK
- BLOOD
- COLOR
- COOL
- DAYLIGHT
- DUST
- EARTH
- LOOK
- LUNAR
- MOON
- TIME
- WATCH
- WORRY
- ZONE

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

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

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

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Write On!

My Home on the Moon

Imagine you live in a home on the moon. Describe what you do on an ordinary day.

Standards Link: Writing: Write narratives with details to develop imagined experiences.

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- **Promote Local Businesses:** Community newspapers often feature advertisements, profiles, and stories about local businesses, fostering a stronger local economy and encouraging residents to shop locally.
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