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# Town of Neenah adopts \$5.25M budget

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The Town of Neenah’s 2026 budget totals just over \$5.25 million, a 15.7% increase from the current year’s spending plan.

The budget was introduced at a public hearing Monday and marks a notable rise from the \$4.53 million budget in 2025, largely due to major road projects including the Larsen Road and Oakridge Road reconstruction projects.

The 2026 spending plan allocates \$4.2 million for highway improvements, up from \$3.6 million in 2025. Town Clerk Ellen Skerke said state programs will provide significant funding. The town is set to receive \$2.1 million for the Larsen Road project, which is about 70% reimbursement, and \$1.7 million for Oakridge Road, which is about 50% reimbursement.

The town’s total tax levy will decrease to \$514,343 in 2026, down 7.4% from \$555,149 in 2025 and up from \$441,497 in 2024. The change is mainly due to debt service, with Skerke noting the town took on additional debt

in 2025, but one loan was paid off for 2026, reducing the levy.

The tax rate will drop from \$1.12 to \$1.03 per \$1,000 of assessed value. For a home assessed at \$250,000, that means the town portion of the tax bill will decrease by about \$22 to \$258 in 2026.

The largest portion of the budget amounting to \$4.27 million, or 81% of total spending, is earmarked for public works, up 17% from this year’s budget. General government spending will rise nearly 30% to \$540,594, while funding for public safety is expected to fall slightly to

SEE **Town budget** ON PAGE 4

  
Photo by David Hall

**Shining bright**  
With a 40-minute performance of Emily Hageman’s “The Blue Hour,” members of the Neenah High School theater program captivated judges at the 2025 Sectional One Act Competition held Saturday at the high school. The cast and crew’s dedication paid off as they advance next week to the Wisconsin Interscholastic Speech and Dramatic Arts Association state competition in Stevens Point.

# International Children’s Fund marks 50 years of service

## Neenah-based non-profit provides food, medicine

By Eric Endres  
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

“Why doesn’t somebody do something?”

That was a question Dr. David Bruenning found himself asking half a century ago after witnessing impoverished conditions in Honduras that the locals faced every day.

“It was a real eye-opener,” Bruenning said.

The experience unlocked a fervent desire for Bruenning to help.

The seeds of what would eventually become the Neenah-based non-profit International Children’s Fund (ICF) were planted. This year, ICF marks 50 years of service to people across the globe. Bruenning, ICF founder and international director, and Executive Director Fran Seidl reflected on ICF’s origins, as well as

the present impacts and what the future might bring.

“When I first started (at ICF), I felt like I had an idea of what it was like in some of these countries ... I had no idea,” Seidl said. “When you can see firsthand what’s actually happening ... it makes a huge impact.”

The ICF story began decades ago when Bruenning was asked to help set up a printing press in Honduras for an organization teaching children English and

the Christian gospel. His background in printing and his desire to visit another country motivated him to take on the task. But when he arrived, he was struck with culture shock.

“Can’t believe the poverty, the smell, the disease and the blind mothers with blind kids shaking a can with stones in it hoping somebody’ll go by and give them some money,” Bruenning recalled. “Why is this so bad, so close to the Unit-

SEE **ICF** ON PAGE 11



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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**  
Published weekly and mailed free of charge Thursdays for Friday delivery (may vary based on U.S. Postal Service and holidays) to more than 21,000 homes and businesses in the Neenah and Fox Crossing areas. An E-edition of the newspaper can be accessed at www.neenahnews.com.

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

Festive holiday sing-along planned

Neenah News

An upcoming interactive sing-along event is designed to benefit the local community.

Two Finish the Lyrics Live: Holiday Edition shows will be at 2 and 7 p.m. Nov. 28 at Greene’s Pour House in Neenah. A portion of the proceeds will benefit Future Neenah.

The event features festive fun, friendly competition and community giving. Organizers said it is part karaoke, part trivia and all-out holiday cheer. Teams of up to six over age 16 can compete in a finish-the-lyric showdown featuring classic holiday hits.

With a giant video wall bringing each song to life, guests will be singing their answers out loud, dancing in their seats and laughing together all night long.

The event features prizes for the top teams and the Most Festively Dressed Team, with all prizes purchased from local small businesses. Guests can expect light snacks included with admission and the option to enjoy festive mocktails/cocktails, wine and beer.

Tickets are available at eventbrite.com/cc/finish-the-lyrics-trivia-holiday-edition-4744353.

The co-hosts for the event are Pamela Barnes and Melissa Chakar.

Rudolph Run/Walk to benefit firefighters foundation

Neenah News

Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Charitable Foundation is welcoming back Rudolph and his fellow reindeer to Downtown Neenah on Nov. 29.

The free event will start at Neenah Public Library, travel the sidewalks through downtown and end at Gateway Plaza. Rudolph, in typical fashion, will be leading the Run and Walk starting at 5 p.m. Organizers are focusing on creating a family friendly event for all ages to stroll through the festive sights that Downtown Neenah has during the holiday season.

Besides seeing Rudolph and his fellow reindeer, the Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Charitable Foundation will be escorting the participants pumping festive Christmas music from their Santa Float with the possibility of a sighting of Santa himself.

The Santa Float will be parked at the conclusion of the Run and Walk for up-close viewing rather than driving through town. In addition, the festive event will be topped off with cookies, cups of hot chocolate and smores from Globe Coffee.

This event is being put on for free courtesy of the Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Charitable Foundation and several local business supporters. Proceeds from the event benefit local athletic teams. For information about supporting the event, call the Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Charitable Foundation at 920-886-6200.



Neenah Historical Society photo

Wilson Elementary School

Opened in 1949, Wilson Elementary was constructed to accommodate the growing needs of Neenah as the city expanded after World War II. Located on Higgins Avenue, the original footprint included the gymnasium, kindergarten suite, six classrooms and a multipurpose room. Learn more about Neenah elementary schools at 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the Neenah Public Library.

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Friday, 11/21 Noon  
  
**Classified Deadline:**  
Friday, 11/21 3pm  
  
**Obituary Deadline:**  
Monday, 11/24 Noon

Neenah  
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Serving Neenah & Fox Crossing

**December 5th issue:**  
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Tuesday, 12/2 3pm  
  
**Obituary Deadline:**  
Wednesday, 12/3 Noon

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Calendar  
of events

**Saturday, Nov. 15**  
Author Linda Van Camp of “But I’m Too Tired to Take a Bath” Book Signing, 10:30 a.m., Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
Little Geniuses Club Kid’s Carnival, 11 a.m., Neenah Middle School  
Veterans Day Celebration, 2 p.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass  
Neenah-Nodaway Yacht Club Fall Gathering, 5:30 p.m., Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel & Conference Center

**Thursday, Nov. 20**  
Neenah Historical Society presentation about Neenah Public Schools, 6:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library

**Saturday, Nov. 22**  
Neenah Animal Shelter Pop-Up Shop, 8 a.m., The Marketplace, 124 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
Taft Elementary PTO Craft Show, 9 a.m., 133 S. Western Ave.  
Craft and Camo Art Fair, 9 a.m., Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, 809 South Commercial St.  
Author Garrette Kersten of “I’m Still Here…” Book Signing, 1 p.m., Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.

**Tuesday, Nov. 25**  
Show Choir, Jazz and Touch of Class Opener, 7:30 p.m., Pickard Auditorium

**Friday, Nov. 28**  
Finish the Lyrics Live: Holiday Edition, 2 and 7 p.m., Greene’s Pour House, Neenah

**Saturday, Nov. 29**  
Small Business Saturday, all day  
Author Kelly Nelson of “The Carpenter and The Cat” and “Brownie the War Dog” Book Signing, 10 a.m., Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.  
Neenah-Menasha Firefighters Charitable Foundation Rudolph Run/Walk, 5 p.m., Neenah Public Library to Gateway Plaza

**Tuesday, Dec. 2**  
Skating With Santa, 4 p.m., The Plaza  
Giving Tuesday, all day

**Wednesday, Dec. 3**  
“A New Santa Claus in Town” Barber-shop Bistro Dinner Show presented by the Fox Valleyaires Men’s Barbershop Chorus, 5:30 p.m., DoubleTree by Hilton

**Friday, Dec. 5**  
First Friday Concert: Mike Malone Trio Plays Vince Guaraldi, 2 p.m., Neenah Public Library  
A Very Neenah Christmas, 5 p.m., Downtown Neenah

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Photo by Jim Forer

## Soaring eagles

A pair of eagles were seen last month on Lake Winnebago. The eagles were diving for food and showing their aerial talents.

## Community invited to lake association meeting

Neenah News

After months of community input, planning and collaboration among local municipalities, the Little Lake Butte des Morts Lake Association is set to officially launch.

Residents from Neenah, Fox Crossing, Menasha, Grand Chute, Appleton and beyond are invited to the inaugural meeting at 6 p.m. Tuesday at the Appleton Yacht Club, 1200 S. Lutz Drive in Appleton.

The new association was established following a comprehensive water quality study conducted by the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance and funded by the Wisconsin

Department of Natural Resources.

The study involved partnerships across the region and identified significant challenges facing Little Lake Butte des Morts — including algae blooms, invasive species, shoreline erosion and nutrient overload. It also revealed the lake’s need for stronger advocacy and coordinated management to serve more than 64,000 residents.

The Lake Association is open to all who care about Little Lake Butte des Morts — not just shoreline property owners. Its mission includes using the latest scientific findings and best practices to improve water quality and habitat; organizing

cleanups, educational programs and recreational events for the whole community; advocating for responsible policy and development and serving as a unified voice for residents, businesses and stakeholders.

“We’re excited to build an organization that brings together everyone who loves this lake, whether you fish, boat, live nearby, or simply want to see it thrive,” said Danielle Rand of the organizing committee. “Anyone with an interest is encouraged to apply for a board position and help guide our future.”

To learn more, review the findings behind the association at llbdm.org.

## Workshop to advise about conservation

Neenah News

Winnebago County Land and Water Conservation is organizing a workshop for farmers, hunters and landowners.

The workshop will focus on ways to start planning next year’s crops and restoring wildlife habitat on land.

The Winter Working Lands Habitat Workshop will be held starting at 3:30 p.m. Dec. 3 at 5860 Grandview Road in Larsen featuring a field tour and guest speakers. The guided tour will include information about conservation practices and work with the Muddy Bottom Farmers producer-led watershed group.

Speakers include Johnny Behrendt from Pheasants Forever talking about using data to identify unprofitable acres and turn them into productive wildlife habitat; Zach Haas from Creek Bottom Land Management speaking about improving habitat and hunting opportunities while saving money and Tim Burns from Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance about how conservation supports clean water and cost-share opportunities that are available.

Dinner will be provided by Muddy Bottom Farmers. Registration information is available at [secure.qgiv.com](https://secure.qgiv.com).

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## Town begins long-term planning process

Neenah News

The Town of Neenah is beginning a year-long process to create plans for its long-term future.

Town officials said the planning initiative will be referred to as “Our Town, Our Tomorrow.” As part of the process, the town will be updating its 20-year comprehensive plan as required by state law, as well as updating its Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan.

The process is expected to take about a year to complete and will initially rely on receiving residents’ up-front ideas and opinions on matters dealing with future growth, development and change. Officials said the idea behind the name for the project embraces the idea that the town does have the right to plan for its future and has a certain level of control in terms of locating future development and making decisions

about infrastructure which serves it. The process will start with a community-wide interactive workshop to be held from 6 to 7:30 p.m. Tuesday at the Neenah Town Hall, 1600 Breezewood Lane. The open-house style workshop will seek resident and landowner opinions on a variety of topics relating to community development and land use.

Participants can provide their input in as little as five minutes, or they can spend an hour or more responding to a variety of interactive exercises designed to gather opinions.

Town of Neenah Chairman Bob Schmeichel expressed the need for “residents to come out to the event as their early input will have a major impact on the approaches taken for the development of the new plan. This is a great opportunity for residents’ voices to be heard on what the future of our town could look like.”



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Neenah News

## Neenah celebrates Veterans Day

Neenah Middle School held two Veterans Day ceremonies on Tuesday. The ceremonies included band and choral performances along with students reading letters from American conflicts including both World Wars, the Vietnam War, Persian Gulf War and the War in Afghanistan. Neenah sixth grader Charlotte Richie reads a letter from Private John Eggleston to his fiancé from October 1776 as the Continental Army waited for the British Army in what became known as the Battle of White Plains.

### Barbershop Chorus performances coming to town

Neenah News

The Fox Valleyaires Men’s Barbershop Chorus will present two performances in Neenah of its “A New Santa Claus in Town” show.

The Barbershop Bistro Christmas dinner show will be held Dec. 3 at the DoubleTree by Hilton Neenah Hotel. Cocktails with a cash bar will open at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner at 6:30 p.m. and the show at 7:30 p.m.

Tickets are \$40 per person for dinner and the show. Tax and tip are included. Ticket sales for the dinner show end Nov. 26.

The other performance of the Christ-

mas show for the whole family is at 7 p.m. Dec. 9 in the Neenah High School auditorium. The show will feature the Arioso and Bel Canto Choirs from the Lawrence Community Girl Choir.

Tickets are \$15 for adults and \$10 for students. For tickets for each of the shows, go to [Foxvalleyaires.com](http://Foxvalleyaires.com).

The show will be full of Christmas classics sung by the chorus and chapter quartets.

The chorus is directed by Chris Vander Pas.

## Town budget

FROM PAGE 1

\$191,154. Other highlights in the budget include increased compensation for elected officials and staff, the transition of a deputy clerk from part-time to full-time, a \$44,000 allocation for a town-wide property assessment revaluation, and nearly \$47,000 budgeted for comprehensive and outdoor recreation plan updates. To balance the budget, the town will use \$327,694 from its reserves, as revenues in 2026 are projected to lag behind expenses. The Town Board adopted the budget to be collected in 2026 at the meeting Monday.

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# Council votes to demolish bus shelter

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Common Council voted last week to demolish the former bus shelter at the northeast corner of Doty Avenue and Church Street.

The bus shelter was built in the mid-1980s as part of downtown redevelopment. It has been vacant since 2022 when the bus stop was relocated to the south side of East Doty Avenue, adjacent to City Hall and Red Parking Lot C.

The city and Valley Transit initially agreed that the relocation of the bus shelter was temporary due to traffic safety concerns. Public Works Director Gerry Kaiser said last week that the city now considers the stop by City Hall to be the downtown bus stop and there are no plans to move it elsewhere.

Though the former bus shelter was fully enclosed, the shelter on East Doty Avenue is a partially enclosed glass structure. Kaiser said officials have discussed the possibility of an enclosed shelter at the site, but no plans have been finalized.

The former bus shelter has sat vacant for three years and has become a target for vandalism. Kaiser said the building recently sustained damage to both of its entrances: the Doty Avenue door was forced open so hard it became inoperable and had to be locked, and the glass panel in the Church Street entrance was shattered by rocks. Plywood has since been installed in place of the broken glass.

“In both cases, we stabilized the condi-



Neenah News

The former bus shelter near Doty Avenue and Church Street is slated to be demolished.

tion at a low cost while discussions were had on any future use of the building,” he said. “When it was determined that there really wasn’t another use for it, I brought forward the request to raze it.”

Kaiser said repairing the bus shelter would be impractical given its unused status.

“Alternative uses for the building have been explored, but the costs associated with adapting it for another use have been prohibitive,” Kaiser said in a memo to the council.

City crews will handle the demolition, with the exception of relocating electrical service. The electrical service will be moved to the wall of the nearby dumpster corral to continue supplying a decorative streetlight and a camera that monitors the area.

A concrete pad will be poured at the former shelter’s location.

Demolition is expected to take place this fall or early winter and should be completed in a few weeks.

# City names interim HR director

Neenah News

Neenah’s Human Resources (HR) director has resigned, leaving the department temporarily under the direction of an interim leader as the city searches for a replacement.

Amy Fairchild was hired as HR Director by the city in 2022 and resigned from her position effective Nov. 3. Her information has been removed from the city website and replaced with a listing for the “Interim Director of Human Resources & Safety.”

Heather Barber, who resigned from her previous employment as Neenah’s HR Director in 2019, is serving as the interim director. She will oversee the department through the transition and help facilitate the search for a permanent director.

At a Finance and Personnel Committee meeting Monday, the city went into closed session so that the city attorney could update the committee on “pending or impending litigation involving the city, specifically regarding: Director of Human Resources,” documents say.

City Attorney David Rashid said Tuesday that there is no legal claim or litigation anticipated from Fairchild’s departure.

“The city hopes to replace the director as quickly as practicable, especially given various urgencies for the department, including open enrollment, the budget, union negotiations, and existing position vacancies,” he said.



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# Prison sentence ordered for antifreeze incident

Neenah News

A Neenah woman was sentenced late last month to two years in prison followed by three years of supervision for putting antifreeze in a man's drink earlier this year.

Mary Lopas, 65, pleaded no contest to first-degree recklessly endangering safety with domestic abuse assessments and placing foreign objects in edibles. The sentence comes after prosecutors and the defense reached a plea agreement.

Court records say Lopas targeted a former partner she was living with because she was frustrated that she had repeatedly taken him to the hospital for what she believed were medical issues that did not exist.

District Attorney Eric Sparr, who spoke about the case at a Judiciary and Public

Safety Committee meeting last week, said Lopas decided she was going to give the victim a real medical issue to deal with and put antifreeze in his soda. The victim noticed something was off and did not consume much of the drink.

"This one fortunately didn't go real far as far as causing actual injury or illness, but it definitely carried some risks," Sparr said.

Police were called to the home on Lopez Court in Neenah on June 11 after the 70-year-old victim reported his drink tasted strange. Security footage showed

Lopas carrying a green liquid toward the victim's water bottle.

Lopas acknowledged her actions and told authorities she wanted the victim to get sick but did not intend to kill him. The antifreeze bottle she used was labeled "fatal if swallowed."

The incident was not Lopas' first charge

for domestic-related violence. Court records show that about 16 years ago she was convicted of misdemeanor battery and two counts of disorderly conduct. Sparr said in that case she attacked her then-husband with a mallet while he slept, reportedly to "make him feel the pain she had endured during their marriage."

## Construction site burglaries bring prison sentence for Menasha man

Neenah News

A Menasha man convicted of burglarizing construction sites across the Fox Valley has now been sentenced in two counties.

Joshua Worm, 36, was convicted last week in Calumet County to two felony counts of burglary to the cargo portion of a truck or trailer. He was sentenced to three years of initial confinement and four years of extended supervision, to be served concurrently with his Winnebago County sentence. He was also ordered to pay \$17,225 in restitution and court costs.

As part of a plea agreement, six felony and two misdemeanor counts were dismissed but read into the record, meaning the charges can be considered by a judge in the future if he commits additional crimes.

Worm was sentenced in Winnebago County in September to three and a half years in prison and five years of extended supervision after pleading guilty to four felony counts including burglary to the cargo portion of a truck or trailer, burglary of a building or dwelling, theft of movable property and possession of methamphetamine. He was also ordered to pay \$55,465 in restitution and court costs. As part of a plea deal, three felony and three misdemeanor charges were dismissed but read into the record.

Worm also has an open case in Outagamie County for a felony and a misdemeanor drug charge. Sentencing in that case is scheduled for Dec. 3. Court records show Worm has previous felony drug con-

victions in Winnebago County.

According to the criminal complaint in the Winnebago County case, Worm targeted construction sites in Fox Crossing, Neenah and Oshkosh late last year, stealing tools, copper wire and other materials. Police say he cut locks off storage containers and trailers and sold some of the stolen items online or to a scrap metal dealer. Evidence recovered from Worm's phone showed he had repainted generators in different colors to avoid detection when selling the stolen property.

Investigators obtained a court order to install a GPS tracker on Worm's truck, which placed him at the scene of multiple burglaries. When police arrested him last December, they found bolt cutters, power tools, construction equipment, and drug paraphernalia, as well as 68 grams of methamphetamine inside his Oshkosh apartment, where a child also lived.

One construction company targeted in the thefts said in a victim impact statement that it had to take additional security measures at job sites.

"It is very traumatic for a trades person to show up to work one morning only to find out that someone has stolen all of the tools that they have personally purchased and that they use daily to make a living," the company wrote.

District Attorney Eric Sparr said numerous law enforcement agencies were involved in the investigation including Oshkosh, Neenah, Fox Crossing, Menasha, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and some out of county agencies.

"He was primarily stealing from construction sites and it was one where they had been investigating it for a long time and initially weren't really able to pin down exactly who was responsible, but eventually developed this guy as a suspect," he said.

Sparr said that when Worm was first arrested, investigators believed there were only three chargeable cases, but as the investigation progressed, they identified 10 to 12 cases connected to him and 23 victims.

## Fox Crossing trainer sentenced for sexual assault

Neenah News

A former personal trainer at a Fox Crossing gym has been sentenced to a year and a half in jail after a jury found him guilty of sexually assaulting a 20-year-old woman he supervised.

Morrison J. Lamb, 42, of Neenah, was convicted in August of two misdemeanor counts of fourth degree sexual assault. The case was closed in September after a restitution issue was finalized. Lamb is required to pay \$19,801 in restitution.

Lamb had been a head personal trainer at Limitless Elite Gym on Prospect Road and was responsible for overseeing new employees. The victim was hired as a personal trainer at the gym in June 2024.

According to the criminal complaint, the victim told police she was assaulted by Lamb on her first day of work. She

said Lamb offered to massage her shoulder and hip to relieve discomfort from lifting. During the session, she said he put his hand down the front of her pants and touched her genitals.

Three days later, the woman said Lamb pulled down her sports bra during another session in his locked office and touched her breasts. She told investigators she was frightened and unsure how to stop him. The gym owner reportedly knocked on the office door twice during the incident, but Lamb opened it only partially, the complaint said.

The woman quit her job after the second assault and later told her parents and the gym owners what had happened. Lamb was fired from the gym and police began investigating after a report was filed in October 2024.



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Neenah News

Paws for safety

Safety Coordinator Len Hoehne demonstrates chest compressions as a student practices on a dog manikin during a canine first aid and CPR class Saturday at the Winnegamie Dog Club in Menasha. Hoehne, a retired police officer for the Town of Menasha, now Fox Crossing, teaches the class at the club three times a year and also travels to present it to other groups. Classes are open to the public for a fee; visit [winnegamiedogclub.com](http://winnegamiedogclub.com) for details.

Former police officer convicted in child pornography case

Neenah News

Former Neenah police officer Owen Halls entered a no contest plea last week to possession of child pornography and will be sentenced Dec. 19.

Halls, 23, was initially charged in Outagamie County with two counts of possession of child pornography. He pleaded not guilty and a jury trial was scheduled to begin next week. Halls instead changed his plea to no contest Nov. 7 under a plea agreement that dismissed one count, which was read into the record, meaning the dismissed charge can be considered by the judge at sentencing.

Halls was arrested March 26 and terminated from his position with the Neenah Police Department, where he had been employed for about a year and was still in



his probationary period. The arrest was the result of a 6-month investigation conducted by the Kaukauna Police Department (KPD).

Court records say that KPD received an Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) CyberTip back in September from the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children. The CyberTip indicated two files of suspected child pornography were uploaded from an address in Kaukauna. Halls was one of four residents who lived at the address.

In an interview with investigators, Halls admitted to using messaging apps for pornographic content and acknowledged knowing some material involved minors.

Halls faces a prison term of three to 15 years when he is sentenced next month.



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# Waukau Dam Park reopens after restoration completed

By Chris Lusvardi  
NEENAH NEWS

Winnebago County Executive Gordon Hintz first visited the Waukau Dam Park while looking for something to do outdoors with his family during the COVID pandemic.

“I had never been out here,” Hintz said Oct. 30 during a ribbon cutting celebrating a recently completed restoration project of the park. “It’s become one of my favorite places to walk around.”

Now, he’s hoping others visit to experience the beauty of the park in the Town of Rushford after the \$1.7 million project was finished in October. The Wisconsin DNR contributed \$751,000, or about 43%, of the engineering and construction costs using a Knowles-Nelson Stewardship grant.

The remainder of the project was funded through the Winnebago County Capital Improvement Program.

“We’re reopening the preserve, which is one of the unique, most important parts of the Winnebago County park system,” Hintz said. “At a time when so many people are rediscovering the outdoors, it’s more important than ever that we maintain spaces like this and other places that are welcoming, accessible and sustainable.”

A major part of the project that started in May was ensuring the pond doesn’t flood, Winnebago County Parks and Expo Director Adam Breest said. In the past, Breest said the pond frequently overflowed its embankment. He explained the sidewalk was constructed in such a way to prevent soil erosion and keep it from washing out if flooding occurs again.

“The water from the fishing pond would



Adam Breest explains how a sidewalk in Waukau Dam Park was constructed to protect it from being damaged by flooding.

normally go over the top of the embankment to create large channels, and it became really hard to continue keeping up with it,” Breest said. “We’re hoping the armored embankment will stay in place for years to come and we won’t lose the pond.”

Being able to control the water that flows through the park is an important part of flood prevention efforts in the sur-

rounding Fox and Wolf river watersheds.

Additionally, the paths through the park have been opened up to connect with the Waukau Dam Mountain Bike Trail, a three-mile, single track trail that is part of the North East Wisconsin Trails (NEWT) system.

That adds an alternate route for bikers rather than relying on Wisconsin Highway 116, which Breest said had become dangerous.

A three-foot drop-off behind one of the bridges along a path was also removed to improve safety for those using the park, Breest said.

Additional improvements include paving the parking lot and adding lighting.

Breest said the parks department is working with the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office in hopes of installing a camera in the parking lot as an added safety measure.

A shelter and two wooden fishing piers were added along with updating the existing fishing pier.

“It’s more ADA accessible so more people can enjoy its beauty,” Hintz said. “By combining local leadership with state and community support to make our park system stronger and more resilient, we can have our impact last for the next generations. I hope this space reminds you of what’s possible when the community takes care of the places that take care of us.”



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# County eyes revolving loan fund to spur housing development

Neenah News

Winnebago County could be moving closer to launching a proposed revolving loan fund that is intended to accelerate housing development across the county.

The fund already has \$1 million committed from the Winnebago County Industrial Development Board, and County Executive Gordon Hintz has proposed adding \$3.5 million from the interest earned on the remaining Spirit (ARPA) funds.



Hintz

The initiative comes as Wisconsin faces a housing shortage, with the state projected to need nearly 227,000 new units in the next decade. In Winnebago County alone, an estimated 10,000 new housing units will be required to support families, seniors and the local workforce.

“This fund is about removing barriers that slow down the development of affordable, attainable housing,” Hintz said.

“By offering low-interest, gap financing and working hand-in-hand with municipalities to streamline approvals, we can create an environment where developers are able to build the homes our community needs.”

Two ARPA (American Rescue Plan Act) Strategy and Outcomes Commission meetings in the past few months included discussion about the best use of the Spirit Fund and the county’s role in dealing with the growing housing shortage.

The Spirit Fund is a special account created under former County Executive Jon Doemel to hold federal ARPA pandemic relief dollars. The county reclassified the ARPA money as “lost revenue” from the pandemic and moved it into the Spirit Fund to be spent on local projects that reflect the original intent of ARPA.

According to Hintz, the proposed revolving loan fund would provide low-interest financing for eligible developers to cover early-stage costs such as property acquisition, pre-development expenses and holding costs. Repayments would return to the fund, creating a sustainable

pool of resources that can be reinvested in future projects.

Hintz said a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued to select a qualified non-profit administrator who will manage day-to-day operations of the loan program, work with an advisory board of county staff, IDB members, and housing experts and develop program guidelines, review applications and ensure compliance.

The program aims to support the creation of 10,000 new housing units over the next decade, which Hintz said would help local businesses attract and retain

talent, give seniors more options to age in place and provide affordable housing for residents across the income spectrum.

Winnebago County’s Strategic Plan identifies housing development as a top priority, with a clear goal to “ensure housing for all.” By investing in this revolving loan fund, Hintz said the county seeks to strengthen its economic foundation and support sustainable growth for years to come.

The county board is expected to vote on the \$3.5 million commitment from the Spirit Fund on Tuesday.



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# School district approves \$128.2 million annual budget

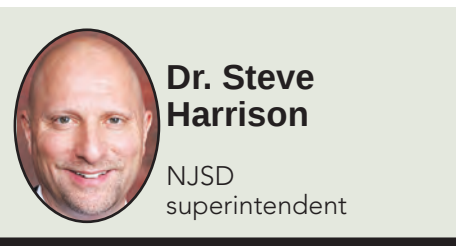
Each fall, the Neenah Joint School District presents its annual budget to the community. This is an important opportunity to share how we invest in our students, staff and schools while maintaining strong fiscal responsibility.

On Oct. 28, the Board of Education approved the 2025–26 annual budget totaling \$128.2 million. This plan reflects our continued commitment to educational excellence while balancing the realities of state funding, enrollment trends and rising fixed costs.

The budgeting process is a year-long effort that begins each November with enrollment and staffing projections and concludes the following October when the tax levy is certified.

This process ensures transparency, accountability and responsible use of taxpayer dollars.

The majority of district funding comes from state aid (64%) and local property taxes (34%). Equalization Aid from the state will total \$51.9 million this year, a slight decrease from last year, consistent



with trends across Wisconsin, where most districts experienced reduced aid.

Property values in our community rose by 7.5%, reflecting continued growth and confidence in Neenah. The state's revenue limit increased by \$325 per student, bringing our per-pupil revenue to \$11,670; however, this remains about \$1,100 below the state average. We continue to advocate for fair and adequate funding that supports student needs without placing additional burden on local taxpayers.

Our largest budget component, the General Operating Fund, supports the day-to-day operations of our schools. About 71% of our expenditures go toward salaries and benefits, directly

supporting teachers, support staff, and administrators. Another 13.5% covers purchased services, 12.4% supports debt, insurance, and other obligations, and 2.9% is used for supplies and materials that help deliver instruction.

In addition to these operational expenses, the budget includes funding for special education, food service, community programs and capital projects that help us maintain and improve our schools in a sustainable way.

The 2025–26 total school tax levy is \$39.3 million, resulting in a mill rate of \$5.64 per \$1,000 of equalized property value.

This is the lowest in more than a decade and one of the most competitive rates among comparable districts in our region.

As we look ahead, our focus remains clear: to align staffing with enrollment, sustain our high-quality programs, and protect the community's investment in its schools while also being fiscally responsible with our resources.

One of the growing challenges we are facing this year involves student meal balances.

The Neenah Joint School District is experiencing higher negative lunch balances than in recent years, totaling about \$80,000, which is five times higher than pre-pandemic levels.

Every day, our food service partner,

Chartwells, ensures that no student goes without a meal, no matter their ability to pay. However, for many families facing financial hardship, unpaid meal balances can quietly grow.

"Studies show that student success relies heavily on proper nutrition. Students who have enough to eat learn better, have better attendance, behave better in class and are more likely to graduate than students who are hungry," said Jennifer Oliver, director of food and nutrition.

Even though every student receives a meal, the growing debt highlights the challenges many families are facing. As a community, we can help.

Donations can be made through the district's website at [neenah.k12.wi.us](http://neenah.k12.wi.us), mailed to 410 S. Commercial Street or dropped off in person. Label contributions "Money for Meals" and all proceeds will go directly toward offsetting student meal balances. Questions can be directed to Amy Gunderson at [agunderson@neenah.k12.wi.us](mailto:agunderson@neenah.k12.wi.us).

Acts of generosity can have a lasting impact. By coming together to help ease this financial burden, we are not just paying off lunch balances; we are supporting families and investing in the well-being and success of our students. Together, we can continue to ensure that Neenah remains a place where every student can learn, grow and thrive.

## NJSD Hall of Fame member passes away

Neenah News

Ron Fedenko, a recent Neenah Joint School District Hall of Fame inductee, passed away Nov. 2 at the age of 81.

Fedenko taught in the district for 34 years and coached 126 seasons of Neenah athletics.

He coached Neenah to back-to-back WIAA state girls cross country titles in 1982 and 1983. To his delight, that feat was equaled by the the 2024 and 2025 Rocket teams - one day before he passed away.

Inducted into the NJSD Hall of Fame on Sept. 27, Fedenko came to Neenah in 1966 and taught science at the junior and high school level until 2000.

He was a longtime freshman boys' basketball coach in Ron Einerson's successful program and later served as a middle school basketball coach. He also coached numerous seasons of freshman and middle school football.

In addition to leading the girls' cross country program, he was the head varsity girls' track and field coach.

Fedenko assisted with the boys' track



Photo from Neenah Joint School District  
Neenah Joint School District Superintendent Steve Harrison in September presented Ron Fedenko with a plaque marking the longtime teacher and coach's induction into the district's hall of fame.

and field program for many years, including this past spring as the pole vault coach.

## Music students participate in state honors program

Neenah News

Five students from Neenah participated in the recent Wisconsin State Music Association State Honors program.

Emily Zak played flute in the high school orchestra, while Rachel Thomas,

Aria Lishner, Carlos AdamsGonzalez and Dillon Patel were part of the middle level honors orchestra.

All were selected from over 1,000 entries statewide. The students' teachers are Jackson Smith and Elizabeth Jacobson-Holtz.

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FROM PAGE 1

ed States?”  
Bruenning originally incorporated Sonlight Ministries in 1974, and they sent a printing press to India, once again finding troubling conditions.

Running the organization with his wife, Marcy, in their home, in 1975 they changed their business name to International Christian Assistance and set their sights on growing their operations to help more people, eventually registering the name they always wanted, International Children’s Fund, in the early 1980s.

With Bruenning’s background in the-ology and psychology, he got involved with an organization that sent him to Zimbabwe to train indigenous pastors, a practice that was rare at the time. That led to the development of theological courses for indigenous people, which would lead to eventual expansion of services into other countries in Africa, as well as Pakistan and a return to India.

Soon, the necessities of people in these countries beyond education — food and medicine in particular — became a bigger priority.

Bruenning began reaching out to people he knew in the United States to help kick off the operations the organization is known for today, starting with sending food and even vehicles and other items to help the locals.

During the early years, growing out of their basement and into a Neenah warehouse while creating a network internationally proved challenging, tracking trucks and cargo ships all over the globe while managing astronomical costs.

But over time, they adjusted. The partnerships with indigenous people and organizations helped, as did the ability to start making certain supply purchases in the countries that would receive them, allowing ICF to spend more of their money on additional supplies.

Seidl and Bruenning credit ICF’s other partnerships and donors as well, including businesses that donate equipment they no longer need, the Neenah School District for donating educational materials and My Brother’s Keeper, an organization in Liberia that, with ICF donor support, provides locals with an orphanage, a school, a church and other programs.

Today, ICF operates with a limited overhead, allowing for almost all donations to reach those who need them.

“In the last two, three years, we’ve consistently had 99.7% of all funds that come in go to program services, and that’s almost unheard of in the non-profit world,” Seidl said.

Seidl noted that over the last fiscal year, ICF provided \$112 million in medical supplies. She credits their partnership with a pharmaceutical company that enables purchases at a reduced rate. Also provided by ICF: over 1.7 million meals, 25 new wells and 36,000 treated mosquito nets.

According to the most recent report from the World Health Organization, there were close to 263 million cases of malaria and 597,000 deaths from the disease across 83 countries in 2023.

It’s that kind of devastation that has helped drive initiatives such as providing mosquito nets free of charge to all mothers after giving birth in a Liberian medical facility that has grown with ICF assistance.

Seidl and Bruenning also emphasized the importance of water wells for locals. With a source of clean water in town, people don’t need to take a sip from a puddle of water that may have been used for washing cattle or a vehicle.

It also eliminates the need for women to venture miles away to fetch water, which could potentially put them in danger.

While ICF and its global network have accomplished a lot over the last 50 years, their work is far from over, with hopes to expand into further locations. The biggest need for assistance now, Seidl said, is in remote areas that normal missions aren’t able to reach. But, again, local partnerships have helped.

“We have created partnerships with indigenous pastors that are able to travel to remote areas to deliver aid to those in need,” she said.

Along with food, water, medicine and shelter, education remains an important resource for locals in areas ICF reaches, particularly for women who may not be seen as equals in some countries. The organization is currently raising funds for an in-progress women’s university in Liberia. “We’re hoping to elevate women so that they too can be successful and take care of themselves and not just depend on other people,” Seidl explained.

Donations are still being accepted for the university and other ICF initiatives. Those interested in giving can find more information by visiting the ICF website at [icfaid.org](http://icfaid.org).

Having visited the continent again recently, Bruenning reflected on how far he’s seen Africa come as a whole since ICF began assisting people within the countries there, now seeing progress in infrastructure, education and more throughout.

“It’s coming up, and it’s exciting to know we’ve had a part of that and have literally saved thousands of kids’ lives,” he said.



Submitted photo  
Fran Seidl and Dr. David Bruenning stand together after loading a container to be shipped to Monrovia, Liberia, West Africa.

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# Southview Park tennis courts reopen after renovation

By Bethanie Gengler  
NEENAH NEWS

Neenah's new \$400,000 tennis courts at Southview Park are officially open for public use, and while most won't be playing in November, they'll be ready for action next spring.

The six lighted courts were completed and fully opened in August. The work included underdrain and storm sewer connections, stone placement, trail restoration, new asphalt, fencing, posts, nets, anchors and color coating. The lights around the court were also serviced, with ballasts and bulbs replaced.

Two of the new tennis court gates – one on each side – are partially blocked by existing light poles, which means they can be fully opened inward but not outward. According to Parks Director Michael Kading, the gates were installed using the existing footprint of the courts to save costs, and some adjustments had to be made in the field.

"What we tried to do is take the existing footprint, which isn't perfect," he said. "We tried to take the exact same footprint,

and we tried to be very cost effective and that's a challenge sometimes."

While the gates' proximity to the light poles is not ideal, Kading said they will remain as installed. He estimated the city saved roughly \$40,000 by not hiring engineers and a landscape architect to draw up plans for the project.

"We had someone help us develop the bid specification for this project, but you work with competent contractors and you try to do the best you can and you try to save the taxpayers some dollars," he said.

The courts' entrances remain similar to the previous layout. Kading said the best access will be from the west when the sidewalk work is completed next spring.

Kading said the city is "very satisfied" with the project, particularly the fill and asphalt work.

"The court surface is phenomenal," he said.

The old courts had deteriorated asphalt, with gaps up to an inch and a half.

"So now, lighted tennis courts coming to a place near you for next spring, fully open and operational," he said.



Neenah News  
The newly completed Southview Park tennis courts reopened to the public in August.

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# Talented perimeter group key to Rockets' success

Neenah News

The Neenah girls basketball team is definitely going to be on guard this season.

Stacked with a wealth of talented perimeter players, head coach Andy Braunel will be counting on his depth at the guard positions to help fuel the Rockets run toward another top finish in the Fox Valley Association.

“We are very guard dominant this year,” commented Braunel. “(Our depth) all creates a solid cast of guards – a lot of options and flexibility.”

Topping the list of returning backcourt players for the Rockets is senior Rowan Klesmit, a first-team all-Fox Valley Association selection last season after earning second-team honors as a sophomore.

Klesmit is the top returning scorer in the FVA after averaging 22.7 points per game last season for the Rockets, who finished tied for second in the conference and won a Division 1 regional title.

Klesmit scored in double figures in all 27 games last year for Neenah, posting a season-high 37 points in a win over Oshkosh North. She has a string of 44 straight games of scoring in double figures, dating back to her sophomore season.

The versatile guard shot 38 percent from the 3-point line last year and was impeccable at the free-throw line hitting 119-of-131 attempts (90.8 percent). She also led the team in assists at 2.3 per game, while chipping in nearly four rebounds per game as well.

Klesmit's top running mate in the backcourt will be fellow senior Ellie Buss, who

has also earned all-FVA recognition the past two seasons. She was a second-team honoree last year when she averaged nearly 14 points per game, following a sophomore season when Buss garnered a spot on the honorable mention list.

Buss was the Rockets' top 3-point shooter last year, making 91 attempts from distance, while shooting at just under 38 percent, and tallied a season-high 30 points in a win over Fond du Lac.

“Everyone knows that Ellie and Rowan can score, creating a more consistent cast of scoring options will be key for our success,” Braunel commented.

Joining that duo will be junior Celia Gentile, who was an honorable mention all-conference selection last year and selected to the conference's all-defensive team. She averaged just under seven points per game in her first full season as a starter, while also chipping in four rebounds and a team-best 2.3 steals per game.

Juniors Alissa Ebel and Cori Baltus as well as sophomore Izzy Malloy also return as perimeter contributors after playing in the Rockets' regular rotation last year. Junior Alex Guden returns in the frontcourt after seeing limited minutes for the Rockets last season.

Sophomore Syd Michalkiewicz will be a newcomer also expected to see minutes in the backcourt and will be counted on to contribute, while juniors McKenna Freier, Lexi Davis, Libby Jahnke and JB Kennedy along with freshman Farrah Danforth are also expected to see action at the varsity level.

“We have a very deep team and we feel



Senior Rowan Klesmit averaged more than 22 points per game last season in earning first-team all-Fox Valley Association honors for the Rockets.



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# Girls Varsity Basketball

## Winter 2025-2026 Schedule



### ST. MARY CATHOLIC

|       |                           |         |
|-------|---------------------------|---------|
| 11/20 | Bonduel                   | 7:15 PM |
| 11/24 | @ Wrightstown             | 7:00 PM |
| 12/2  | @ Living World Lutheran   | 7:15 PM |
| 12/4  | @ Hilbert                 | 7:15 PM |
| 12/8  | Manitowoc Lutheran        | 7:15 PM |
| 12/12 | @ Howards Grove           | 5:50 PM |
| 12/15 | Mishicot                  | 7:15 PM |
| 12/22 | Valders                   | 7:15 PM |
| 1/6   | @ Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah | 7:15 PM |
| 1/9   | Reedsville                | 7:00 PM |
| 1/12  | Newman Catholic           | 7:15 PM |
| 1/16  | TBA                       | 7:15 PM |
| 1/20  | Hilbert                   | 7:15 PM |
| 1/22  | Pacelli                   | 7:15 PM |
| 1/27  | @ Manitowoc Lutheran      | 7:15 PM |
| 1/30  | Howards Grove             | 7:15 PM |
| 2/2   | @ Brillion                | 7:00 PM |
| 2/5   | @ Mishicot                | 7:15 PM |
| 2/9   | @ Laconia                 | 7:15 PM |
| 2/12  | Elkhart Lake-Glenbeulah   | 7:15 PM |
| 2/17  | @ Winneconne              | 7:00 PM |
| 2/19  | @ Reedsville              | 7:00 PM |



### NEENAH HIGH SCHOOL

|       |                          |         |
|-------|--------------------------|---------|
| 11/18 | Wisconsin Rapids Lincoln | 7:15 PM |
| 11/22 | @ Wauwatosa East         | 4:00 PM |
| 11/25 | @ Marshfield             | 7:15 PM |
| 11/29 | Waunakee                 | 4:30 PM |
| 12/2  | @ Appleton North         | 7:15 PM |
| 12/5  | Hortonville              | 6:00 PM |
| 12/9  | Manitowoc Lincoln        | 7:00 PM |
| 12/12 | Appleton West            | 7:15 PM |
| 12/15 | Oshkosh North            | 7:15 PM |
| 12/18 | @ Oshkosh West           | 7:15 PM |
| 12/23 | Appleton East            | 7:15 PM |
| 12/29 | Monona Grove             | 1:00 PM |
| 1/6   | @ Kaukauna               | 7:15 PM |
| 1/9   | Fond Du Lac              | 7:15 PM |
| 1/13  | @ Kimberly               | 7:15 PM |
| 1/16  | Appleton North           | 7:15 PM |
| 1/23  | @ Hortonville            | 7:45 PM |
| 1/27  | @ Appleton West          | 7:15 PM |
| 1/30  | @ Oshkosh North          | 7:15 PM |
| 2/3   | Oshkosh West             | 7:15 PM |
| 2/6   | @ Appleton East          | 7:15 PM |
| 2/11  | @ Fond Du Lac            | 7:15 PM |
| 2/13  | Kaukauna                 | 7:15 PM |
| 2/19  | Kimberly                 | 7:15 PM |

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# Mulroy, Hansman, relay gear for trip to state meet

By Steve Clark  
NEENAH NEWS

Anna Mulroy remembers what it was like three years ago, making her first trip to the WIAA State Swimming and Diving Championships.

“I didn’t know what to expect my freshman year,” the Neenah High School senior swimmer recalled. “It was intimidating definitely, but I know I was super excited.”

Fast forward three years and Mulroy is more confident heading into a state meet atmosphere but there is one feeling that is still the same.

“I am still so excited,” Mulroy said earlier this week before a practice. “Now, I know what to expect and I know what’s going to happen. It’s such a cool experience.”

Mulroy will compete in both the 100-yard butterfly and 100-yard backstroke at this year’s state meet, returning to state in both events and will be joined by junior Breleigh Maurer, sophomore Bridget Bloomhuff and freshman Elisabeth Hang on the Rockets’ 400-yard freestyle relay team.

Junior diver Sydney Hansman will also be competing at the state meet, returning for the second time.

“It feels good to be going again,” Hansman said. “It’s very stressful as your first time. I feel like this year I will be more relaxed and have more fun this year.”

Hansman will compete first on Saturday at the Waukesha South High School Natatorium with the diving competition slated to start at 9:30 a.m. She finished second at the sectional meet with a score of 396.85 points, which seeds her 14<sup>th</sup> in the field of 24 divers.

Last year, Hansman made it through the first of two cuts at the state meet, but did not advance into the finals and finished 18<sup>th</sup> overall. She hopes to change that around this year.

“My goal is to make it to the top 16 because then you are not cut,” Hansman said. “We’re just going to practice all of my dives (this week) as much as I can and try



Neenah News

Representing Neenah at the state swimming and diving meet on Saturday will be: (front, from left) Sydney Hansman, Anna Benthien, Anna Mulroy; (back, from left) Elisabeth Hang, Breleigh Maurer, Bridget Bloomhuff.

to perfect everything.”

In addition to the competition at state and the fun of being there with her team-

mates, going to the meet does allow Hansman an opportunity to see what other divers are doing.

“You are watching the girls a lot and you get to see what other girls around the state are doing,” Hansman said. “I see a lot of new dives when I go to state and then I feel like I want to do that. It influences me.”

Mulroy is seeded in the top 10 for both of her individual events at the state meet and comes in after winning sectional titles in each last Saturday.

She is seeded fifth in the 100-yard butterfly after posting a school-record time of 56.14 seconds – a mere .01 seconds faster than Appleton North’s Elise Brazzale.

“That was one of the most exciting races we have seen at a sectional,” Neenah head coach Carrie Raeth said. “Then she got the job done on the backstroke. She went out in great fashion at sectionals.”

Mulroy’s victory in the 100-yard backstroke came with a time of 57.60 – which was six-tenths of a second faster than the runner-up – and lands her in the third heat at the state meet. She is one of three swimmers that qualified with the same time, which is tied for the 10<sup>th</sup> fastest mark among the 27 qualifiers in the event.

Mulroy finished 22<sup>nd</sup> in the 100-yard backstroke at last year’s state meet and 23<sup>rd</sup> in the 100-yard butterfly.

Raeth believes that Mulroy can hold to her seeds at the state meet to finish in the top 10 in each event and podium in the 100-yard butterfly.

Mulroy is just focused on finishing her high school career by doing her best.

“It definitely was a relief at sectionals. It just meant a lot to me to be going back,” Mulroy said. “Right now, I just want to get my best times right now. I just want to have fun. It’s my last high school meet and I want to enjoy the experience.”

Mulroy was excited to get the relay through to state as well as the group cut things pretty close.

The foursome finished third in the final race of the sectional meet and ended qualifying 23<sup>rd</sup> among the 24 relay squads. The

SEE **State meet** ON PAGE 15

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# Local clinic expands hours for orthopedic, sports medicine care

Neenah News

Orthopedic & Sports Medicine Specialists (OSMS) has expanded its clinic and walk-in injury clinic hours for orthopedic and sports medicine care in Neenah.

The change means patients on select weekdays can either schedule an appointment or walk into the OSMS walk-in clinic with a new injury and be seen by an orthopedic physician until 7 p.m.

At OSMS Neenah, the clinic and walk-in clinic expanded hours are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. two days a week – with the two days alternating every other week – and the hours for the other three days remaining 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“We understand that not all injuries

happen Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. We also understand that schedules can get busy, and that some people may not be able to schedule an appointment during the workday,” OSMS CEO Sandy Fragale said. “So, the decision for us to expand our hours was made to allow our community members access to orthopedic and sports medicine care when it is most convenient for them.”

In addition to this change, OSMS MRI services have also expanded later in the evening on Mondays through Thursdays each week.

OSMS’ new clinical and walk-in injury clinic hours can be found on their website at OSMS Fox Valley Clinic.

## State meet

FROM PAGE 14

group’s time of 3:43.33 was roughly five-tenths of a second below the qualifying standard.

“It was really important to get a relay there,” said Mulroy, who anchors the event. “I really, really wanted to get a relay down there and it means a lot to me that we did.”

Other than Mulroy, the rest of the relay squad – including alternate swimmer junior Anna Benthein – could return next season and will have the experience of swimming at state under their belts.

“The experience is huge for them to see that this is where they want to be, individually as well,” Raeth said. “It was a huge

excitement for us (at sectionals). We knew the individuals were going already so to have four qualify for the relay that was big for us.”

The Rockets’ 200-yard freestyle relay team of Mulroy, Bloomhuff, Benthein and Maurer also swam a strong race at sectionals to take fourth but fell about a second short of hitting the state qualifying time.

Other top individual finishers at sectionals were: Hang, fifth in the 200-yard freestyle and seventh in the 500-yard freestyle; Maurer, fifth in the 200-yard individual medley and seventh in the 100-yard butterfly; Bloomhuff, seventh in the 100-yard freestyle; and Sophia Diaz, seventh in diving.

The swimming portion of the Division 1 state meet will begin at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday.



Neenah News

Junior Autumn Crowe is coming off a season where she averaged nearly 14 points per game and helped the Zephyrs reach the Division 4 state title game.

## Girls basketball

FROM PAGE 13

that this will make practices super competitive,” Braunel said. “When you have a team that can do that, make practices as close to game speed and intensity as possible, and a team can really take off and soar. We look forward to instilling this mindset with this squad.”

### St. Mary Catholic

Fresh off a state runner-up finish last season, head coach Jeff Chew will turn to a new cast as the Zephyrs once again look to challenge for a title in the Big East North.

Four of the five starters from last year’s squad graduated, including three of the top four scorers. St. Mary Catholic shared the league championship last season before losing to Cuba City, 53-50, in the WIAA Division 4 state title game.

The lone starter returning from last year is junior Autumn Crowe, who enters her third season at the varsity level for the Zephyrs.

Crowe averaged 13.7 points per game last year, while leading the team with 44 3-pointers and shooting 40 percent from behind the arc. She also averaged four rebounds and three assists per game, while collecting a team-leading 4.3 steals per

contest.

Juniors Lucy Norville and Luci Nackers will likely take on bigger roles this season after playing in the Zephyrs’ regular rotation a year ago with each averaging about three points per game.

Seniors Audrey Weber and Bella Woodbridge along with junior Bitsy McCauley all saw limited varsity action a year ago and will add to the depth.

Chew will also be counting on varsity newcomers in juniors Piper Neubauer, Halle Janssen and Mina Jackson and sophomores Paxtyn Trinkner, Gabby Guerrero, Daphne Dwyer and Brecken Britzke to contribute to the squad this season.

Despite all of the new faces expected to take on roles with the team, Chew is expecting to once again be a conference force. The Zephyrs tied with Manitowoc Lutheran for the conference crown last year before topping the Lancers in the sectional final.

Chew believes this team is following that path, too.

“This team has worked to be a strong team with quickness and hustle,” Chew commented. “The expectation of the program doesn’t change. We are striving for our fifth straight conference championship and going to state. The leadership and people stepping up will make us a good team.”

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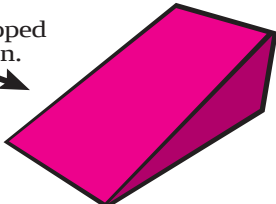
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The sun was out. The classroom was getting warmer and warmer. Wonder Wedge looked around and saw his friends sweltering. One at a time the kids got up and tried to open the door. But, each time the door slammed shut. How could they keep the door open?

Wonder Wedge came to the rescue! He showed the kids two pieces of wood. Which one would work best to keep the door open?



How many wedges can you find on this page?

### Wedges at Work

A knife, a nail, a doorknob, a pushpin and even a screw are types of wedges. They help us do many different things. Look at these pictures and circle all of the wedges the children are using.



Standards Link: Physical Science: Students understand simple machines and how they work.

### Working Together

Draw a line to match the tools that work together.



Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

### How is a screw like a wedge?

A wedge and a screw are both made with an inclined plane. To see how a screw is made from an inclined plane, try the following experiment:

1. Cut out the triangle-shaped wedge pictured here. (Fig. 1)
2. Tape side A to a pencil. (Fig. 2)
3. Roll the triangle around your pencil. Tape the tip of the triangle to the pencil. (Fig. 3)
4. What has happened to the slanted line of the triangle? This slanted line is also called an **inclined plane**.

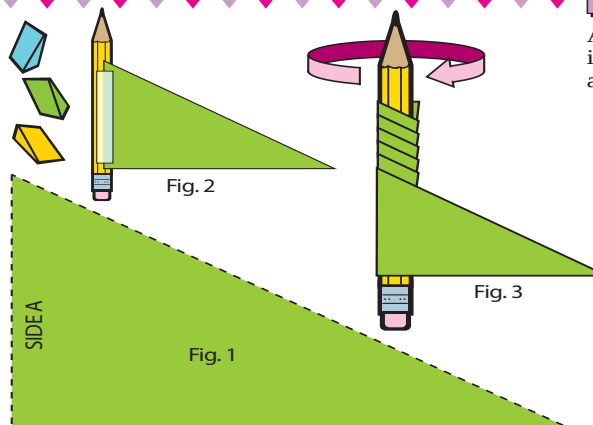


Fig. 1: A green triangle with a dashed line labeled 'SIDE A'.

Fig. 2: The triangle is taped to a pencil.

Fig. 3: The triangle is rolled around the pencil, forming a screw thread.

Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow multiple-step written directions.

### Extra! Extra! W-to-W Dot-to-Dot

Select one page of the newspaper. Find and circle all of the **Ws** that you can. Draw lines to connect the **Ws** to make a dot-to-dot design. Color your design.

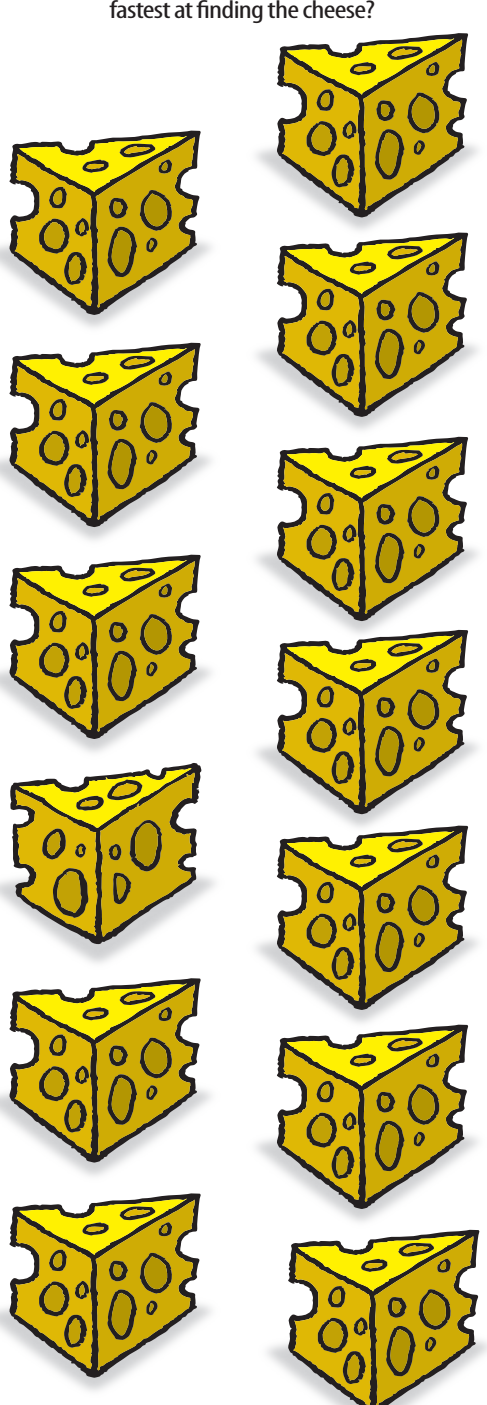
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## Kid Scoop Together

### Cheese, Please!

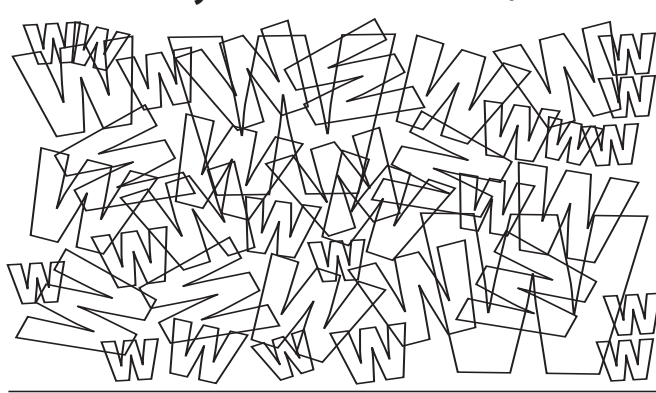
Have someone time you to see how quickly you can find the wedge of cheese that's different from all the others. Switch places and time the other person. Who was fastest at finding the cheese?



### Kid Scoop Puzzler

#### Wild & Wacky Puzzle

WOW! How many **Ws** are here?



Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written directions.

### Double Double Word Search

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

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| W | H | D | E | W | O | H | S | D | Y |
| G | N | I | K | R | O | L | W | A |   |
| W | O | R | L | D | E | I | R | I | L |
| Y | A | E | T | G | W | D | H | T | E |
| K | H | R | D | O | O | N | H | E |   |
| C | E | E | M | R | E | E | W | O | H |
| A | W | S | O | E | M | R | A | U | W |
| W | O | U | L | D | R | C | R | T | A |
| N | W | Y | W | S | W | S | D | H | Y |

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

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### Write On!



### Write Words Wonderfully

Write an alliteration: a sentence where every, or nearly every, word starts with the same letter. Example: *Agitated alligators ate the apples anxiously.*



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