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Photo from Neenah Joint School District

City eyes downtown parking

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

The City of Neenah is taking a closer look at its downtown parking situation by studying its parking inventory compared to its employer parking obligations.

Kelly Nieforth, Neenah's director of community development and assessment, said the city is looking at how many parking spots are allotted to different businesses and how many spots are available in the city's parking ramp and lots.

"We're working on updating our agreements with the needs of our large employers," she said.

Neenah has several agreements in place with large employers, including Alta Resources, Plexus Corp., (both the headquarters and the company's design center), Ascension and ThedaCare.

For example, in the Church Street Parking Ramp, which was built when Alta Resources opened in downtown Neenah, the company has 531 stalls; Plexus has 295 stalls; Jason Tadych, the developer of 201 W. Wisconsin, has 10 stalls and 36 stalls were set aside for the public and West Wisconsin Avenue businesses for a total of 872 spaces.

Originally, Plexus was given 375 spaces but transferred 24 to the city's Brown Lot and 56 to Alta in the ramp leaving them with 295. The Department of Natural Resources has ruled that parking should no

SEE **Parking options** ON PAGE 7

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Making music

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Senior Standout

Injury forces Neenah's Marsh to sidelines

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Learning experience

Neenah High School students recently attended a Hmong Heritage Conference at Fox Valley Technical College. This year's theme focused on Hmong Arts, giving students the opportunity to participate in sessions on digital art and traditional Hmong dance. One of the experiences was "A Night in the Jungle," an immersive, maze-like simulation designed to reflect the challenges Hmong people faced while fleeing persecution following the Secret War.

County board committee assignments draw debate

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

A few newly elected county supervisors received two committee assignments while long-time committee members, including board chairs, found themselves with new assignments.

Those were just a couple of the complaints raised during the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors meeting last week when County Board Chairman Frank Frassetto officially presented committee placements for the next two years.

"I wanted a fair balance of experience and new supervisors coming in on these committees," he said. "I wanted to also give everyone something from their interest list."

Supervisors could list up to four committees they were interested in serving on. From there, the Committee on Committees, a group of three supervisors plus Frassetto and Vice Chair Conley Hanson, divided the supervisors onto the nine county committees.

As part of board procedure, supervisors had to vote their approval of the whole slate of appointments. After much discussion, the board voted 21-11 to approve.

In addition, County Executive Gordon Hintz made his own appointments

to several boards, including the Board of Health, Human Services Board and the Solid Waste Management Board.

"I talked with Hintz about his appointments, too, so I knew if I wasn't putting someone on a committee that he might be putting someone on a board," Frassetto said. "I knew full well we wouldn't satisfy everyone."

Supervisor Rachael Dowling noted she was not assigned to one of the nine committees, but Frassetto pointed out she was appointed as his permanent alternate to the East Central Wisconsin Planning Commission, which meets monthly, and was appointed to the Winnebago County Human Services Board by Hintz.

Supervisor Bob Poeschl was selected

for the Planning & Zoning Committee but mentioned he listed four committees he wanted to serve on. "How did you decide who got two committees to sit on versus one committee? It's not that we don't want to serve, it's just that we don't like the process."

Supervisor Kristl Laux, who was selected to serve on the University of Wisconsin Education, Extension & Agriculture Committee, was disappointed she wasn't selected for the Land Conservation Committee where she said she had dedicated extra time last term.

"I was very active. I attended state meetings," she said. "I don't get it why I

SEE **County Board** ON PAGE 6



Frassetto

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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

A 501c3 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 Winnebago Media Group, Inc., 36 Broad St. Suite 300, Oshkosh, WI, 54901. 920-385-4512.



Photo from Doty Island Development Council

Community cleanup

Over 90 volunteers collected almost 600 pounds of waste May 2 during a Doty Island Development Council community cleanup event. Board members treated the volunteers with coffee, orange juice and donuts to start the day. The next community event is a planting morning at Doty Park with volunteers asked to meet at 9 a.m. at the boathouse parking lot.

Letter carriers organizing annual food drive

Neenah News

Letter carriers in the Neenah area will be collecting donations Saturday as part of a national food drive.

The National Association of Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive has been held each year on the second Saturday in May for the past 30 years.

Letter carriers will be collecting non-perishable food donations from customers. According to organizers, letter carriers are in the communities they serve every day and often come face to face with a sad reality for too many: hunger.

The donations go directly to local food pantries to provide food to people who

need help. Organizers said the timing of the food drive is crucial as food banks and pantries often receive the majority of their donations during the winter holiday season. By springtime, many pantries are depleted, entering the summer low on supplies at a time when many school breakfast and lunch programs are not available to children in need.

Participating in this year's Letter Carriers Stamp Out Hunger Food Drive is simple. Just leave non-perishable food donations in a bag by the mailbox on Saturday and the letter carrier will do the rest. Carriers will be dropping off bags this week for pickup on Saturday.



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Calendar of events

Saturday, May 9

Junk in the Trunk, 8 a.m., City Hall
Doty Island Shoreline Volunteer Planting, 9 a.m., Doty Park
Safety Around Water, 10 a.m., Neenah-Menasha YMCA
Little Duckling Pint-Sized Prom, 10:30 a.m., Neenah Public Library
Meet Authors Tansy Lederhaus and Jon Hagen, 10:30 a.m., Lyons Books, 127 W. Wisconsin Ave.
Show Choir Finale, 7:30 p.m., Pickard Auditorium

Tuesday, May 12

Downtown Neenah Blood Drive, 8 a.m., DoubleTree Hotel Neenah
Fox Crossing Kiwanis Charter Party, noon, 2000 Municipal Drive
The Power of Self Talk: Transforming Your Inner Dialogue, 6 p.m., Village of Fox Crossing, 2064 Municipal Drive
High School Choir Concert, 7:30 p.m., NHS Performing Arts Center

Wednesday, May 13

Fox Talks: Leadership in the Fox Cities - Paths, People, and Possibilities, 8 a.m., Community First Credit Union

Thursday, May 14

Cheese, Please, 6 p.m., Neenah Public Library
High School Jazz/Touch of Class Concert, 7:30 p.m., NHS Performing Arts Center

Friday, May 15

Campfire with the Cops, 5:30 p.m., Memorial Park

Saturday, May 16

Volunteer Sign Installation, 8 a.m. Carpenter Preserve
Treasure in the Trunk, Medical Benefit Rummage Sale, 8 a.m., Peace Lutheran Church, 1228 S. Park Ave., Neenah
Garden Party, 9 a.m., Neenah Animal Shelter, 2475 Progress Court
Safety Around Water, 10 a.m., Neenah-Menasha YMCA
K-Pop Dance Party, 10:30 a.m., Neenah Public Library
Boots and Bags Luncheon, 11 a.m., Beaming Ranch
Neenah Street Party, 2 p.m., Greene's Pour House

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Local musicians part of street party lineup at Greene's

By George Halas
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Church Street will be closed to open the way for the enjoyment of live music and related revelry at next weekend's Neenah Street Party hosted by Greene's Pour House.

The street party will be from 2:30 to 10 p.m. May 16. Tickets are \$10 online or at the gate. The tips from the street-side bars will be donated to the Neenah-Menasha Fire Rescue.

Appleton native and WAMI Award nominee Jason Schaefer will get the music started at 3 p.m. and will play until 5 p.m. He is familiar to Fox Cities music fans from his days with local favorites Tate Rooper as well as regular radio airplay on 91.1 The Avenue and 105.7 WAPL.

Since shifting his focus to writing acoustic music in 2017, Schaefer has released two EP's, "Feels Like Home" and "For The Ghost" as well as full length studio album, "Something Better," which was recorded at Appleton's Rock Garden Studio.

Neenah residents and music fans will recognize a number of familiar faces in Yacht Sea, which will perform from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Michael Murphy is a Neenah High School and Lawrence University graduate, drummer Wayne Salzman is a Neenah High School and University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh graduate and keyboardist/multi-instrumentalist/vocalist Joe Slyzelia, also known as Sly Joe, leads the Fox Menagerie and regularly tickles the ivories at Cannova's.

The group also includes multi-WAMI award-winner Michael Underwood play-

ing percussion, Dave Jerabek playing bass and guitarist Woodie Larsen.

"Yacht Rock" is a term generally applied to smooth jazz, soul and R&B influenced music of the later 1970's and early 80's that includes Christopher Cross, Kenny Loggins, TOTO, the Michael McDonald-era Doobie Brothers and Steely Dan.

"The band is the brainchild of Michael Murphy," Underwood said. "He wanted to put together something that everyone's going to like."

"If you like yacht rock songs — and who doesn't? — you're going to love this show," Underwood added. "Even if you think you don't like it, come anyway because you'll discover that we play a lot of songs that you like."

"I've been obsessed with this genre forever," Murphy said. "I created this show as a creative outlet and to get reps with great musicians playing music that I have been greatly influenced by."

"Yacht Rock fans are huge fans," he continued, "and the ones that aren't become big fans. Kenny Loggins will do that to you."

The band made its debut in March at The Grand Oshkosh.

"The show went great," Underwood said. "Everybody loved it. It was awesome."

Murphy, who left immediately after the show and just returned from a month in Europe touring with South For Winter, echoed Underwood's analysis.

"It (the concert) went swimmingly," he said. "I received more follow-up texts and messages than I've received after any other show from people telling me how excellent the show was and how excited they



Submitted photo

Yacht Sea featuring vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Michael Murphy will be one of the performers May 16 during the Neenah Street Party hosted by Greene's Pour House.

were for the next one."

Nationally renowned Bermuda Search Party will close the evening with a set from 8 to 10 p.m. that features their "unapologetically energetic and uplifting" music in a live show that has been described as a "celebration of life." The band takes pride in their reputation for both touching the hearts of an audience while getting them up on their feet.

The band has released two albums: their debut, "Melancholy Flowers" in 2022 and "Fools On Parade," which was produced by Eric Palmquist and released through Nettwerk Music Group.

Hundreds of live performances across the country culminated in 2025 with four Boston Music Awards nominations: Live and Pop Act of the Year, Video of the Year for "Olivia" and Album of The Year.

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Robotics teams compete at world championships

Neenah News

Neenah High School had 14 students on four different teams participating at the recent VEX World Robotics championships in St. Louis, Mo.

The team of Jack DeMenter and Jack Henry had Neenah's highest finish, placing 36th of 85 teams in the spirit division and earning a skills ranking of 25th out of 511 teams.

The group of Graham Engelhart, Jason Harris, Nolan Morrow, Noah Sabatke and Elliot Seidling placed 49th of 87 teams in the innovate division and also won the Pit Design Contest out of all 811 teams with their Tyrannosaurus VEX-themed station. The duo of Sam and Oliver Bontorno placed 37th of 87 teams, and the quintet of

Caleb Barczak, Joey Button, Nolan Mantufel, Joel Ostermeier and Vinny Wilson was 31st of 87 teams in the technology division.

Neenah Middle School had eight students participating on two teams. The team of Gus Goethel, Blake Hawley, Ben Bontorno and Deklan Portelli placed 35th of 83 teams in the design division.

The group of Wyatt Spice, Hudson Hendries, Oliver Breitzman and Zach Liesener won the prestigious Inspire Award for a team that demonstrates outstanding leadership through action to other teams. This team was identified by their peers as a leader in innovative and creative design. The team finished 70th of 83 teams in the research division.

Neenah Animal Shelter hosts garden party

Neenah News

The annual garden party will feature various activities at the Neenah Animal Shelter.

The event from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. May 16 at the shelter, 2475 Progress Court, includes shopping for house plants, annuals

and perennials, vegetables, garden decor, hanging plant baskets, NAS merch and more. Activities include a brat fry, bake sale, kids craft table and raffle baskets.

The brat fry includes brats, hot dogs, burgers, chips, soda and water.

Pets are not allowed at the event.

Fox Crossing Kiwanis holding charter party

Neenah News

A newly formed Kiwanis group in Fox Crossing is looking for members.

The group has 23 participants and is looking for more community members to join in its efforts to continue growing and making an impact on local youth. The

group meets for an hour every other week.

A Fox Crossing Kiwanis Charter Party is being held at noon Tuesday in the Assembly Room at 2000 Municipal Drive to share information about the group's creation, growth and program implementations.

Dessert and beverages will be provided.



Submitted photo

Members of Neenah-based Girl Scout Troop 2291 recently completed a project to enhance the recess experience for students at Neenah Middle School.

Girl Scout project enhances playground

Neenah News

Girl Scout Troop 2291 has successfully completed its Bronze Award project, bringing new energy and opportunities for play to Neenah Middle School.

The project focused on improving the recess experience by expanding access to engaging, inclusive activities that promote physical movement and social interaction.

Beginning in September 2025, troop leader Katie Huss said the troop identified a need for more structured and accessible recess options. Through petitioning, fundraising and careful planning, Huss said the girls worked to provide a variety of new equipment, including balls, game boards, activity cards and a storage shed on the blacktop to keep materials organized and readily available.

"This was a huge accomplishment given the school is transitioning from a space designed for high schoolers to a space now supporting middle schoolers," Huss said.

The project reached its completion on

May 1 with a dedication ceremony attended by family members, school staff, administrators and representatives from Girl Scouts of the Northwestern Council.

"The event reflected a strong sense of community pride and appreciation for the troop's initiative and lasting contribution," said Huss, who supported the troop along with the group's other leader, Heather Moua.

Troop members Eleanor Huss, Emery Moua, Bristol Polakowski, Lauren Schwandt and Lydia Wedge demonstrated teamwork and leadership throughout the project.

"Their efforts have created a more active, inclusive and enjoyable recess environment that will benefit students for years to come," Huss said.

The Girl Scout Bronze Award is the highest honor a Junior Girl Scout can earn. To achieve it, girls must identify a community need, create a sustainable project and complete at least 20 hours of work each.

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Young professional awards nominations are now open

Neenah News

The Fox Cities Chamber and its Pulse Young Professionals Network are ready to select the 16th annual class of Fox Cities Future 15 Young Professionals. Nominations are open through noon July 9.

These awards recognize young professionals age 40 and under who live or work in the Fox Cities region (Outagamie, Calumet and northern Winnebago Counties) and excel professionally while also giving back to the community.

Those nominated will be asked to submit an application. Completed applications will be advanced for award consideration to a selection committee made up of past Future 15 award recipients and area

business leaders.

Recipients are selected based on their professional dedication, strong sense of vision for the future of the Fox Cities and personal commitment to philanthropy in the community.

Criteria for nominations includes the nominee must be currently employed, should be active in community service and must be 40 years of age or younger.

To nominate a Future 15 YP visit this link form.jotform.com/261038889647170.

In addition to the Future 15, a Young Entrepreneur of the Year will also be named. An entrepreneur is defined as a person who organizes and operates a business or businesses, taking on greater than normal financial risks in order to do so.

Criteria for this award includes the nominee being 40 years of age or younger, active in community service, business must currently operate in or service the Fox Cities region and must be the majority owner of the business.

Performers earn recognition at state event

Neenah News

Eight Neenah High School individuals or groups were selected as exemplary performers at the Wisconsin School Music Association state solo and ensemble festival last month in Oshkosh.

The jazz combo of Logan Claudio, David Linstedt, Brendan Dallmann, Alex Barlow-Guevara, Oliver Posegate, Barret Bjornstad and Jackson Schafer was honored in the band division.

In the choir division, Kaylee Collins and

To nominate a Young Entrepreneur of the Year visit this link form.jotform.com/261039375256157.

The 2026 winners will be honored at a ceremony Oct. 29 at Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort and Hotel in Neenah.

Alivia Haller were honored along with Jilian Lauer and Kay Dorion in the musical theater duet competition. Sofia Seager was chosen for her soprano solo.

In orchestra, Rebekah Thomas and Malina Zhang each were honored for their violin solo, while Jacob Perry was recognized for his piano solo and the Touch of Class ensemble was selected for alternative string ensemble.

In addition, 11 other Neenah individuals and groups were nominated for their performances.

County's We Heart You App gets updated

Neenah News

The Winnebago County Overdose Fatality Review Team has launched an updated version of its app, We Heart You App 2.0.

The updated app offers a more user-friendly experience, expanded resources and improved mapping features to help individuals and families quickly find the support they need. The app serves as a tool in connecting people to lifesaving services

across Winnebago County and beyond. Community members will need to download the new app to receive the benefits of the update. The app can be downloaded by searching "We Heart You!" in the Apple App Store or Google Play.

The We Heart You initiative was developed through the work of the Winnebago County Overdose Fatality Review Team to break the silence around substance use, reduce stigma and ultimately save lives.

Tayco Street bridge in Menasha to be closed Monday

Neenah News

The Tayco Street Bridge in Menasha will be closed from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday for routine inspection and maintenance.

The Wisconsin Department of Trans-

portation (WisDOT) bridge is safe to travel. Motorists may see bridge inspectors, inspection equipment and drones. WisDOT said to pay attention to the roadway when crossing the bridge.

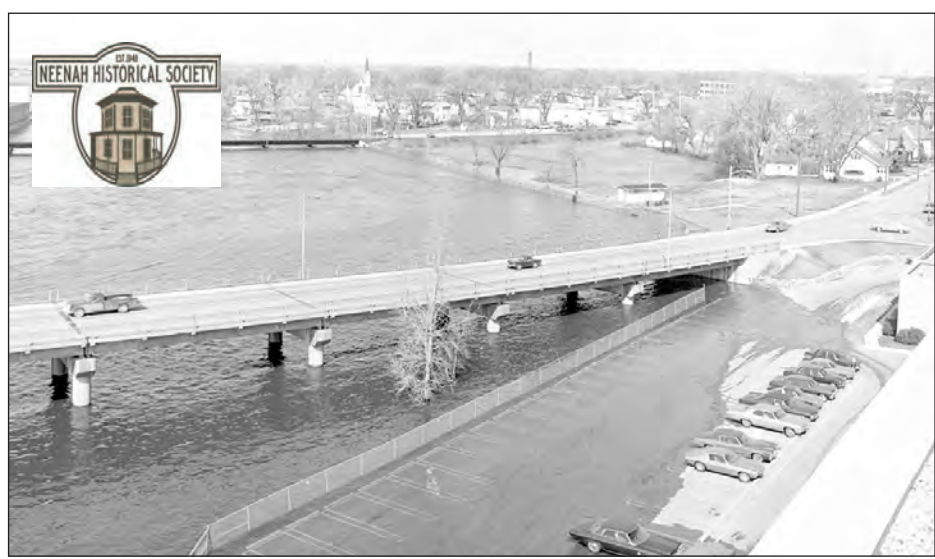


Photo from Neenah Historical Society

Island Park 1973

A photograph from the top of the Theda Clark Hospital in Neenah shows the Fox River and the Oak Street Bridge. Behind the bridge, Island Park has some flooding. From the Munroe Studios photograph collection on March 20, 1973.

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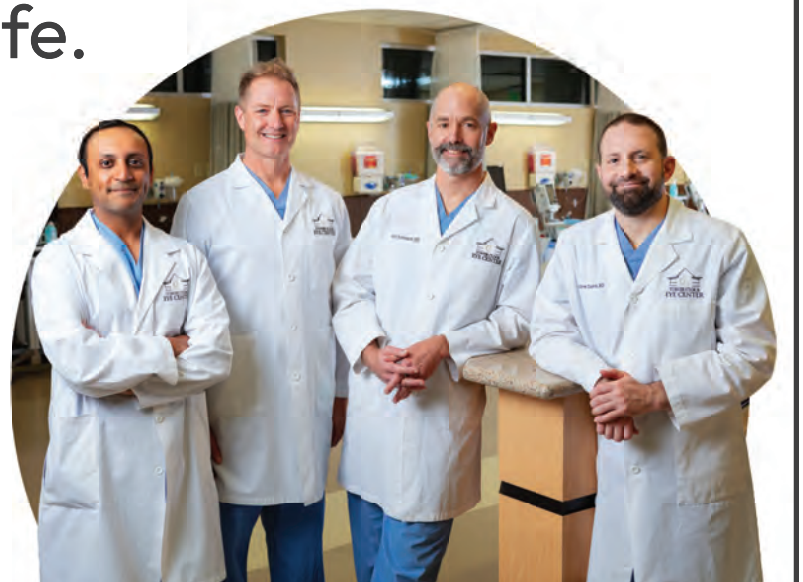
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County Board

FROM PAGE 1

wasn't put back on."

Supervisor Kate Hancock-Cooke said the board appointment process "isn't perfect, but it's the process we have. I didn't get any indication that anything was amiss in the process."

A member of the Committee on Committees, Supervisor Maribeth Gabert said she was initially upset she was not placed on the Park View Health Center Committee, where she had previously

served.

"But I calmed down. I know there will be a new group of people who will get to know them and take care of Park View like I had," she said, adding she looks forward to serving on the Planning & Zoning Committee and the Aviation Committee.

Supervisor Steven Binder, who was chair of the UW Education, Extension & Agriculture Committee and involved with 4-H, said he was shocked he was left off that committee. He was assigned to the Personnel & Finance Committee.

"This is basically a joke," he said.



Photo from St. Mary Catholic Schools

Night to remember

Students performed Saturday during the 41st annual Zephyrfest at the Fox Cities Exhibition Center. Each year, St. Mary Catholic Schools holds the event to share with the community the joy and successes of the school system.

School Board approves contracts for administrators, certified staff

By Eric Endres
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Joint School District Board of Education on Tuesday approved contract extensions and compensation for administrators and certified staff members, which includes a pay freeze for administrators and a 3% raise for certified staff members.

A memo linked in the May 5 meeting agenda said that as part of the district's plan to address the current budget shortfall, administrator compensation will remain unchanged for the 2026-2027 school year. It went on to say that the district will revisit the possibility of salary increases this coming fall once there's a greater clarity about its financial outlook.

Most administrator contracts were recommended with an expiration date of June 30, 2028.

The board also approved the contract renewals for 493 certified staff members, including a 3% increase in compensation, for the 2026-2027 school year.

Since it was the first school board meeting with its newly elected members (Chris Blanton, Becky Heidke Kwiatkowski and Samuel M. Roth), the board also held an election for president, vice president, treasurer and clerk.

All sitting members wound up staying in their positions: Brian Epley as president, Lauri Asbury as vice president, Tara Brzezinski as treasurer and Alex Corrigan as clerk.



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Former middle school teacher offered deferment program

Neenah News

A former Neenah middle school teacher has avoided prosecution in his drug case after accepting a deferred prosecution agreement as part of a plea agreement.

Benjamin Schmidt accepted a deferred prosecution for the charge of possession of controlled substance. The other charge Schmidt was facing, possession of THC, was dismissed.

In court on April 21, Schmidt, 46, accepted the deferred adjudication agreement, which suspends the prosecution of his case for nine months. In that time, he has to comply with specific conditions of the agreement. If Schmidt completes the conditions, the possession of a controlled substance charge will also be dismissed.

Schmidt was placed on administrative

leave in January after charges were filed on Dec. 30. On Jan. 23, Schmidt's contract with the Neenah Joint School District was terminated.

Court documents show there are five conditions to the agreement that Schmidt must comply with over the next nine months.

This includes not engaging in any further criminal activity, paying fines, he cannot consume, use or possess THC or any controlled substance and he must complete an alcohol and other drug assessment (AODA) and follow through with any recommended treatment.

According to a criminal complaint, Neenah police went to Schmidt's residence around 9 a.m. Dec. 15 after his wife reported finding drugs in the home. Police said

the substances included kratom, which is a Schedule I controlled drug in Wisconsin.

Officers searched Schmidt's residence, classroom, vehicle and personal property, according to the complaint. Police reported locating a vape pen in Schmidt's vehicle containing a substance believed to be THC wax, as well as an empty bag of kratom capsules in his desk drawer. Additional substances were allegedly found in a travel coffee tumbler taken from his classroom.

During an interview with police, Schmidt denied possessing illegal substances at school and said the vape pen contained Delta-8.

He told police the substance in his travel mug was protein powder but admitted to having kratom powder in his home.

Schmidt told police the incident stemmed from a contentious divorce and said the report was consistent with actions his wife would take to gain leverage, according to the complaint.

Parking options

FROM PAGE 1

longer be allowed in the Brown Lot, due to its location in Arrowhead Park. As for the Purple Lot, it is set for development, and the city will lose that space for parking as well.

The city needs to determine where the people parking in those lots will go, Nieforth said.

While at one point pre-COVID, there was discussion of building a second parking ramp in downtown Neenah, Nieforth said the demand for that is no longer there since more people work remotely. The plan now is to build a surface parking lot to provide an additional 125 spaces for employers. If over time demand continues to grow and a second parking ramp is needed, the parking lot could be the base

of where the ramp could go.

Nieforth said the city has short- and long-term parking recommendations it's working toward.

In the short-term, Neenah would like to:

- Amend Alta's parking agreement.
- Create a master parking agreement with Plexus to accommodate their move out of the Brown Lot and address their parking needs.
- Determine Ascension's parking needs and amend their agreement.
- Utilize already borrowed funds (over \$1 million) in Tax Incremental District 10 to potentially acquire property and construct a surface parking lot.

Looking long-term, Nieforth said the city's long-term parking recommendations include reviewing all parking agreements to ensure they are consistent with available information and reviewing the parking permit process.



Submitted photo

The Theisen's garden center is open so customers can shop for spring projects and seasonal outdoor needs before the full store opens in late May.

Theisen's garden center opens ahead of main store

Neenah News

The garden center at Theisen's Home•Farm•Auto has opened for customers in Neenah ahead of the full store opening later this month.

Once the full location opens at 999 Winneconne Ave., it will be Theisen's fifth store in Wisconsin and 26th overall serving Iowa and Wisconsin. The store is opening in the former Krueger's Hardware location. Krueger's was a family-owned business that had served the community since 1866 before closing last year.

"This is an exciting first step in bringing Theisen's to Neenah, and we're eager to provide the friendly service, quality products and strong values our customers have come to expect," said Tony Theisen, president and CEO.

The garden center offers customers flowers, plants, shrubs, fruit trees and garden essentials, along with lawn and outdoor products.

The garden center is open 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday through Saturday and 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.



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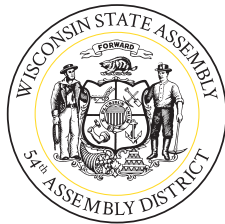
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- AB 1143** / Requires disclosure of utility charges related to residential rental agreements
- AB 52** / Expands access to the homestead tax credit

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Senior Spotlight is brought to you by: **Nicolet NATIONAL BANK**

Knee injury forces Marsh to watch senior season

By Steve Clark
NEENAH NEWS

It's one of the toughest things that any athlete has to do.

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Neenah High School's Ellery Marsh has been forced to do just that in what was supposed to be a memorable senior season for the Rockets' girls lacrosse team.

"I just wish I was out there," Marsh said after watching Neenah drop a 7-4 match against Green Bay Notre Dame on Monday night. "I was so looking forward to it and I was doing all the strength and conditioning in the summer. I was like this is going to be my year – but it's not my year."

Marsh blossomed as a junior last season finishing third on the team with 17 goals, while chipping in four assists as a midfielder. She earned second-team all-Bay Valley Conference honors and was the only non-senior on the all-conference first or second teams.

With a young group expected to take the field for Neenah this season, Marsh figured to be an integral part of the offense and key leader for the Rockets.

But at some point during the hockey season – Marsh plays for the Fox Cities Stars, a co-op team from schools in the Fox Valley – she tore the meniscus in her right knee. She's not sure when the injury happened, but when it was diagnosed, she knew that her senior lacrosse season was gone.

"I actually got told by the doctors that I could play (this high school season) but

Senior Standout



then I wouldn't be able to play in college," said Marsh, who had surgery in late April on the knee. "Or I could not play now and play in college. I was like, yeah, I will play in college."

Marsh, who committed to the NCAA Division I University of Detroit Mercy in November, said that knowing that she will be back on the field in the future has helped ease the frustration of not playing her senior season.

"It's tough to watch (from the sidelines), but I know I have more years to play and I'm looking forward to playing in college," Marsh said. "And I'm hoping to be a coach when I get older, so this is an opportunity to see what's like a little bit."

Marsh continues to be a presence at practices and games for the Rockets and contributes what she can to the younger players.

It's definitely given her a different view of things while also keeping her involved with the squad.

"It helps me connect with the girls still. Instead of being completely out of the sport I still get to spend time with them,"

SEE **Senior Standout** ON PAGE 11



Neenah News

Ellery Marsh has been watching her Neenah lacrosse teammates from the sideline as she recovers from a knee injury. Next season Marsh will return to the field for NCAA Division I University of Detroit Mercy.




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Sluggish first period too much for Rockets to overcome

By Steve Clark
NEENAH NEWS

By the time the Neenah girls lacrosse team started to get things cranked up Monday night, the Rockets were already looking up at Green Bay Notre Dame on the scoreboard.

A sluggish first quarter led to a three-goal deficit for the Rockets and they ended up dropping the Bay Valley Conference contest, 7-4, at a windy Rocket Stadium.

“That’s been kind of our pattern throughout the year,” Neenah head coach Michael Babbits said of the slow starts. “We come out a little flat-footed and by the time the second quarter comes around we’re down a couple of goals. We play with teams for three quarters, we’re just coming out flat.”

The Rockets actually kept the Tritons scoreless for much of the opening period, despite Notre Dame having the bulk of the possession.

Neenah goalkeeper Bristol Bechtal was able to make a couple of key saves and the Rockets’ defense was able to force enough ground balls to keep the game scoreless.

But a Rocket turnover on their defensive end with just under four minutes to go led to the Tritons getting on the scoreboard. They would add two more goals in the final 2:30 of the first period – including one goal with just six seconds left in the period – to leave Neenah facing a 3-0 deficit.

“We’re a momentum team and we wanted to come out and get the first goal,” Babbits said. “The games we have won this year we have scored first. We have a stout defense but we need to match that with firepower on offense.”

Bechtal had another strong night in net for the Rockets, finishing with at least 10 saves.

Babbits has been pleased with the development of his sophomore netminder this season.

“Bristol has been fantastic,” Babbits said. “Bristol has come a long way since the beginning of the season. She’s keeping us in a lot of games.”

Ella Allred finally got Neenah on the



Neenah News

Neenah’s Delilah Hein (22) battles for a ground ball during Monday’s match against Green Bay Notre Dame.

SEE **Neenah lacrosse** ON PAGE 11

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Prep sports roundup

TRACK AND FIELD

Neenah girls take title as invite hosts

The Rockets racked up big points in the field events and soared to the title at the 10-team Neenah Rocket Invitational last Friday.

The Neenah girls finished with 187 points to easily outdistance runner-up Bay Port, which had 143.

The Rockets had the top finisher in four of the six field events and had three top-five finishers in a pair of field events on the night.

Emma Severson won both the shot put and discus titles at the meet with teammate Brooklyn Kohlbeck finishing fourth in the shot put and fifth in the discus. Lexi Davis made it three Rockets in the top five in the shot put with a second-place finish.

Neenah also had three top-five finishers in the high jump, with Mirella Taschner finishing first followed by Aubrey Murwar in third and Addie Tyrriver in fourth. Resa

Goethel and Eva Marose finished second and fourth in the pole vault, while Celia Gentile won the long jump and was second in the triple jump.

Neenah's best event of the night, though, was the 3,200 meters where Sam Zilm, Natalie Schultz and Elsa Gruber pulled off a sweep of the top three places. Gruber and Schultz also ran on the first place 3,200-meter relay team along with Natalie Willes and Lizzy LaPlant, while the foursome of Molly Snider, Brynn Fox, Kobi Meyer and Gentile won the 800-meter relay.

Izzy Malloy in the 800 meters and Willes in the 1,600 meters each added second places, while Anna Benthein in the 400 meters and Aubrey Strosahl in the 300-meter hurdles were each fourth.

Neenah also placed second in the 1,600-meter relay and fourth in the 400-meter relay.

The Neenah boys finished eighth at the invite, led by Elliott Drake's second-place finish in the 1,600 meters along with the runner-up finish from the 3,200-meter re-

lay team.

Nate Kramp was third in the shot put, Arlo Ferguson took fourth in the 400 meters and Neenah placed fourth in the 1,600-meter relay and fifth in the 3,200-meter relay.

Zephyr girls post relay wins at Brillion invite

The St. Mary Catholic girls won a pair of relay races to highlight their performance at the Brillion Invitational last week.

The Zephyrs won both the 400-meter and 800-meter relays with Autumn Crowe, Ellie Davel and Luci Nackers running on both quartets. Cori Epping rounded out the 400-meter relay foursome, while Moorea Steckling anchored the 800-meter relay team.

St. Mary Catholic also had a trio of second-place finishes on the girls side as Davel in the 100 meters, Steckling in the 100-meter hurdles and Marissa Hahn in the discus were each runner-up in their events.

Claire Higgins added third places in the 400 meters and 800 meters, while Lucy Norville was fourth in the high jump, and Claire Mislinski in the 1,600 meters and Hahn in the shot put were each fifth.

The boys were led by Isaiah Hennessy, who took second in both the shot put and discus. Brenden Hueslbeck was third in the 100 meters and took fifth in the long jump, with Ethan Auer adding a third place in the 800 meters.

The girls finished sixth in the final team standings and the boys were seventh.

Rocket girls second, boys third at FVA Relays

The Neenah girls finished second behind only Appleton North, while the Neenah boys won a tight five-team race for third place at the Fox Valley Association relays on Tuesday night at Lawrence University.

Both teams had a top finisher in an in-

SEE **Prep roundup** ON PAGE 12

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Senior Standout

FROM PAGE 8

Marsh said. "I just like to help out at practice because it gives me a feel for what it's going to be like when I'm older."

Marsh has lacrosse coaching in her genes.

Her dad was a college lacrosse player and founded and coached the Valkyrie girls lacrosse club in the Fox Valley. It marked the first time Marsh got the chance to play with all girls, instead of playing on boys teams in her first years in the sport.

It was actually a big change for Marsh and one she struggled with a little bit.

"Changing from boys to girls was a tough change. I liked playing with the boys. It was more physical and more fast moving I feel like," Marsh said. "I was very physical with the boys – and you have to be or things aren't going to go very well – so going from boys to girls physical wise it was a little different."

Her background playing against boys should serve Marsh well in the future when she heads to Detroit Mercy, as

will her club experience playing against high-level competition.

But getting the chance to play in college was in question last summer.

Marsh tore the meniscus in her left knee her sophomore season and missed that year as well, leaving her just one high school and club season to draw the eyes of prospective college coaches.

She wasn't sure if that would be enough to land her an offer for the next four years.

"It was very scary. It felt so last minute," Marsh said. "When I went to camps, it was mostly with the (Class of 27 players). I'm a (Class of) 26, so I was a little late to it."

When she does get to Detroit Mercy, she plans on resuming the role of an attacking player and hopes to find the same rhythm she had before the injury.

"Once you click with the girls it's so much easier to move the ball," Marsh said. "You just have to know the game, know what's around you."

I run around a lot when I'm out there and I think I get into a rhythm when I'm running. It just feels so much better when I can book it down the field rather than like standing there waiting for the ball to come to me."



Neenah News

Neenah's Kennedy Loudin (3) gets a bump from a Green Bay Notre Dame defender while trying to get into scoring position on Monday night.

Neenah lacrosse

FROM PAGE 9

board with less than six minutes before halftime. The sophomore drew a foul driving toward the net and then scored on the restart.

But Notre Dame answered about two minutes later with a goal and took a 4-1 lead into halftime.

Neenah had its best stretch of the night to start the third quarter, scoring twice in a three-minute span to pull within a goal.

Izzy Bugge cut the deficit to two by scoring off a restart with just under 10 minutes left in the period, while Ainsley LeClair converted after scooping up a ground ball in the midfield and bursting all the way in

on goal.

The Rockets did have one possession to even the game but couldn't convert.

Notre Dame then answered with two goals in a 52-second span to push the lead back to three.

Sidney Mullins scored with about a minute in the third period to narrow the margin back to two but the Rockets were held scoreless in the final period.

Notre Dame tacked on an insurance goal with about two minutes left after a long possession to all but seal the win.

"We're young. We have a lot of sophomores who are playing key roles and a lot of players who last year were third string and are now first string," Babbitts said. "The experience part, we are still working on that."

Obituaries

Donald E. Miller

March 25, 1938 – May 3, 2026

Donald "Don" Miller, age 88, passed away unexpectedly on May 3, 2026, at home while doing one of the things he loved most—watching the Brewers.



Don was born on March 25, 1938, in Neenah to Edmund and Wilma (Gutenecht) Miller. The oldest of four boys, Don, shared many stories of his adventurous childhood, especially summer days spent away from home all day with friends. He loved swimming and was known as the "clown diver" at the Neenah Pool. A talented athlete, Don excelled in football and baseball as a Neenah Rocket and was affectionately nicknamed "Tubby" and "Golden Toe" by his classmates.

Don met the love of his life, Sandy Roo, while he was a junior at Neenah High School and she was a freshman newly arrived from Portland, Oregon. Sandy often said she fell for him because he was such a nice guy. After graduating in 1956, Don received several football offers from colleges across the country but chose UW-Madison to stay close to Sandy. He played as a kicker and lineman for the Badgers for one year before transferring to Ripon College to be even closer to her. The two were married in 1958 at St. Margaret Mary Church in Neenah, beginning a remarkable 67-year love story.

Don began his career as a police officer with the Neenah Police Department, a role he was immensely proud of. He often shared stories of foot chases around town and even a memorable encounter with a "rabid squirrel" at Roosevelt School—whether true or not, it always made for a great story. After several years and with two young sons at home, Don transitioned to a new career at Kimberly-Clark, where he worked for 38 years until his retirement. During that time, he and Sandy welcomed two more children, completing their family of three boys and one girl.

Don was a devoted father who never missed a game, activity, or recital. Though a quiet man, his words always carried meaning and came straight from the heart.

He was deeply involved in his community, coaching little league and soccer teams and forming lasting friendships through the Paper Valley Soccer Club. Among those friends was a group they humorously called the "Duck Carving Society," despite spending most of their time golfing and playing poker. Their annual summer golf trips to the Upper Peninsula were among Don's favorite memories. He was also a founding member of the weekly Wednesday morning "BORED" breakfast group, something he looked forward to every week.

In retirement, Don worked part-time as a driver for Bergstrom Automotive. He enjoyed tinkering in his garage—often relying on duct tape for repairs—and loved being outdoors, especially riding his bike, which he continued until last summer.

Above all, Don cherished being a grandfather. He was blessed with 11 grandchildren, 6 great grandchildren and loved spending time with each of them, whether attending Brewers games, dyeing Easter eggs, carving pumpkins, or taking walks to watch the trains. He never missed a grandchild's event and was incredibly proud of them all.

In recent years, Don had slowed down but remained strong and resilient. He faithfully attended dialysis for nearly three

years without complaint and continued to care for Sandy, taking her on daily drives and coffee outings. Their 67 years of marriage stand as a true testament to enduring love.

Don is survived by his beloved wife, Sandy; his children, Jeff (Janice) Miller, Mark (Sheree) Miller, Brad Miller, and Michelle (Matt) Dunning; his grandchildren, Jordan (Annmarie) Miller, Joshua Liv Miller, Taylor (Tyler) Allen, Kaelyn (Ryan) Cassidy, Jacob (Hailey) Miller, Nicholas Miller, Haley and Hannah Miller, Addison Miller, Drew Dunning, and Gabe Dunning; and his great-grandchildren, Caleb and Ryan Miller, Nora and Lincoln Allen, and Davie and Brody Cassidy. He is also survived by his brothers, Jim Miller and Mike (Mary) Miller, and sister-in-law Mary Jane Miller.

He was preceded in death by his parents, Edmund and Wilma Miller and his brother, Dick Miller.

The family extends heartfelt thanks to the friends at the Highlands at Mahler Park Apartments, where Don and Sandy made their home for 14 years, and especially to Pat and Shelby Neitzel for their kindness, support, and many meals over the years. We would also like to thank Pastor Kim for being there to comfort Sandy.

Dad, we know you were tired, and now you can rest. We will take good care of Mom. We love you.

A visitation will be held on Saturday, May 9, at First Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Church Street, Neenah, from 9:00 a.m. until the time of service at 11:00 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, we encourage you to consider making a donation to Future Neenah in memory of Don Miller. He loved his hometown so much.



William Porath

It is with deep sadness that we share the passing of William "Bill" Porath on April 24, 2026 at the age of 82.



Details for a celebration of Bill's life will be shared when available on Kessler Fahrenkrug Funeral Home's website: www.kesslerfh.com.



Fox Valley Workforce Development Board Updates to:

- WDA4 Local Plan
- WDA4 and 5 Regional Plan

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Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 10

dividual event as Emma Severson won both the shot put and discus for the girls while Owen Fox posted the top time in the 300-meter hurdles for the boys.

The girls posted second-place finishes in the 400-meter, 3,200-meter and distance medley relays, while picking up a third place in the 1,600-meter relay.

In addition to Severson, Aubrey Murwar tied for third and Mirelle Taschner tied for fifth in the high jump while Claire Broeders, Eva Marose and Resa Geothel all tied for fourth in the pole vault.

Goethel in the long and Elise Braaten in the 1,600 were each fifth, while Lexi Davis and Brooklyn Kohlbeck finished fourth and fifth, respectively, in the shot put.

For the boys, Nate Kramp took third in the shot, Fox added a fourth place in the 110-meter hurdles and Dawson Oberer was fifth in the discus.

Neenah also took second in the 3,200-meter relay and third in the 1,600-meter relay.

BOYS LACROSSE

Neenah picks up close win over Mukwonago

Drew Green and Jude Marsh each scored five goals as Neenah edged Mukwonago, 12-11, in a nonconference match on Monday night.

Jackson Herres and Vincent Thiel also scored for Neenah. Herres also led the team with three assists, while Marsh and Lenny Coulman each finished with two.

Isaac Scholl made 11 saves in goal for the Rockets.

Neenah also picked up a 5-4 win over Kimberly last week and toppled Wausau 15-1 on Tuesday.

Hunter Weinke notched a pair of goals in the win over Kimberly, while Green, Herres and Jack Werner each had one.

The Rockets also lost to Kettle Moraine on Saturday, 13-5, with Green tallying two goals and Coulman, Marsh and Weinke each netting one. Scholl finished with 13 saves in the match.

BASEBALL

Plutz hurls no-hitter as Zephyrs blank Mishicot

Ethan Plutz tossed a no-hitter and walked only two to lead St. Mary Catholic to a 2-0 win over Mishicot in a Big East North contest at home on Tuesday.

Plutz struck out five in the game, going the distance on just 70 pitches. He faced one batter over the minimum.

The Zephyrs backed Plutz with single runs in the fifth and sixth innings.

Jacob Ernsting finished 2-for-3 and drove in a run for St. Mary Catholic, while Andrew Ernsting also had an RBI in the contest.

Last Thursday, the Zephyrs rallied for two runs in the bottom of the seventh to edge Reedsville, 4-3.

Caleb Vogel and Mason Wagner each had two hits in the game, while Luke Fairweather drove in a pair of runs in the contest.

Benjamin Kuffel pitched two innings of relief, allowing just one unearned run to earn the win. Ernsting fanned six in five innings to start the game.

Rockets edge Appleton North in FVA tussle

Neenah scored two runs in the top of the fifth inning to break a 1-1 tie and held on to beat Appleton North, 3-1, in a Fox Valley Association contest in Appleton on

Tuesday.

Gus Weinholzer allowed just five hits and struck out eight in going the distance to get the win against the Lightning. The run he allowed was unearned.

Mack Krause belted a home run and scored a pair of runs for the Rockets, who totaled just four hits in the game.

The Rockets were coming off a 6-3 win over rival Menasha in a game played at Fox Cities Stadium.

Levi Bolvin went and Owen Pire each went 2-for-2 and combined to drive in three runs for the Rockets. Ethan Hellingreen had a triple in the game for the Rockets, who rallied from a nearly 3-0 deficit to get the win.

Connor Amsler struck out four in 5 2/3 innings to get the win for Neenah. Henry St. Clair didn't allow any hits in relief to close things out.

On Saturday, the Rockets dropped an 8-4 decision against De Pere as the Redbirds rallied for five runs in the bottom of the sixth to erase Neenah's lead.

Hellingreen finished 2-of-4 to pace Neenah.

Rockets also dropped a 5-3 game against FVA-leading Kimberly last week. The Papermakers led 4-0 at the end of the second inning before the Rockets closed the gap but were unable to overtake Kimberly.

Weinholzer and Hellingreen each had two hits in the game for the Rockets with Hellingreen driving in two runs.

Cal Juckem allowed seven hits in five innings but only two of the five runs he allowed were earned. He struck out six in the start for Neenah. Amsler amassed five strikeouts in two scoreless innings of relief.

TENNIS

Rockets blank Appleton East

Two flights posted perfect 6-0, 6-0 wins to highlight Neenah's 7-0 sweep of Appleton East in a Fox Valley Association dual meet last week.

The No. 1 doubles pairing of Brady Lawatsch and Luke Grassl won their match without dropping a game, while Nicholas Zenzick also picked up a 6-0, 6-0 win at No. 4 singles for the Rockets.

Hunter Brown dropped only one game at No. 1 singles, with Henry Farrell and Mercer Moss completing the sweep of singles matches. Max Gerken and Tim Zhao at No. 2 doubles and Eric Hein and Charlie Perry at No. 3 doubles also picked up wins for Neenah.

GOLF

Whaley, Pendergast lead Zephyr golfers

Charlie Whaley and Carter Pendergast each posted rounds of 43 to lead St. Mary Catholic at a Big East Conference major meet at Fox Hills Resort on Tuesday.

The Zephyrs finished with a score of 181 to place sixth in the field of 10 complete teams. Kohler won the meet with a 167.

Brady DeLeeuw added a 47 for St. Mary Catholic and Finnley McClone finished with a 48.

Neenah falls to Kimberly in FVA dual

The Rockets carded a 164 at Buttes Des Morts Country Club in a Fox Valley Association dual meet on Monday but came up short against Kimberly.

The Papermakers carded the lowest three scores en route to shooting a 148.

Cartyr Simonson led Neenah with a 39, followed by Mason Peitersen with a 40. Zach Schneider added a 41 and Gavin

Winiiecki had a 44.

On Saturday, Neenah competed at the 2026 MACC Fund Invitational at The Club at Lac La Belle in Oconomowoc and finished 22nd among the 32 teams in the field.

Schneider led the Rockets with a round of 83, followed by Peitersen with an 84, Simonson with an 85 and Carson Seitz with an 88.

Neenah did pick up a close 162-169 win over Oshkosh North last week at Ridgeway Country Club, with Seitz earning medalist honors with a 37. Simonson finished with a 40 followed by Peitersen with a 41 and Winiiecki with a 44.

SOFTBALL

Zephyrs pull out win over Mishicot

St. Mary Catholic turned a double play in the seventh inning to thwart a Mishicot rally and held on for a 1-0 win in a Big East North contest on Tuesday.

The Indians got their first two runners on in the top of the seventh but the next Mishicot batter lined out to leftfielder Scarlett Reichenbacher, who then fired a throw to second to double off the base-runner.

Gabby Guerrero struck out the next batter to close out the win. Guerrero scattered six hits over the seven innings and did not walk a batter.

The Zephyrs scored their run in the bottom of the sixth with a two-out rally. Sammi Weiss extended the inning with a single and Paxtyn Trinkner followed with a double to the left-field fence to plate Weiss.

Breanna Neubert also doubled in the game for the Zephyrs.

The Zephyrs dropped a 5-1 contest to Iola-Scandinavia last Friday on the road.

Weiss and Illa Moder each finished with two hits in the game, with Moder driving in the Zephyrs lone run in the top of the first inning. Iola-Scandinavia scored three runs in the bottom of the first inning and led the rest of the way.

Last week, the Zephyrs pounded out

16 hits and led 10-0 after two innings in a 15-1 win at home over Reedsville.

Weiss and Moder each had three hits in the game, with Weiss finishing with three runs scored and four RBIs. Trinkner, Neubert and Ainslie Liddy each added two hits in the game for the Zephyrs, while Trinkner, Moder, Liddy and Reichenbacher each had two RBIs.

Trinkner struck out four and allowed just five hits in five innings to get the win.

Rockets fall short against Lightning

Neenah dropped a Fox Valley Association contest to Appleton North, 8-1, on Tuesday.

The Rockets split a pair of games on Friday, beating D.C. Everest, 5-4, in eight innings while dropping a 6-3 decision to Stevens Point.

SOCCER

Rockets notch win over Pulaski

Three different players scored goals as Neenah downed Pulaski, 3-0, last Friday night.

Maddie Schoonover, Brooklyn Myers and Lizzy Lueneberg each found the net for the Rockets. Lawsyn Michalkiewicz had two assists in the match and Lilly Romjue had one.

Neenah dropped a 2-0 contest to De Pere on Saturday and fell 2-1 in a Fox Valley Association match against Oshkosh West on Tuesday.

Zephyrs collect easy win over Peshtigo

St. Mary Catholic erupted for a season-high goal total and beat Peshtigo, 8-0, in a nonconference soccer match on Tuesday.

The Zephyrs had scored six total goals entering the game.

St. Mary Catholic dropped a Big East Conference match to Oostburg, 5-0, last week.

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