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Resident devoted to community service

By Pamela Hart
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Neenah resident Vicki Hanson has been recognized for her efforts to promote patriotism and Americanism.

Earlier this year, Hanson received the 2026 Outstanding Americanism Person of the Year award for her contributions to the advancement of American Legion Auxiliary (ALA) programs and activities dedicated to God and country.

The award is presented to a community member who demonstrates outstanding leadership and service, and commitment to patriotic education and community service. The recipient is one who has made an impact on youth through school programs

and activities in addition to honoring veterans and promoting civic values.

Hanson has devoted her time designing the float for the Neenah-Menasha Memorial Day and Flag Day parades. She has been recognized for promoting Junior and ALA programs of which she leads Junior ALA girls in flag etiquette and taught them the Pledge of Allegiance. The Juniors led the pledge at the Blue Star/Gold Star mother community event.

ALA provides opportunities for youth

aged 17 and under to become engaged, productive members in society. Hanson focuses on the children and youth program where she helped Juniors earn six patches last year.

The Juniors served veterans at King Veterans Home in Waupaca with Valentine bingo and homemade cards. They joined senior ALA members for Christmas caroling in the community, served cake at local restaurants for Purple Up Day for military children, presented roses for Military Spouse Day and made seasonal cards and gifts for American Legion members.

Committed to serving the community

SEE **Hanson honored** ON PAGE 4



Hanson

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Photo by Rankin Photography

Greetings from Neenah

Artist Leif Larson has created a Greetings from Neenah mural on the side of Greene's Pour House. Over the past few weeks, visitors to downtown Neenah have been able to watch as Larson's work has progressed and come to life. Richard and Amy Jo Aylward provided support to help make the project possible.

Neenah coaching legend Einerson passes away at 93

By Steve Clark
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah basketball community lost a legend last week.

Former boys basketball coach Ron Einerson, who led the Rockets to a pair of state titles and finished his career with more than 550 wins, passed away in Middleton on June 22.

"He was an iconic figure," current Neenah boys basketball coach Lee Rabas said. "Not just in this part of the state but an iconic figure statewide. He was someone who was respected by everybody in the

profession across the entire state."

Einerson arrived in Neenah in 1968 and began a run of unprecedented success with the Rockets.



Einerson

Einerson guided Neenah to 10 WIAA State basketball tournaments, including winning titles in 1975 and 1978. His teams finished second four times (1969, 1970, 1972, 1988) and was also third in 1971.

Overall, Neenah has made 30 trips to the WIAA state tournament – the most of any school in the state – and Einerson's teams were responsible for a third of that total.

"Coach was very competitive but everything he did, he did it with class. That's the one thing I remember the most and the one thing I try to emulate the most," said Dennis Ruedinger, who graduated from Neenah in 1992. "Coach Einerson has had a profound impact on me as a human being and as a basketball player. I certainly cherish that opportunity to have him

mentor me."

Einerson's teams captured 12 Fox Valley Association championships in his tenure and established themselves as a powerhouse in the league.

Neenah finished below fifth place only once in his 25 years at Neenah and had a stretch in the 1970s and 80s where they finished .500 or better in league play in 18 of 19 seasons.

"There is something to be said for consistent domination and in the 70s and 80s,

SEE **Coaching legend** ON PAGE 9



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Advertising deadline is noon Friday for the following Friday. The classified line ads deadline is 4 p.m. Tuesday for Friday.

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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.

Program advances natural resilience

Neenah News

A new conservation program is supporting the Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance’s Natural Resilience pillar through long-term and permanent conservation practices across the Fox-Wolf Basin.

The Rooted & Resilient program is supported by a new \$4.3 million investment through Advancing Markets for Producers (AMP) funded through USDA, adding to existing Great Lakes Commission (GLC) funding and Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding through the EPA. These investments bring total program funding to \$6 million.

Program partners include Brown County, Calumet County, Fond du Lac County, Outagamie County, Waushara County, Winnebago County, Oneida Nation and Pheasants Forever.

Over time, wetland loss, stream channelization, and land development have reduced the basin’s natural ability to absorb and manage water.

As rainfall and snowmelt move quickly across the landscape, runoff carries sediment and nutrients into local waterways, contributing to erosion and water quality challenges.

Rooted & Resilient works to restore natural watershed functions through practical conservation solutions on agricultural land, particularly marginal acres that are difficult or unprofitable to farm.



Photo from Neenah History Society

Community Fest Parade 1983

Established in 1982, Community Fest has become part of the Fourth of July traditions in Neenah and Menasha. This library parade entry features adults and kids marching to celebrate the public library’s youth department.

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Calendar of events

Friday, July 3

Community Fest Parade of Lights, 9 p.m.

Saturday, July 4

Community Fest, 11:30 a.m., Riverside Park

Neenah Community Band at Community Fest, 7:45 p.m., Riverside Park

Festival Foods Fireworks, 9:45 p.m., Riverside Park

Tuesday, July 7

Doty Cabin Museum presents We The People of Neenah and Menasha Reflections of Native American Life by Cathy Caldwell, 6:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Wednesday, July 8

Lunchtime Organ Recital Series featuring Don Verkuulen, 12:15 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Church St.

Future Neenah Evening Concert featuring Party Animal, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park

Friday, July 10

Summer Fun Fest, 2 p.m., Evergreen Credit Union, 1500 W. American Drive

Saturday, July 11

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

Filthy Fun Run, 8:15 a.m., O’Hauser Park, Fox Crossing

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

Sunday, July 12

Meet Author Molly Weinfurter, 11 a.m., The Plaza and Globe Coffee

Neenah Summer Fun Run, 6 p.m., Memorial Park

Tuesday, July 14

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

Wednesday, July 15

Future Neenah Evening Concert featuring The Britins, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park

Thursday, July 16

Future Neenah Out to Lunch Concert featuring Randy Peterson (kids concert), 11:30 a.m., Shattuck Park

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Safety panel to discuss Flock camera usage in city

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

The Neenah Public Services and Safety Committee will discuss and may act on Flock Safety cameras at its next meeting on Tuesday.

After two consecutive meetings with community members speaking out against the use of Flock cameras, alderman Brian Defferding said it is time for the committee to discuss whether the city should cancel its contract with Flock or continue its contract until it ends in the fall of 2028.

“We have had significant input from the community on this issue,” Defferding said. “We’ve had two meetings with a lot of public speakers, and I’ve received a significant amount of email on the subject. I think this is a discussion that the common council needs to have.”

The committee’s two June meetings each featured about 20 community members speaking out against the cameras, which read license plates and note identifying information about the vehicle including its make, model and color.

At the June 9 meeting, Police Chief Aaron Olson discussed how the city uses its 12 Flock cameras to help solve crimes. At the June 23 meeting, Max Weinstein, Flock’s Director of Public Trust and Technology, presented on the company’s tech-



Defferding

nology and security, but did not have all the answers committee members were looking for.

Defferding, who was elected to the council in April, asked to have the Flock cameras added to the committee agenda.

“I had questions both about the honesty of (Flock) and thought we should have a constitutional discussion about whether we should be putting our citizens under this amount of surveillance,” he said. “Then, we heard about what happened in Oshkosh and I thought it was really time to discuss it.”

In April, a Flock representative was asked by the Oshkosh Common Council if the license plate cameras created heat maps of a vehicle’s movements. The representative replied no. The next day the Oshkosh police chief went into the station and was notified by staff that Flock did create a heat map of vehicles. The council then voted to end its contract with Flock.

In Appleton, the city canceled its contract with Flock in May due to a loss of trust in the system’s integrity and a lack of control over how other outside agencies used the city’s data. In June, Grand Chute canceled its contract with Flock.

Defferding said if Neenah decides to cancel its contract with Flock, there will be a lot of questions to answer.

“We will need to figure out what the payment looks like, what do we do with the cameras in the meantime, how do we get them taken down?” he said. “You just don’t cancel the contract and they disappear.”

Plans underway for infant feeding support group

Neenah News

Erica Chicchirichi, a certified lactation counselor and a pediatric registered nurse, is starting a free breastfeeding and infant feeding support group this summer at the Neenah Public Library.

“After finding out first-hand and doing a lot of research on my own, I have found there is a lack of breastfeeding support specifically in Neenah, and I’m excited to volunteer my time and expertise to help our community,” Chicchirichi said.

The group, which is targeted for parents with babies one year and under, will meet at 10 a.m. July 27 and Aug. 24.

Those attending will have the opportunity to connect with other parents and caregivers. Chicchirichi hopes to provide a supportive environment for all parents that are breastfeeding, pumping and bottle feeding or a combination.

There will be opportunities for guest speakers from other maternal and infant specialists such as maternal mental health, infant speech therapists, pelvic floor physical therapists and more.

An infant scale will be available for weighted feeds.

Chicchirichi is working on collecting

donations of breast pumps and accessories as well as other infant feeding products like bottles, breastfeeding friendly clothing items and more.

“I already have some donated items from community members,” Chicchirichi said.

She plans on setting up somewhat of a “little free library” with breastfeeding and pumping supplies for community members to browse for items they may need or that community members will have access to during the meetings – dependent on availability and available on a first come, first serve basis.

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Photo from Neenah Public Library

Shirt making

Volunteers from Plexus Corp. helped kids with an outdoor project last week at the Neenah Public Library. The group made colorful shirts together during the library’s tie-dye program.

Boat landing to close for rest of season

Neenah News

The Lake Butte des Morts boat landing will close Sunday for the remaining boating season as part of a \$2.1 million construction project.

The boat landing at 5316 Leonard Point Road in Omro will reopen in 2027.

The construction project will bring a new look to the boat landing, including replacing the two ramps, doubling the parking lot to 68 spaces, adding a new bathroom shelter with running water, dredging the bay to make the water deeper and adding more lighting and security cameras.



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Please be advised the Neenah News will have **early deadlines** for the July 3rd issue:

Space and copy deadline: **Friday, June 26, 2026 NOON**
Materials complete deadline: **Monday, June 29, 2026 3PM**
This is for classified and display advertising.
OBITS deadline is **Monday, June 29 at 3 PM**



The Neenah News office is closed on July 3rd

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Teen plans gala to raise funds for Habitat for Humanity

By Hope Hahn
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

Thirteen-year old Aubryn Stinson, who lives in Neenah, is planning a charity gala to benefit the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity.

The Hollywood for Humanity Gala will take place from 6 to 10 p.m. July 16 at Emprise Brewmill in downtown Menasha.

“This gala means so much to me, and I really want it to do as much good in our community as possible,” Stinson said. “We’ll all have a blast together, so be sure to buy your tickets and help us end homelessness one house at a time.”

All funds raised from the gala will go to Habitat for Humanity to build house 401.

Guests will enter into the gala space on red carpet, escorted up the staircase for those who would like a helping hand. Additionally, guests will also get their photos taken in front of a historic wall by professional photographers, all the while grazing from a generous spread of delicious appetizers and enjoying music and dancing on the dance floor with a DJ.

The event also includes raffle baskets, a silent auction and a 50/50 raffle. It is a great opportunity for the community to come together to help build the house, Stinson said. Tickets for the event are \$45 each and should be bought in advance.

The gala is sponsored by Congregational United Church of Christ Neenah Menasha (CUCCNM). Stinson would like to thank Craig Zoltowski for lending a hand at the Brewmill event.

CUCCNM helped the Greater Fox Cities Area Habitat for Humanity build its first house, and with every 100 houses, it has become a tradition to help raise funds,

and help build houses 101, 201, 301 and now 401, which will be located in the Fox Valley.

The build for house 401 begins in spring 2027, but before that happens, it needs to raise \$125,000. Stinson’s goal with this fundraiser is to raise at least \$5,000. They have room for up to 150 guests.

For anyone that is unable to attend, there are many other ways to support the cause: make a monetary donation, donate a raffle basket of new and desirable items, donate a silent auction item, buy a 50/50 raffle ticket, and share this information with friends and family, so they can fill the gala along with other community members.

“This has been such an amazing learning experience, and I hope to spread philanthropic energy through our community like confetti,” Stinson said. “Habitat for Humanity does so much for this community, and I am so honored to get to help. I cannot even imagine the impact Habitat has had on people’s lives, but this gala is more than a fundraising event — it’s an opportunity for our community to come together and make a lasting difference.”

Every ticket purchased and every dollar donated helps support a cause that directly impacts the lives of people in the area, she said.

Other than Habitat for Humanity, Stinson has volunteered in the past at Feeding America and a local food pantry. When Stinson is not volunteering, she loves to make clothes or do anything that involves fashion.

Stinson is grateful that she is able to spread the word about the gala and have the opportunity to help people through Habitat for Humanity.

“What excites me most is seeing people from all walks of life come together around a goal we all share,” Stinson said. “Whether someone attends to support the cause, bridge out to other members of the community, or simply enjoy a lovely evening out, they become part of a collective effort to create positive change. My

hope is that guests leave feeling inspired, connected, and proud of the impact we can make when we work together.”

Donations can be made at cuccnm.org/give and tickets for the gala can be bought at tinyurl.com/r229fjyb. For questions, contact CUCCNM by calling 920-725-4873 or email office@cuccnm.org.



Neenah News

Market fun

Saturday was Kids’ Day at the Future Neenah Farmers Market in Shattuck Park. Families could enjoy the morning with activities including a bounce house, crafts and games. New at the event this year, six kid vendors were selling their own handmade creations.

Hanson honored

FROM PAGE 1

and country, Hanson distributes poppies for the poppy program and assists the chairman in educating students in local schools and residents at assisted living facilities. Hanson said she had the privilege of reading ALA’s mission statement at the Neenah Common Council meeting when Mayor Brian Borchardt signed the Poppy Proclamation.

Each year, unit members vote on the member that they think deserves the Americanism award. Once the District 6 committee receives all local units’ submissions, it designates the winner and presents the award at the annual Americanism banquet in Oshkosh in front of hundreds of veterans, families and dignitaries from the state of Wisconsin.

“Winning the Outstanding Americanism Person of The Year award displays my passion, energy and commitment for volunteering to serve veterans and it humbles me that my service to community and ALA programs is valuable and I thank God for giving me the abilities to serve in this manner,” Hanson said.

A second award, the Junior Unit of the Year, was also presented to Hanson for leading her Junior unit for four years.

“It is my job as a senior ALA member to help my juniors discover their unique abilities and interests, connect them with the ALA mission and programs, develop

leadership skills based on their individual personalities, and teach them that everything we do is to honor someone who bravely and courageously wore a uniform to defend our country,” Hanson said. “They know that poppies are to honor fallen veterans. Every award I earn is not mine alone, it is deserving of our entire unit 33, because without their support I could not accomplish all I do.”

The Junior Unit of the Year award is awarded by the Department of Wisconsin Junior Chairman at the annual Department Convention in July.

Hanson said she became involved with volunteering in the organization because her dad was an Army veteran who served in World War II and the Korean War.

“I volunteer in this organization to honor his sacrifice and service to his country,” Hanson said. “My passion to lead Juniors emanates from my granddaughter, Ellie, who was a junior member who died in 2020, who loved fundraising, and distributing poppies in the community. Her picture is displayed by the driveway going into the post.”

Hanson said her commitment involves time, money and selfless volunteering as the mission statement states, “Service Not Self.”

“I strive to represent my dad and my granddaughter by giving back to veterans and our community and by keeping my unit’s motto, ‘Purpose Not Personality,’” Hanson said.

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Police chief believes need for more officers exists

Current roster has fallen to 1971 level

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

When Neenah Police Chief Aaron Olson meets with community groups, he often asks a question: How many officers do you think are on patrol right now?

The answers come in: nine, 10, 12 or even the high teens.

Olson then delivers the answer: three, four or maybe five.

“We are chronically understaffed,” he said before pointing to a chart showing the police department had 41 sworn officers in 1971 compared to 42 sworn officers in 2026.

At the same time, call volume increased 244% between 1971 and 2025 from 7,000 to 24,146.

“We are doing more with less,” Olson said.

Policing has also changed. For example, today’s department has a behavioral health officer, who works with community members experiencing a mental health crisis. That position did not exist back in the 1970s.

Technology has also changed police operations.

“It’s great we have so much technology, such as body cameras and computers, but they add time on the back end. A report that was maybe one paragraph back in 1971 is probably a 12-page report today” as they contain more information and details, Olson said.

The SpongeBob Musical on tap for Riverside Players

Neenah News

Theater audiences are invited to dive under the sea this month as the Riverside Players Theaters brings the characters of Bikini Bottom to life in The SpongeBob Musical.

The family-friendly production runs July 23-26 and July 29-Aug. 1 with all performances beginning at 7:30 p.m. in the Riverside Park Pavilion.

Based on the iconic Nickelodeon series, The SpongeBob Musical is packed with high-energy music, colorful characters and a heartfelt story about friendship, courage and community.

When the future of Bikini Bottom is threatened, SpongeBob and his friends must come together to save their beloved home—proving that even the smallest sponge can make the biggest difference.

The production features original songs by Yolanda Adams, Steven Tyler and Joe Perry of Aerosmith, Sara Bareilles, Jonathan Coulton, Alex Ebert of Edward Sharpe and the Magnetic Zeros, The Flaming Lips, Lady A., Cyndi Lauper, John Legend, Panic! At the Disco, Plain White T’s, They Might Be Giants, T.I., and songs by David Bowie, Tom Kenny and Andy Paley.

Tickets are \$20 each. For more information or to purchase tickets, go to ci.neenah.wi.us/departments/parks-recreation/riverside-players.

He said current Neenah Mayor Brian Borchardt and past mayors and the city’s Common Council support the police department, but the dollars are not there in the budget to increase the number of officers.

“We are not the only city department that is understaffed. At a recent Common Council meeting, Alderman (Mark) Ellis brought up that Neenah might need to raise taxes to better fund our city,” Olson said. “We have to do something to get us to safe operating levels” with the number of police officers.

When looking at the national average of police officers, a city of Neenah’s size should have 52 to 54 police officers. Olson said if he had additional officers, the department would add another behavioral officer, a traffic officer, more patrol officers, an investigator and more officers on the noon to midnight shift.

Neenah’s Public Services and Safety Committee has held recent meetings on the Flock Safety cameras, which have attracted community members speaking out against the technology. Olson said the license plate reading cameras have helped the city solve crimes, providing officers with important information.

While police officers are spread thin, Olson said they go the extra mile “and you truly see it in the community. We have a great culture here and don’t have a problem filling spots when we have openings.”

Olson said officers would be able to do their jobs better with additional staff.

“People say Neenah is safe and we want to keep it that way,” he said.



Photo by David Hall

Monumental celebration

Neighbors and alumni came together on Doty Island on Saturday for a special celebration in recognition of the new Roosevelt School commemorative statue named Rosie. Set against the backdrop of a historic local residence, the event marked a celebratory milestone in preserving the island’s rich educational heritage.



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County restarts strategic planning initiative program

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

Winnebago County is looking to update its strategic plan and is seeking input from area residents.

The county created its first strategic plan in March 2025 under former County Executive Jon Doemel and the County Board of Supervisors. Current County Executive Gordon Hintz said the plan was helpful when it came to budgeting for the 2026 fiscal year, and that it is time to do

a review of the plan since there is a new county board and executive in place.

“It’s recommended we make periodic updates, and this is a good time to do it before we work on the next budget,” Hintz said.

The five strategic pillars outlined in the current strategic plan include: transportation, housing, economic development, efficient government and quality of life. Each pillar has goals, and a definition of what success looks like.

Hintz said it will be a multi-step process to gather feedback to create the plan. A survey was created and will be shared by county employees with stakeholders and clients as well as with community members at farmers’ markets. County supervisors will also get a copy of the survey to share with their constituents. Six focus groups will also be held with community partners and leaders from throughout the county. On July 15, the county board will meet to share their thoughts on the plan.

From there, the new plan will be written with the board giving its final approval.

Hintz said the plan will likely get some tweaks and not a complete rewrite.

Supervisor Cullen Bettin questioned why the county’s executive branch led the development of the strategic plan and that he felt he would not have enough time to

discuss it with his constituents.

Hintz pointed out that supervisors were receiving the survey to share with residents in their districts to seek out their opinions. As to why the executive branch leads the strategic plan development, he said he was following the same process undertaken in 2025 and in other counties with strategic plans.

Supervisor Bob Poeschl said working together on the plan made sense. “We want to work with the county executive on this. I’ve never seen a strategic plan initiated by a legislative body,” he said.

The strategic plan allowed the county to do priority budgeting last year, said Supervisor Karen Powers.

“I’ll admit I was a bit leery of the strategic plan, but I thought it was a great process,” she said.



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Neenah man arrested on homicide warrant from Indiana after traffic stop

Neenah News

A Neenah man, who had an arrest warrant in Indiana, was arrested during a high-risk traffic stop in Menasha on Monday morning. He is expected to be extradited to face homicide and attempted armed robbery charges.

Willie Wallace is currently in custody at the Winnebago County Jail.

Neenah Police officer Joe Benoit said that the department was alerted by law enforcement in Lake County, Indiana, that Wallace was in the area and had an active warrant for homicide and attempted armed robbery.

Initial media reports suggested Flock cameras assisted in the arrest of Wallace. Benoit stated Flock was used to confirm Wallace was in the Neenah-Menasha Fox

Valley area and to confirm the vehicle registered to Wallace was in the area.

Once this was discovered, officers were watching Wallace's residence, Benoit said.

Wallace left his home Monday morning and the officers were about to make a high-risk traffic stop when Wallace turned into the McDonald's parking lot at the intersection of Racine Street and Third Street in Menasha.

Wallace is not facing any charges locally. He is currently in custody at the Winnebago County Jail, awaiting the formal extradition process to begin the return of Wallace to Lake County, Indiana.

“Be aware of your surroundings and if you see anything concerning, let us know,” Benoit said. “Because we’re all on the same team.”



Photo from Neenah Public Library

Reading milestone

The Neenah Public Library Summer Reading Challenge last month reached 4,000 readers officially registered. The library said others wanting to participate still have time to sign up, log their reading, attend programs and earn rewards. The program, which runs through Aug. 21, is open to all ages, babies through adults.

Chamber event focuses on multi-generational workforce

As Millennials now dominate the workforce and Gen Z begins to enter, organizations face a critical crossroads: balancing tried-and-true traditions with fresh perspectives and new ways of working. But when different generations clash, productivity, morale and innovation can all take a hit.

Companies can find ways to bridge the gap between seasoned professionals and younger talent. The next Fox Cities Chamber Fox Talk: Generations Collide – Unlocking the Power of a Multi-Generational Workforce from 8 to 9:30 a.m. Aug. 12 at Community First Credit Union in Neenah will provide information about the topic.

Presenter Chad Kopitzke will unpack the unique values, communication styles and motivations of each generation.

His interactive, insight-rich session offers actionable strategies to navigate generational friction with confidence and clarity, harness the strengths of a diverse workforce for maximum impact, and create a collaborative, future-ready culture that drives long-term success.

The presentation delivers more than just theory.

Attendees can expect real-world solutions that inspire connection, boost teamwork and set organizations on a path toward lasting growth.

The event is free for Fox Cities Chamber members and \$25 for non-members.

To learn more, or to register, visit shorturl.at/1qy3N.



Photo from Miron Construction

Miron Construction recognized a group participating in its youth apprentice program during an event June 16.

Business news roundup

Kristin Steede has been promoted to Vice President of Culture + Capability at **Verve, a Credit Union**. In her expanded leadership role, Steede will lead Verve's strategy for onboarding, training, leadership development and team member growth. As the newest member of the Senior Leadership Team, she will help ensure Verve's values are consistently reflected in everyday experiences across all teams and locations.



Erin Miller has been hired as **Fox Communities Credit Union's** assistant vice president of project delivery, a leadership role focused on advancing the organization's strategic initiatives and strengthening enterprise project execution. In her role, Miller will oversee the delivery of key enterprise initiatives, ensure consistent project governance, and lead the continued evolution of Fox's project delivery practices. She will partner closely with senior leadership to translate strategic priorities into actionable plans while supporting project teams in achieving successful outcomes.

Jason Dostal has been appointed as **Fox Communities Credit Union's** assistant vice president of software engineering, a leadership role responsible for advancing the organization's software engineering capabilities and driving its AI strategy. In his new role,

Dostal will lead the evolution of Fox's software engineering discipline, overseeing engineering teams while shaping the organization's approach to AI, automation, and integration. He will serve as a hands-on leader, guiding architecture decisions, developing scalable solutions and fostering a culture of innovation and continuous improvement.

Lindsay LaCourse has been hired as **Fox Communities Credit Union's** vice president of product growth, a newly established leadership role focused on accelerating product innovation, product experience and member growth across the organization. In her new role, LaCourse will lead the strategy, development and optimization of Fox's deposit and consumer product offerings. She will focus on identifying market opportunities, enhancing member journeys, and launching innovative products designed to drive sustainable growth and strengthen member relationships.



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Program celebrates students taking next step in construction careers

Neenah News

Miron Construction celebrated 16 young adults as they take the next step in their careers in construction.

The celebration June 16 at Miron's office in Neenah highlighted the multiple phases of the beginning of a construction career including the bridging of youth apprentices to registered (union) apprentices, youth apprentices beginning their second year of training and new youth apprentices beginning their training.

Career Signing Day is a time for high school and college graduates to officially begin employment with a construction contractor who will sponsor them throughout their registered apprenticeship and provide on-the-job training.

Along with on-the-job training, these registered apprentices will receive classroom instruction from their designated union training center as part of their apprenticeship. According to the company, the celebration honors both graduate and contractor, providing a pivotal moment in the life of a student.

Caden Sarauer from Neenah High School is one of the youth apprentices bridging to registered apprentices as a carpentry apprentice.

Corban Documman from Neenah High School is among the high school graduates signing into a registered apprenticeship as a millwright apprentice.

Eight of the new registered apprentices will sign with the Northern Midwest Regional Council of Carpenters and one will sign with the Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers District Council of Wisconsin.

Students like them continue to choose the trades for the importance of the work they provide for all of society, for the rewarding profession it offers, and for the opportunity to learn and build a career.

In the last three years, Miron's youth apprenticeship program has grown more than 150% and now extends to Miron's satellite offices.

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• Monday, July 27 | 10:00 a.m.

• Wednesday, July 29 | 1:00 p.m.



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Sheriff marks 16 years reading Declaration of Independence

By Michael J. Cooney
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

When Winnebago County Sheriff John Matz steps to the microphone this Independence Day, it will be the 16th time and last time he has publicly read the Declaration of Independence.

The annual tradition began with former Winnebago County Board Supervisor Bill Wingren, then chair of the Judiciary Committee and a devoted student of history.

“Bill was the one who got it started,” Matz said. “It all stems from when we first became a nation. They didn’t have mass media. Sheriffs throughout the colonies would read important documents like, the Declaration of Independence to the people, and that’s how they learned what was happening.”

Matz believes former Sheriff Michael Brooks read the document once before he took over the role. Since then, the reading has become a regular part of Winnebago County’s Independence Day observance.

The sheriff admits the document is not as easy to read as it looks.

“There are some strange words in there,” he said. “The first year I read it, I started studying on July 2. There were words I wasn’t even sure how to pronounce, let alone what they meant.”

While he still doesn’t have the Declaration memorized, experience has made the task easier.

“Bill always wanted me to memorize it,” Matz said with a laugh. “I told him I wasn’t sure I had the time to memorize the Declaration of Independence.”

Preparation remains part of the routine. Each year Matz reads the document aloud multiple times before the event.



Photo by Michael Cooney

Winnebago County Sheriff John Matz practices reading the Declaration of Independence to prepare for his last public reading of the document Saturday.

“The staff is used to it now,” he said. “I’ll sit in my office and read it out loud 10 or 15 times.”

This year’s reading comes as the nation approaches the 250th anniversary of the Declaration’s adoption and as Matz prepares to leave office at the end of his term.

“I’m hoping this year strikes some additional patriotism because of the 250th year,” he said. “I remember the bicentennial in 1976. I was 12 years old, but I remember the sense of patriotism that was everywhere.”

Over the years, the annual reading has given Matz a deeper appreciation for the document and the men who signed it.

Concert features pipe organ music

Neenah News

The Lunchtime Organ Recital Series this summer features concerts across the Fox Valley, including in Neenah, as part of its 29th season.

The free concerts are sponsored by the Northeastern Wisconsin Chapter of the

American Guild of Organists.

Don Verkuulen will perform at 12:15 p.m. July 8 at First Presbyterian Church, 200 S. Church St.

The concerts are intended to share the sights and sounds of the pipe organ in Northeastern Wisconsin. For more information, visit newago.org.

An advertisement for Infinity by Marvin windows and doors. It features a large, multi-paned window set into a stone wall. The text is overlaid on the image in a clean, modern font. The background is a warm, golden-yellow color.

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Photo from Neenah Community Band

Festive celebrations

Families and children were invited last week to attend the Neenah Community Band concert at Riverside Park. The concert featured guest conductors, a patriotic march around the park, balloon animals, a visit from Hagrid and the Hogwarts sorting hat and more. The band’s next performance is at 7:45 p.m. Saturday during Community Fest at Riverside Park.

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Coaching legend

FROM PAGE 1

his teams were that,” said former player Jon Joch, who is now the Chief Financial Officer in the Neenah Joint School District. “He was about respecting the program and understanding the privilege it was to wear the red and white.”

Frank Schade, who coached at Oshkosh North during the final years of Einerson’s tenure, said it was never easy facing the Rockets. Not just because of the talent that Neenah put on the court but because of the way that talent was coached to play.

“They were dedicated athletes and a lot of that was because of Ron. When you played them you knew you were in for a battle,” said Schade, who also faced Neenah when he coached at Plymouth. “His teams were always extremely competitive. The thing that stands out to me was he extremely organized. They would throw a lot of things at you with defensive pressures. They were smart and deep all of the time.”

Einerson, who was also a U.S. Army veteran who served in Korea, finished his coaching career with a 556-235 record and was the first Wisconsin high school coach to top 550 career wins. He is currently 13th on the all-time coaching wins list in the state.

In addition to what he did on the court, Einerson helped establish the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches Association and served as the organization’s first president in 1975.

He was also a charter member in the WBCA Hall of Fame and in the Neenah High School Hall of Fame.

“He was impactful beyond just the Fox Valley and Neenah,” Rabas said. “Coach Einerson had an impact statewide. An iconic figure that people looked up to.”

Yet, it was at Neenah High School – where teams would one day play in the Ron Einerson Fieldhouse, named for the coach in 2003 – that he made his biggest



Submitted photo

Jon Joch (left) and Lee Rabas (right) met with Ron Einerson in 2022 after Neenah won the WIAA Division 1 state boys basketball title.

mark.

Not just with wins and titles, but with the way he built the Neenah program and the players in the program.

“Neenah basketball was something you went to and were part of as a community. It’s something that I wanted to be a part of,” said Rich Klesmit, who played for Einerson from 1986-88. “It was an honor and a privilege to be a member of the Neenah boys basketball program at that time. It was a very prestigious group and it still is.”

Klesmit, whose sons Max and Cal and daughter Rowan will all play at the collegiate level, said that the lessons he learned from Coach Einerson as a player carried over to when he was coaching his children.

“Basketball players are made in the offseason and that was a big thing I took

from him and applied to my boys and my daughter,” Klesmit said. “If it was something they were really interested in doing, we have to work at it outside of the season.”

Playing for Einerson wasn’t an easy thing to do.

According to his former players, expectations were high, practices were grueling and Einerson was certainly a fiery, intense coach.

“You better be able to handle honest criticism or you weren’t going to be able to perform for him,” Joch said. “He had a standard and the standard was the standard so either you met that, or you decid-

ed to do something else.”

But as tough as it may have been, the rewards were worth it.

“He was very demanding and he held us accountable,” Klesmit said. “When you take a look at the history of Neenah basketball players, I think a lot of them would be thankful for that work ethic and team togetherness that we learned from coach.”

Even after his retirement from coaching and teaching social studies at Neenah High School, Einerson was a fixture at Neenah games – sitting in his usual spot behind the Neenah bench.

Yet, he never interfered with what the coaches after him were trying to accomplish.

“In the 2016 season, I got him to come in early in the season and talk to the team but he was reluctant to do it. He told me it was my team and he didn’t want to step on my toes,” Rabas said. “He was very gracious to me the entire time after I took over. Each year, I would receive a note from him after the season, complimenting what we were able to do, complimenting the kids and that he was happy for our success. That always meant a great deal.”

Rabas said one of his fondest memories came after the Rockets’ 2022 state championship when he and Joch visited Einerson in Middleton and brought all three state title trophies along to reminisce about.

“That was a really fun day,” Rabas said. “We had lunch with coach and his wife (Dolores) and sat around and talked Neenah basketball and basketball around the state. It is a day I will always cherish.”

A day that will always be remembered with a coach no one will ever forget.

“He was truly a legend,” Ruedinger said. “The thing that I try to carry on from coach the most was that everything you do, you do it with class and respect.”

Area unemployment rate decreases in May

The Oshkosh-Neenah metropolitan area (MSA) and Winnebago County saw their unemployment rate decrease to 2.7% in May, down from 3.1% in April and 2.8% a year ago, according to preliminary data from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Preliminary May 2026 unemployment rates decreased in all 13 metropolitan areas over the month. Rates decreased

in 12 metropolitan areas over the year and stayed the same in one area: La Crosse-Onalaska.

Preliminary May 2026 unemployment rates decreased in all 35 of Wisconsin’s largest cities over the month. Rates decreased in 27 cities over the year.

Rates increased in four cities over the year and stayed the same in the remaining four cities.

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Neenah Legion drops pair to Oshkosh

Neenah News

The Neenah Legion rallied from a 10-run deficit but couldn't overtake Oshkosh in a 13-9 loss at home on Monday night.

Neenah trailed 11-1 heading into the bottom of the third but outscored Oshkosh 8-2 the rest of the way. The Legion plated a run in the bottom of the seventh and had two runners on base when Oshkosh registered the final out.

Ty McNeely finished 3-for-5 at the plate for Neenah with Lukas Bertam adding three hits – including a triple – and drove in three runs in the game. David Linstedt added a pair of RBIs for Neenah.

Linstedt had a two-run double and Bertam tripled and scored on a McNeely single in a three-run fourth inning that started the comeback for Neenah. The Legion added two more runs in the fourth and tacked on two more in the sixth before getting their ninth run in the final inning.

Neenah committed five errors in the

game that led to seven unearned runs for Oshkosh.

Neenah also dropped a 4-3 decision to Oshkosh last week despite a strong outing on the mound from Sam Printz. The righthander allowed just three earned runs while working into the seventh inning, walking two and striking out two in the game.

Neenah tallied eight hits in the game, with Owen Pire finishing 3-for-4 and Tyson Huss added a pair of hits. Pire and Zachary Waite each drove in runs for Neenah.

The Legion broke a scoreless tie in the top of the third when Pire singled home Brody Staffeld to give Neenah the lead.

Oshkosh tied the game in the bottom of the inning and the Legion had single runs in the fourth and fifth innings answered by Oshkosh to tie the game at 3.

Neenah, however, would be held hitless over the final two innings and Oshkosh plated the game-winning run in the seventh frame.



Photo by Jim Koepnick

Neenah second baseman Tyson Huss takes a throw on an Oshkosh steal attempt last Thursday.

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Obituaries

Ronald Einerson
Ronald Einerson was born Sept. 4, 1932 in Argyle, WI to Herbert and Rose (Stephenson) Einerson and passed away on June 22, 2026 at the age of 93.

He graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1950 where he played football, basketball and baseball. He graduated from UW Platteville in 1956 where he played basketball. There Ron met the love of his life, Delores Hoesly, and they married in 1956. He served in the U.S. Army from 1952-54, part of that time as a Morse code operator in Korea. He received his Masters Degree from UW Madison in 1960. Ron taught History and coached basketball in Cash-ton, Plymouth and Neenah. His Neenah teams won the state championships in 1975 and 1978. He was named Wisconsin coach of the year in 1975 and the Neenah fieldhouse was named in his honor in 2003. Ron was selected as a charter member of the Wisconsin Basketball Coaches

Hall of Fame in 1979, as a member of the UW-Platteville Hall of Fame in 1989, and as a charter member of the Neenah School District Hall of Fame in 2015.
Ron loved golf and the camaraderie of his friends, Neenah and Wisconsin Badger basketball and football games, and spending time with his children and grandchildren. He enjoyed time in Door County and Florida. He journeyed domestically and internationally, not because he particularly enjoyed traveling, but because he loved his wife who loved to travel. His daughters remember him as a loving father with a great sense of humor who lived his life with personal integrity and who loved his girls equally. They looked up to him as an accomplished speaker and inspirational leader. Ron valued and exemplified a strong work ethic, preparation, perseverance, teamwork, discipline, class, and character.
Ron is survived by his daughters Andree (Craig) Fredrick of Madison, Laura (Mike) Radke, Madison and Leslie (Todd) Eberhardt, Orono, MN, his grandchildren Jason and Jordan (Natalie) Fredrick, Megan (Derek Polk) and Jenna Radke, and Nicholas, Taylor and Tori Eberhardt, and great-grandchildren Scottie Fredrick and Bennett Polk. Also surviving are his brothers, Mal and Gary, sister-in-law Jan Hoesly, and a number of nieces

and nephews. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Delores, parents, sisters-in-law Carol Gruber, Vi Einerson and Sandi Einerson and his brothers-in-law, Dwight Hoesly and Don Gruber.
The family would like to thank Cardinal View Senior Living and Agrace staff for their support and compassionate care.
A Celebration of Life will be held Sunday, September 20, 2026 at Bridgewood

Resort Hotel, 1000 Cameron Way, in Neenah, WI., from noon to 3 p.m. Memorials can be made to the Ron and Delores Einerson Scholarship Fund at Neenah High School or First United Methodist Church Neenah.
To view his obituary and share a memory, please visit: www.ryanfuneralservice.com. Ryan Funeral Home & Legacy Center 6728 Mader Drive Madison, WI 53719 608-274-1000

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Legal Notice

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME
CHANGE OF:
Anne Kettenhofen Werth-Rueckl

Notice and Order for Name Change Hearing
Case No. 26CV590

NOTICE IS GIVEN:
A Petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
From:
First – Anne
Middle – Kettenhofen
Last – Werth-Rueckl
To:
First – Anne
Middle – Rose Grace
Last – Kettenhofen
Birth Certificate:
First – Anne
Middle – Carmen
Last – Kettenhofen

This Petition will be heard in the Circuit Court of Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin:

Judge's Name: Michael Gibbs
Place: Winnebago Courthouse, Rm 211
415 Jackson St. Oshkosh, WI 54901
Date: August 17, 2026
Time: 8:30 a.m.

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 920-236-4868 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

NOTICE TO NEWSPAPER AND PETITIONER:
Notice of this hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 3 notice for three weeks in a row prior to the date of the hearing in the following newspaper Neenah News.

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: June 10, 2026
Winnebago County Circuit Branch 4

Runs: June 19, 2026, June 26, 2026 and July 3, 2026.

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME
CHANGE OF:
Zoe Lynn Standiford

Notice and Order for Name Change Hearing
Case No. 2026CV000400

NOTICE IS GIVEN:
A Petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
From:
First – Zoe
Middle – Lynn
Last – Standiford
To:
First – Parker
Middle – Lynn
Last – Standiford
Birth Certificate:
First – Zoe
Middle – Lynn
Last – Standiford

This Petition will be heard in the Circuit Court of Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin:
Judge's Name: Hon. Michael D. Rust
Place: Winnebago Courthouse, Rm 410
415 Jackson St. Oshkosh, WI 54901
Date: July 28,2026
Time: 11:00 a.m.

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 920-236-4811 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

NOTICE TO NEWSPAPER AND PETITIONER:
Notice of this hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 3 notice for three weeks in a row prior to the date of the hearing in the following newspaper Neenah News.

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: April 20, 2026
Winnebago County Circuit Branch 1

Runs: June 26, 2026, July 3, 2026 and July 10, 2026

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE NAME
CHANGE OF:
Isaiah Josephe Maki

Notice and Order for Name Change Hearing
Case No. 2026CV000616

NOTICE IS GIVEN:
A Petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
From:
First – Isaiah
Middle – Josephe
Last – Maki
To:
First – Isaiah
Middle – Josephe
Last – Jansen
Birth Certificate:
First – Isaiah
Middle – Josephe
Last – Maki

This Petition will be heard in the

Circuit Court of Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin:
Judge's Name: Michael D. Rust
Place: Winnebago Courthouse, Rm 410
415 Jackson St. Oshkosh, WI 54901
Date: July 23,2026
Time: 8:30 a.m.

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 920-236-4811 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

NOTICE TO NEWSPAPER AND PETITIONER:
Notice of this hearing shall be given by publication as a Class 3 notice for three weeks in a row prior to the date of the hearing in the following newspaper Neenah News.

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: June 19, 2026
Winnebago County Circuit Branch 1

Runs: June 26, 2026, July 3, 2026 and July 10, 2026

WNAXLP

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT,
WINNEBAGO COUNTY

IN THE MATTER OF:
CHRISTOPHER LEE GERRITS
LIVING TRUST DATED
JANUARY 15, 2020
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
LIMITATIONS ON CLAIMS
(Trust Administration)

The administration of the trust has commenced for the decedent-grantor, CHRISTOPHER LEE GERRITS, whose date of birth was October 24, 1953, and date of death was June 7, 2026. The decedent died with a residence in Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin, with a post office address of 1636 Oak Hollow Lane, Neenah, Wisconsin 54956.

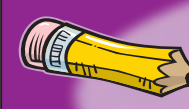
Pursuant to Wisconsin Statutes 701.0508, creditors' claims must be filed with Patrick J. Hietpas and Cheryl A. Hietpas, co-trustees of the Christopher Lee Gerrits Living Trust dated January 15, 2020, with the power and authority to pay the debts of the decedent, at the address provided below, on or before November 3, 2026.

Address to file claims:
Patrick J. Hietpas and Cheryl A. Hietpas
c/o Lin Law LLC
1928 Riverside Drive
Green Bay, WI 54301

Dated this 26th day of June, 2026
/s/ PATRICK J. HIETPAS, Trustee
Dated this 26th day of June, 2026
/s/ CHERYLA HIETPAS, Trustee

Runs: July 3, 2026, July 10, 2026 and July 17, 2026

WNAXLP



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SIDEWALK GAMES

If you have a sidewalk, patio or driveway nearby, just add chalk and you're ready to play these games!

Make a Hopscotch Challenge!



Go!

- JUMP SIDEWAYS
- DANCE HERE FOR 10 SECONDS
- HOP ON ONE FOOT
- WALK LIKE A CRAB
- HOP LIKE A FROG
- FREEZE FOR ONE MINUTE
- DO FIVE JUMPING JACKS
- COUNT TO 30
- RUN IN PLACE FOR 15 SECONDS
- HOP BACKWARDS
- HOP WITH YOUR EYES CLOSED
- SAY THE ALPHABET BACKWARDS
- HOP BACK AND FORTH
- STOP
- SPIN IN A CIRCLE

Maze Mix-Up!

STEP 1
You need three different colors of chalk for this game. Start by making three shapes lined up in a row to be START spots.

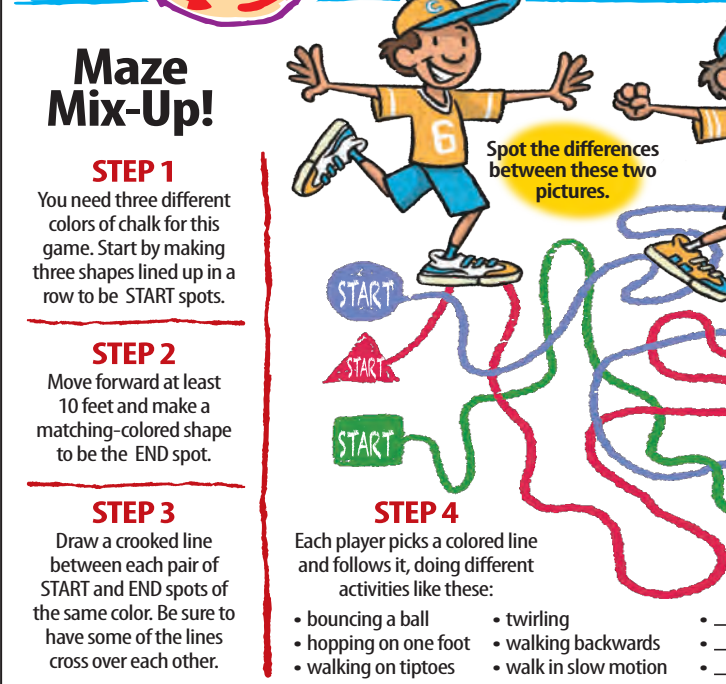
STEP 2
Move forward at least 10 feet and make a matching-colored shape to be the END spot.

STEP 3
Draw a crooked line between each pair of START and END spots of the same color. Be sure to have some of the lines cross over each other.

STEP 4
Each player picks a colored line and follows it, doing different activities like these:

- bouncing a ball
- hopping on one foot
- walking on tiptoes
- twirling
- walking backwards
- walk in slow motion

Spot the differences between these two pictures.



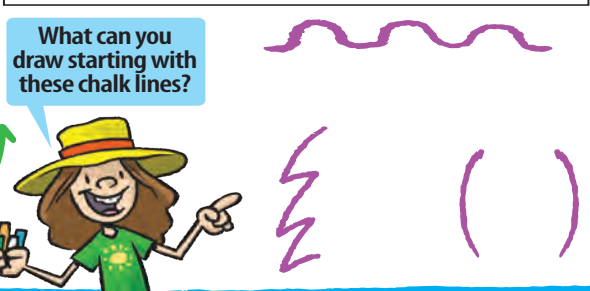
Monster Word Game

- Draw a large grid with squares that are large enough for you to stand in. The grid should have at least four squares on each side.
- Write a letter inside each square on the grid. Be sure to include at least four vowels, but not in a row.
- Take turns stepping from one letter to another to create a word. You can jump over a square if you need to. Write each word that is spelled out in chalk on the sidewalk. What is the largest word someone can make?

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

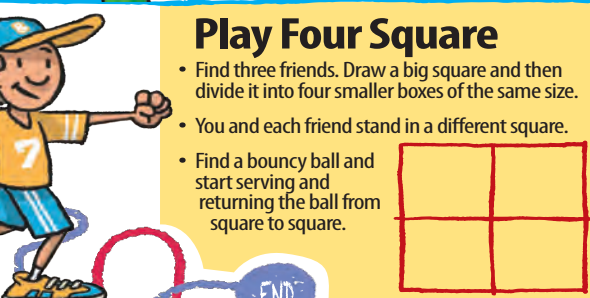
Standards Link: Spell grade-appropriate words correctly.

What can you draw starting with these chalk lines?



Play Four Square

- Find three friends. Draw a big square and then divide it into four smaller boxes of the same size.
- You and each friend stand in a different square.
- Find a bouncy ball and start serving and returning the ball from square to square.



Standards Link: Follow basic written directions.

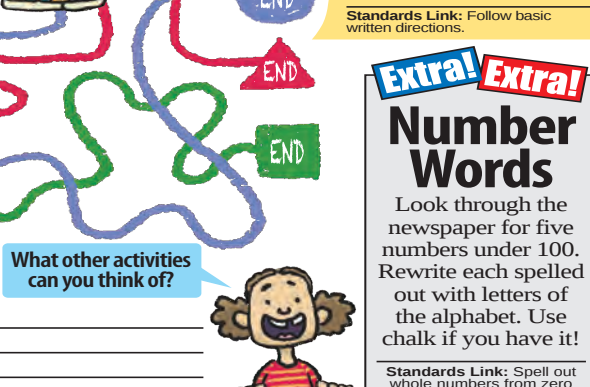
Extra! Extra!

Number Words

Look through the newspaper for five numbers under 100. Rewrite each spelled out with letters of the alphabet. Use chalk if you have it!

Standards Link: Spell out whole numbers from zero up to ninety-nine.

What other activities can you think of?



Standards Link: Learn rules, strategies, and problem-solving skills needed to play a game.


Kid Scoop Together

Masking Tape Masterpiece

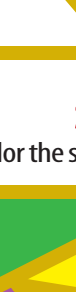
STEP 1

Use masking tape to create a square on cement.



STEP 2

Add more strips of masking tape to create a design.



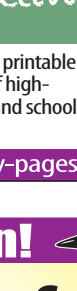
STEP 3

Color the spaces in the design.



STEP 4

Carefully remove the tape.



Standards Link: Reading: Follow simple, written directions.

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Write On!



What Makes You Smile?

Write two or three sentences about one or more things that make you smile.

Standards Link: Self-reflect to Identify personal sources of joy (SEL).



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