



Stay Updated on Recovery Efforts.



Our Hearts are with Our Neighbors Impacted by the Storm.

Area moves forward after tornado

By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

The cleanup from the July 27 tornado has entered a new stage as northern Winnebago County begins its long-term recovery.

The storm, which included winds topping 140 mph, damaged and destroyed buildings, downed trees and utility wires, made streets impassable and left thousands without electricity.

More than 10 days later, the lights are nearly back on for everyone, and water is flowing from the taps (the initial boil order for Fox Crossing east of the Fox River

has been dropped) and plans are being made on moving forward.

Clearing debris, making repairs

With so many homes and structures damaged, Winnebago County Emergency Management worked with Menasha, Fox Crossing and Neenah to identify different neighborhoods to focus on the cleanup of trees, brush, building supplies or damaged items.

An area of streets is selected and then announced via social media and on TV the day before. Residents are asked to remove any vehicles from the streets and

heavy equipment is brought in to clear debris from the streets and the side of the roads. While the streets are cleared, they are completely shut down.

The street-by-street process is clearing a lot of large debris from area streets, making them passable.

If anyone is thinking of removing or tearing down any building, including a shed or garage, they must first receive a raze permit, according to county emergency management officials. All utilities must be properly disconnected before any

SEE **Moving forward** ON PAGE 9

INSIDE



Terrific tent
Outpost provides lifeline for ravaged neighborhood
Page 6

Making music
Copper Box hits right notes on area stages
Page 12



Photo by Michael Cooney

Helping out

Members of the Wisconsin National Guard based in Oshkosh continued to help with traffic control Tuesday on Doty Island after being activated following last week's tornado. Gov. Tony Evers asked the National Guard to support the area's recovery response as utilities were repaired and debris removed from the streets.

Police helping bring communities together at difficult time

By Chris Lusvardi
NEENAH NEWS

National Night Out took on added significance this year as it brought members of the Neenah, Fox Crossing, Menasha and Appleton communities together just over a week after a tornado ravaged the area.

With gatherings in Fox Crossing and Menasha cancelled as widespread recovery efforts continued this week, the Neenah Police Department's event went ahead Tuesday at Memorial Park. The department extended the invitation to the event farther than originally planned.

"Everybody is having a good time,"

said Officer Joe Benoit, community policing coordinator for the Neenah Police Department. "We've just got an amazing outpouring of support out in the community. We would like to thank Menasha and Fox Crossing for showing up and coming together as one united community to have a really good time, show the kids how much fun it is."

Benoit was inspired by the turnout. He said the park was jam-packed and they ran out of bike helmets that were being given away to children. They had several hundred helmets, he said.

Helmets will be available at future community events to those who want

them, Benoit said.

Benoit thanked Bergstrom Automotive and Community First Credit Union for sponsoring the event and providing food for all the attendees.

Fox Crossing had planned on holding a similar event at O'Hausser Park, but the police department announced July 31 the event could no longer be held as usual.

"The tornado that ravaged the City of Menasha, Fox Crossing and City of Neenah and beyond has been quite devastating," said Dan Wiechman, Fox Crossing community liaison officer. "Unfortunately,

SEE **Night out** ON PAGE 15



Photo from Neenah Police Department

The Neenah Police Department organized a National Night Out event Tuesday at Memorial Park partially as a way to bring Neenah and surrounding communities together following last week's tornado.

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Neenah News is owned by Winnebago Media Group, Inc., 36 Broad St. Suite 300, Oshkosh, WI, 54901. 920-385-4512.

Cemetery walk rescheduled due to storm

Neenah News

A new date has been set for the Neenah Historical Society’s Annual Cemetery Walk.

The event will take place at 5:30 p.m. Thursday in the chapel at Oakhill Cemetery. The 41st annual event was moved from July 30 as the area continued to recover from tornado damage.

This year’s theme, honoring America’s 250th, features stories of Neenah locals connected to Revolutionary War patriots. The historical society has partnered with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) to identify program features and celebrate their impact. The program will explore how these individuals shaped the community and examine their lasting legacy. The four people that will be featured this year are Letta French, Frank Miller, John Pinkerton and Mary Howden.

The presentations will happen inside the chapel. Instead of paying at the cemetery entrance, tickets will be at a table in front of the chapel. The gravesides will have informative markers about the individuals and their patriotic ancestors. The DAR will also have a booth and additional learning opportunities.

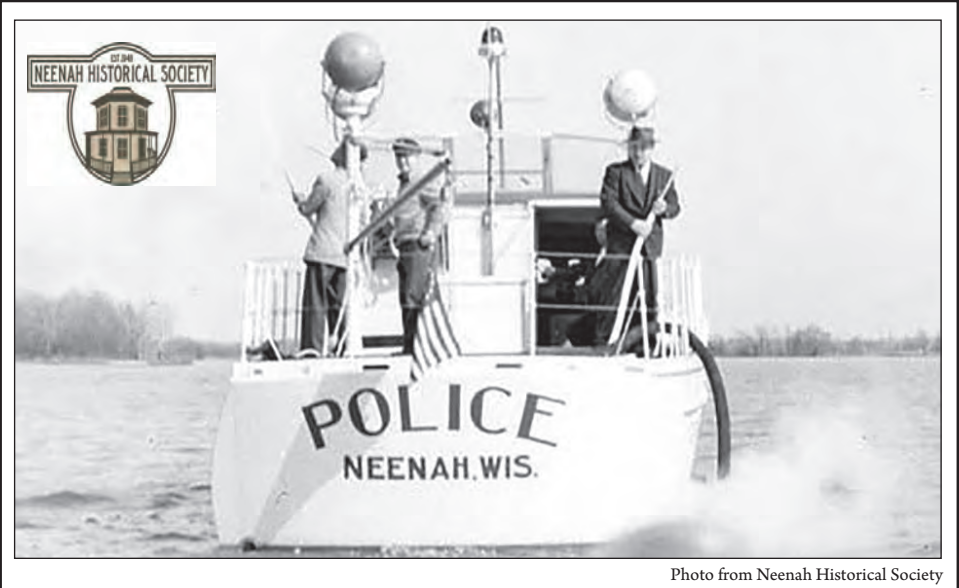


Photo from Neenah Historical Society

Coast guard

Although Neenah does not have an active-duty U.S. Coast Guard base, it is served by the volunteer U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary Flotilla 47-03 Neenah/Menasha, which operates on Lake Winnebago and the upper Fox River. For many years, Neenah’s marine protection services were also provided by Neenah’s Police Boat. The boat was gifted to the city by Frank Whiting in the 1950’s and was primarily stored at the Whiting Boathouse. The Neenah Police Boat was retired in 2002.

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Calendar of events

Saturday, Aug. 8

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park
GLASS Arts Festival, 10 a.m., Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass

Sunday, Aug. 9

Huntington’s Disease Society of America Fox Valley Team Hope Walk, 9 a.m., Memorial Park

Tuesday, Aug. 11

Future Neenah Evening Concert featuring Copper Box, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park

Wednesday, Aug. 12

Future Neenah Evening Concert featuring Murphy’s Law, 6 p.m., Shattuck Park

Thursday, Aug. 13

Friends of the Neenah Public Library Book Sale, 10 a.m. to 7:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library
Neenah Historical Society Cemetery Walk, 5:30 p.m., Oakhill Cemetery

Friday, Aug. 14

Friends of the Neenah Public Library Book Sale, 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Saturday, Aug. 15

Future Neenah Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Shattuck Park
Town of Clayton Fire Rescue Touch-A-Truck, 10 a.m., Trailhead Park, Larsen Friends of the Neenah Public Library Book Sale (books by the bagful for \$7), 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Sunday, Aug. 16

Friends of the Neenah Public Library Book Sale Free Day, noon to 4 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Monday, Aug. 17

Friends of the Neenah Public Library Book Sale Free Day, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Neenah Public Library

Thursday, Aug. 20

Future Neenah Out to Lunch Concert featuring Elvis John, 11:30 a.m., Shattuck Park

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Voters head to polls for state, local primary elections

By Jonathan Richie
NEENAH NEWS

The partisan primary election Tuesday will decide which candidates will be on the ballot in November. The August ballot includes the statewide races for governor, lieutenant governor, attorney general and secretary of state.

The Democratic party and the Republican party both have candidates on the ballot. Third party candidates will also be in the November election, but there are no primary elections for those parties.

Incumbent Glenn Grothman, a Republican in Congressional District 6, is running for reelection. He is running unopposed in the primary but will have a challenger for his seat in November.

Grothman will face the winner of the August primary. That will come down to who voters select for District 6, which is a vast district stretching west to Portage and south as far as Ozaukee County.

Amanda Bell and Brad Smith are the Democratic candidates for the Congressional seat in the primary. Bell is a former water scientist who worked at the U.S. Geological Survey as deputy director. Smith is a U.S. Army National Guard veteran and current software company leader helping small businesses.

The Wisconsin Green Party is also running a candidate in the race. CPA and business owner Matthew Arndt hopes to win the election despite not fitting into the two-party system.

In the race for Assembly District 53 representative, Republican David Daniels is unopposed and will face Democrat Becky Nichols, who is also unopposed in the primary, in the November election.

Daniels is an Air Force veteran and business owner. Nichols has served on the Menasha City Council for the past 12 years.

Incumbent Dean Kaufert is not seeking reelection after a long career serving in the state legislature and as mayor of Neenah.

In the race for governor, incumbent Democrat Tony Evers announced last year he would not seek reelection after serving two terms. The Republican party has Congressman Tom Tiffany and Andy Manke, a medical service technician who has never held public office.

On the Democratic party ballot, four candidates are still in the race, although some ballots may have more names than that.

Milwaukee County Executive David Crowley, former secretary of the Wisconsin Department of Administration Joel Brennan, State Senator Kelda Roys and State Assembly representative Francesca Hong are still in the race for the primary.

The ballot will have other names such as former Lt. Gov. Mandela Barnes and current Lt. Gov. Sara Rodriguez, who recently dropped out of the race. Former Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation CEO Missy Hughes will also be on the ballot despite suspending her campaign in June.

Wisconsin Secretary of State Sarah Godlewski is the sole candidate running for lieutenant governor on the Democratic side. Small business owner Will Martin and former Lancaster Mayor David Varnam are the Republican candidates for lieutenant governor.

There is no primary from the two major parties for attorney general. The 2026 general election is shaping up to be a rematch of the 2022 election with incumbent Josh

Kaul running for the Democratic party and Republican Eric Toney, who currently is the district attorney for Fond du Lac County.

Kaul defeated Toney by 35,000 votes in 2022.

With Godlewski not seeking reelection as secretary of state, the field is wide open with the Republicans fielding four candidates in the race. Businessman Jay Schroeder, small business owner Brayden Myer, businessman and farmer Nate Pollnow and military veteran Cindy Werner will all be looking to secure the most votes to advance to the general election.

For the Democrats, former state representative and current Milwaukee Common Council member JoCasta Zamarripa is running. The Green party is also running Pete Karas for this seat. Both candidates will be on the November ballot.

In the race for state treasurer, incumbent John Leiber is running unopposed on the Republican side. The Democratic candidates are Marathon County Board

Supervisor Yee Leng Xiong and Black Earth village board member Dylan Helmenstine.

Locally, three candidates are running for Winnebago County Sheriff. That race will be decided in November as none of the candidates have primary opponents.

Sheriff John Matz is retiring after leading the department since 2011. Republican Darin Rice and Democrat Jason Rippl are running for sheriff and both currently work for the department – Rice as the field services captain and Rippl works in the patrol division.

Danielle Falesnik is the third candidate in the race. She does not have a traditional law enforcement background. Instead, her background is as a mental health professional.

That race, along with all the other contests, will be decided Nov. 3 with most positions starting in January 2027.

For more information on the 2026 primary, go to myvote.wi.gov.

Fox Crossing changes polling location

Neenah News

After the Fox Crossing Community Center at 1000 Valley Road was deemed unsafe due to storm damage, a polling location for the partisan primary Tuesday has changed.

The polling location for voters residing in Wards 10, 11 and 12 will be relocated and operations merged with another site at the Pentecostals of the Fox Cities Church, 1445 Midway Road. Polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 8 p.m.

The Fox Crossing Board of Trustees approved the change July 30 during a special meeting called after the storm hit the area

earlier in the week.

The village is required to take appropriate action to ensure affected voters continue to have access to a suitable polling place and that election operations can be conducted effectively and efficiently.

Fox Crossing officials plan to divide the main worship area of the church into two separate polling stations. Signage will be placed throughout the facility to clearly direct voters to the appropriate area.

Officials plan to station an individual at or near the former Community Center polling place to direct any voters to the new polling place.





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By MaryBeth Matzek
NEENAH NEWS

"After that first week, I ask kids what they're interested in or they tell me what they're interested in and I try to include some of those," she said. "We carry a variety since we have kids ranging from first



Submitted photo

The program starts in the second week of June and runs through mid-August with the bike going out every Thursday. Thiel said the kids do a great job of remembering to bring back their books. "They like to show off 'look, I brought my books back,'" she said. "The kids are really excited when

The Friends of the Neenah Public Library provide funds for the physical

“The kids are always excited to see it,” she said.

FV 60

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New senior living community in area opens its doors

Neenah News

CopperStone Senior Living community is opening a second residence in the Fox Valley to provide resident assisted living and memory care.

“We planned to get ahead of the curve and develop a high-care setting for people with complex needs that 10 years ago would have been in a nursing home,” said owner Nicole Barrett. “Our caregivers are the heart of our building.”

The facility at 9440 Clayton Ave. has 56 assisted living units and 20 memory care units and is staffed by one full-time RN

and two full-time LPNs. The nursing staff is scheduled so there is skilled care 24/7 and there are already plans to add additional nursing staff. In addition, the community plans to create 50-55 additional jobs.

The community will provide specific on-site care to limit the need to transport residents to outside clinics or hospitals.

The new community is 72,000 square feet on a 62-acre property located on the west side of Fox Crossing. There are already plans to expand the facility once it is fully occupied.

Locating the expanded facility in a rural area was intentional to provide care for residents in smaller communities outside of the Fox Cities. Both Aaron and Nicole Barrett are from small towns and realized the challenge for rural seniors and their families.

“Many small towns don’t have the level of care seniors need, causing seniors to move to big cities despite wanting to stay

in country setting,” Barrett said. “Because we worked in rural health care, we know It’s hard to operate a successful community in a small town, because you need significant capacity to cover overhead.”

Residents will start moving in Monday and there are still limited apartments available.

For more information, visit copperstoneassistedliving.com.

Nominations open for Fox Cities Chamber lifetime achievement awards

Neenah News

Nominations are open through Sept. 17 for the Fox Cities Chamber Lifetime Achievement Awards.

The awards recognize individual professional excellence in the region, which includes Outagamie County, Calumet County and the northern portion of Winnebago County.

Awards to be presented include ATHENA Leadership Award, Business Leader Hall of Fame, Gus A. Zuehlke Distinguished Service Award and Joyce Bytof Exceptional Mentor Award.

The ATHENA Leadership Award, sponsored by Bergstrom Automotive, recognizes a woman who has achieved the highest level of professional excellence.

The Fox Cities Business Leader Hall of Fame recognizes an individual who has demonstrated personal and business success and is a role model for future gener-

ations.

The Gus A. Zuehlke Distinguished Service Award is designed to honor an individual who has made outstanding contributions through leadership in the business community and service during their years as a Chamber member.

The Joyce Bytof Exceptional Mentor Award is given to an individual who is proactive in the advancement of others by sharing time, talent and business experience for the purpose of promoting growth and opportunity in our community.

Award recipients will be announced to the public this fall, and recipients honored on stage at the Chamber’s Celebrate event scheduled for Jan. 19 at Best Western Premier Bridgewood Resort Hotel in Neenah.

Submit a nomination using the 2027 Fox Cities Chamber Lifetime Achievement Nomination Form at shorturl.at/Gwfdm.

Bergstrom named top dealership to work for

Bergstrom Automotive has been recognized as the No. 1 dealership group to work for in the United States, earning more dealerships on Automotive News’ Top 150 Best Dealerships to Work For list than any other dealer group in the nation for the second consecutive year.

This year, 39 Bergstrom dealership teams were recognized among the Top 150 dealerships nationwide, reinforcing Bergstrom’s commitment to creating an exceptional workplace where team members feel valued, supported, and empowered to deliver outstanding guest experi-

ences.

Automotive News, a publication serving the North American automotive industry, selected the honorees from more than 18,000 dealerships across the United States. The annual awards recognize dealerships that excel in workplace culture, employee engagement, leadership and overall team member satisfaction.

Bergstrom, along with the other honorees, will be recognized during the Automotive News Best Dealerships to Work For awards celebration on Nov. 4 in Dallas.



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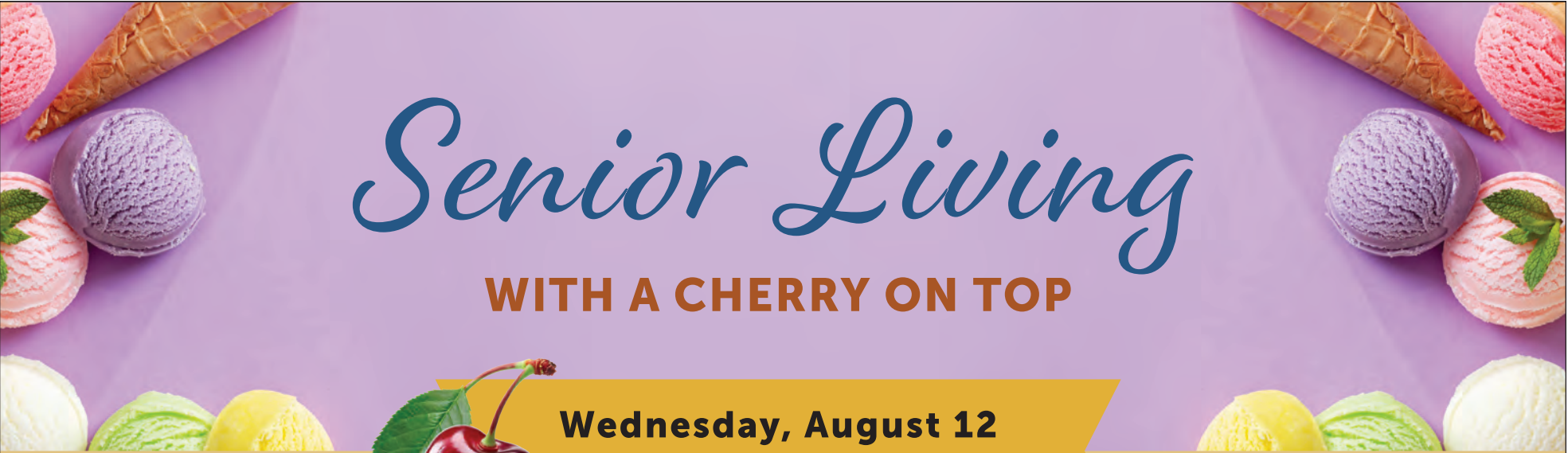
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Little white tent becomes neighborhood lifeline

By Michael J. Cooney
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

When last week’s tornado tore through Doty Island, Kathie Boyette was recovering from a kidney transplant. Instead of resting, she set up a white tent on her front lawn.

Within days, it became an unofficial neighborhood relief center, providing meals, cleaning supplies, hygiene products and a place where storm survivors could gather. Boyette estimated her team fed between 200 and 300 people each day following the tornado while also distributing groceries, water and emergency supplies throughout the neighborhood.

“I had some friends call me to see if I had any damage to my home and if we needed anything,” she said. “I just started telling my friends, ‘Yes, I need to feed my family. I need to feed my neighborhood. I need to take care of these folks.’”

“There were stands set up in Menasha where the majority of the damage was, and rightfully so. Menasha is devastated,” Boyette added. “But I didn’t see anything for Neenah, and I didn’t see anything for the Doty Island side of Neenah.”

Road closures created another problem. “When they started closing the roads and saying you had to have identification to show that you belonged here, we couldn’t get into Menasha even though we were in the destruction zone,” she said.

Help soon arrived as some of Boyette’s friends said their churches wanted to help. “So Calvary showed up, and Peace Lutheran showed up,” Boyette said. “Then Lowe’s showed up with truckloads full of buckets and cleaning supplies. Dunkin’ Donuts showed up with coffee and donuts



Doty Island resident Kathie Boyette set up a tent in her front yard to help provide supplies to her neighbors in need as they cleaned up and started making repairs from storm damage.

and breakfast sandwiches. They’ve sponsored us every morning, so there’s literally Dunkin’ Donuts on the island during this disaster.”

As word spread, more donations and volunteers arrived. “Truckloads and trailers just showed up with supplies and food, and the volunteers came,” Boyette said. “The people that have tarps on their roofs came and said, ‘We want to help.’ They served food. They packed water into cars and boxes of groceries. We had clothes and diapers. People would come and say they had specific

needs. Individual volunteers would write those needs down, make phone calls, and those individual needs would show up like a special order.”

Mercy Chefs joined the effort, along with friends preparing homemade meals. “We’ve been cooking meals,” Boyette said. “This morning a friend brought breakfast burritos, and we’re having homemade rigatoni for lunch.”

The volunteers also found ways to reach neighborhoods where vehicles couldn’t go. “They went into the heart of it all where cars couldn’t get — on bicycles with trailers behind them, in wagons and on foot,” Boyette said. “They delivered hot meals, cold drinks and supplies.”

The little white tent became something more than a distribution center. “We did therapy,” Boyette said. “Hugs and holding hands. Hugs and holding hands. I had a volunteer that came on Sun-

day and wanted to do a moment of prayer at 10 a.m. We allowed that. People came just for that. Then we fed them and sent them home with supplies.”

As recovery moved beyond the emergency stage, the mission of the tent came to an end with Tuesday being the last day Boyette planned to set it up.

“We were for emergency, and now it’s recovery,” Boyette said. “The stages change. We’ve served our purpose. We’ve done God’s work. Today is bittersweet, but I’m looking forward to resting.”

When asked what she planned to do next, Boyette laughed.

“Recover. I was in the hospital when the tornado hit. I had just received my kidney. When I came home, we did this,” Boyette said. “I still have staples and stitches. I sat in a lawn chair with my cell phone, and I called in all the people that I knew wanted to help.”

Looking back, Boyette said the tornado changed more than the landscape.

“There was no politics,” Boyette said. “There was no division between neighbors anymore. It was all love. I just hope it doesn’t go away because it’s just been great.”

She lives almost on the line between Neenah and Menasha.

“I always used to joke, ‘Good morning, Menasha,’ because we were Neenah,” Boyette said. “Doty Island came together. There were volunteers from Menasha and volunteers from Neenah. There was no line drawn.”

We stand with our neighbors

Photo: David Hall

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Photo from Neenah Girls Volleyball

Members of the Neenah High School girls volleyball team were among the volunteers last week helping to cleanup damage in yards from the storm.



Photo from Neenah High School Wrestling

Groups of volunteers from Neenah High School Wrestling, Neenah Rockets Youth Wrestling Club and Middle School Wrestling have been helping with storm cleanup work throughout the past week.

Athletic teams help with tornado recovery process

By Eric Endres
NEENAH NEWS

Neenah High School athletic teams pitched in with cleanup efforts around the area last week and over the weekend after an EF-3 tornado devastated parts of Neenah, Fox Crossing, Menasha and Appleton. Members of NHS teams, including soccer, wrestling, volleyball, basketball and powerlifting, ventured into the middle of the mess to pick up branches, haul debris, run chainsaws, rake pieces of insulation, prepare food and provide water and more for affected members of the communities. “It was completely a player driven decision to get onto Doty Island and help out,” said boys soccer coach Kevin Baetke, who also said the players normally meet up informally to play but opted to assist with cleanup efforts instead after a player suggested lending a hand. Wrestling coach Kyle Kleuskens shared a “gameplan” going over detailed assignments and locations for volunteers, with an introduction that praised the team members for giving up their day. “Your willingness to step up during this time of need demonstrates the very best of what our Neenah community represents,” the plan’s introduction said. The boys volleyball team also contributed by collecting donations of supplies from attendees at their summer league last week. “Thank you to all the families that showed up for the NHS Boys Volleyball



Photo from Neenah High School Wrestling

Neenah Wrestling deployed over 100 volunteers last week. All walks of the program, including wrestlers, parents, coaches, alumni and friends, showed up to help those in need.

summer league last night with donations in hand,” said a post on the Neenah Rockets Boys Volleyball Booster Club Facebook page. A post on the girls volleyball Facebook page showed team members clearing branches and raking leaves with a caption that said, “Stronger Together.” Baetke said families in the community were “tremendously thankful,” and that he thinks the players learned a lot about themselves through this experience. “To see the damage firsthand really made it sink in how big of a need for help there really was ... and then to be able to give a few hours of time to help out really instilled some community pride,” he said.



Photo from Neenah Soccer Club

Volunteers helped last week to clean up the Neenah Soccer Club fields on Earl Street as crews worked to restore utilities in the area.

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Fire department continues service after station destroyed

By Jonathan Richie
NEENAH NEWS

Firefighters initially sought shelter as last week's tornado struck Fox Crossing Fire Station 41 on Valley Road and ripped off the roof.

The department said a driver, lieutenant and firefighter were inside the apparatus bay when they recognized the immediate threat from the July 27 storm and attempted to seek shelter.

As the tornado struck the fire station and immediately ripped the roof off the building, parts of the building began to collapse. All three firefighters who were inside the building when the tornado hit sustained minor injuries and were able to escape the station despite it collapsing.

"Our primary concern is the safety and well-being of our firefighters and the members of our community," Fox Crossing fire chief Todd Sweeney said. "We are extremely grateful that all three firefighters were accounted for following the collapse of the station and that our crew was able to quickly transition from surviving the storm to assisting others in the community."

The fire trucks in the station were covered in concrete debris from the collapsed walls and twisted metal from the station's roof. The trucks sustained severe damage, but the firefighters were able to recover a medical bag from one of the damaged trucks.

"All three members quickly began to check on neighboring businesses and residents for injuries," Sweeney said. "The injured firefighters were evaluated at a local hospital later in the day, where they received stitches for their injuries."



Photo from Fox Crossing Fire Department

Gov. Tony Evers and Fox Crossing fire chief Todd Sweeney surveyed the damage at Fire Station 41 on July 30.

Fire Station 41 and all the fire apparatus housed there are currently unable to be placed back in service. Engine 41 had just gone into service last summer, with Sweeney saying at the time the department's apparatus are on a 24-year replacement schedule.

The department has two fire trucks for emergency response capabilities through a variety of partnerships with the Grand Chute Fire Department.

The Village Utility Department also provided a building on Airport Road to serve as a temporary fire station, allowing the department to continue providing fire and emergency response coverage to the east side of the village.

"We are also incredibly thankful for the assistance and support we have received from our neighboring fire departments, village departments, business partners and the community," Sweeney said. "Their willingness to step forward and help us maintain emergency services during this difficult time demonstrates the strength of the partnerships we have built and the commitment of our community to taking care of one another."

Sweeney said the Fox Crossing Fire Department remains committed to providing uninterrupted emergency services while the department works through the recovery process and determines the next steps for replacing the damaged station and apparatus.

"The July 27 tornado caused significant damage throughout the Fox Crossing area," Sweeney said, "but the response from firefighters, emergency responders, village departments, neighboring agencies, businesses and community members has demonstrated the resilience and strength of the Fox Crossing community and the entire Fox Valley Region."



Photo from Fox Crossing Fire Department

The three firefighters inside Fox Crossing Fire Station 41 when a tornado destroyed the building continued to respond to the situation despite minor injuries. They later helped to pick up a loaner truck the fire department is using until the equipment can be replaced.



Photo from Fox Crossing Fire Department

A fire truck was trapped under concrete debris from the building collapsing and twisted metal from the roof that was torn off Fire Station 41 by the July 27 tornado.



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Area businesses helping support tornado recovery efforts

Neenah News

Area businesses are supporting the community’s tornado recovery efforts in various ways ranging from financial assistance to supply donations.

Kimberly-Clark announced a \$10 million commitment over the next three years to support the long-term relief, recovery and resilience of the Fox Valley region.

The commitment represents one of the largest community investments in the company’s history and reflects Kimberly-Clark’s enduring connection to Neenah where the company was founded in 1872.

“Neenah is our hometown,” said Mike Hsu, chairman and CEO of Kimber-

ly-Clark. “The people of the Fox Valley made Kimberly-Clark the company it is today. As the community begins the difficult journey of recovery, we are committed to working alongside our neighbors, community partners, and fellow businesses to help the Fox Valley emerge stronger than ever.”

Kimberly-Clark is working closely with local leaders, nonprofit organizations, government officials and other stakeholders to help address both immediate and long-term recovery needs. This includes identifying strategic partners and opportunities where the company’s support can have the greatest impact.

Funding will be distributed over three years to help ensure resources remain

available for long-term recovery and resilience initiatives.

Community First Credit Union has announced a \$1 million commitment to support immediate relief and long-term rebuilding efforts across affected Northeast Wisconsin communities, including Menasha, Appleton, Neenah and Fox Crossing.

The \$1 million pledge represents one of the largest community recovery commitments in the credit union’s history. The funds will directly support local relief initiatives aimed at helping residents and small businesses recover and rebuild.

In addition to the financial pledge, Community First has launched a series of immediate disaster relief programs designed to ease financial strain for impacted individuals, families, and businesses, regardless of whether they are current credit union members.

Residents and business owners seeking financial assistance or relief options are encouraged to visit any local Community First Credit Union branch, call customer support, or complete a relief request form online at communityfirstcu.org.

Thrivent announced it will contribute \$500,000 to support disaster relief and recovery across the area. Thrivent’s support includes funding for local nonprofit organizations, assistance for impacted workforce members and efforts to help accelerate community recovery.

More than 500 Thrivent team members live in the Appleton area, including employees, financial advisors and their staff, alongside clients and members across the region.

The company continues to assess the full impact of the storms and is working closely with local partners to understand the most urgent needs and move resources quickly to the people and organizations best positioned to help.

Bergstrom Automotive said Tuesday the company has made a \$100,000 donation to the Community Foundation’s tornado relief fund to help meet both immediate and long-term needs of impacted community members.

Based in the Fox Cities, Bergstrom says the area is their home, and the storm impacted their communities, neighbors and friends. The company said that many of their own team members were directly affected. The company said that they remain committed to standing beside them and the entire community throughout the recovery process.

In the days and weeks ahead, Bergstrom plans to look for meaningful ways to support recovery efforts across the communities. Bergstrom sponsored food trucks during Neenah’s National Night Out and is making a donation to the City of Menasha to help replace municipal vehicles lost in the tornado.



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Photo by Michael Cooney

Christ the Rock Church set up a community assistance station on Doty Island where food and supplies can be picked up and dropped off.

Churches provide supplies to those in need

Neenah News

As tornado recovery efforts got underway over the past week, leaders from area churches have looked for spots to best serve the needs of the community members impacted by the disaster.

Hannah VanZeeland of Christ the Rock Church in Menasha said a community assistance station was established on Doty Island after seeing a need there.

The church has been helping to provide hygiene kits, shelf-stable food through a pantry and hot meals donated by local individuals and organizations along with complimentary coffee and breakfast from Dunkin’ Donuts.

A free mobile shower unit has also been set up nearby, allowing residents to shower, receive towels and hygiene supplies, and refresh during the recovery effort.

The relief station has been operating for several days. Volunteers reported that activity fluctuates throughout the day, with the busiest periods around meal times.

VanZeeland expected use of the services to increase as more residents learn about the location through word of mouth. There is currently no planned closing date. The church intends to continue operating



Photo from Calvary Bible Church

Calvary Bible Church in Neenah has been collecting and distributing items to help with the area’s tornado relief efforts.

the assistance station as long as there is a community need, adjusting services as recovery efforts evolve.

Calvary Bible Church at 1450 Oakridge Road in Neenah has also been among the places collecting and distributing items to help with the area’s tornado relief efforts.

Former Green Bay Packers quarterback Brett Favre encouraged those in need to stop by the church, saying that his friends at Jones Capital Hattiesburg, Mississippi have responded in force by dispatching their Jones Serves Mobile Kitchen to the area.

“My heart goes out to the families of Neenah and Menasha, Wisconsin after a tornado ripped through these communities,” Favre said.

Museum reopens after cleaning up storm damage

Neenah News

The Bergstrom-Mahler Museum of Glass reopened July 31 after being closed for three days to clean up damage on its grounds from last week's tornado that struck the area.

"Like our neighbors, the museum sustained considerable damage to its grounds preventing public access and very minor damage to the building," executive director Amy Moorefield said. "We are so thankful to our community, members, sponsors and partners for reaching out and helping us."

With the museum grounds cleaned up, Moorefield said the admission-free GLASS Arts Festival scheduled for Saturday will go on as planned. Other nearby areas such as Riverside Park and Kimberly Point Park remained closed while City of Neenah crews clean up extensive tree damage from the storm.

Moorefield said the GLASS Arts festival will be from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. with glass blowing, over 40 glass artists showcasing their work, food trucks and music by Kate Voss and the Hot Sauce.

Guests are invited to visit the museum's

renovated galleries and exhibitions, not just for the special event but during regular hours as well. The museum is regularly open from 10 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. It stays open until 8 p.m. Thursday and is open from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Sunday. It is closed on Mondays.

"Come visit us, enjoy our air-conditioned galleries, be inspired by our glass collections and let us be there for you in this difficult time," Moorefield said.

Lighthouse event postponed: The National Lighthouse Day Celebration event at the Kimberly Point Lighthouse has been postponed and will not take place today as scheduled today due to effects of the severe storm last week.

Neenah Parks and Recreation said it will share information on the new date and event details once they are confirmed.

Band cancels concert: The Neenah Community Band cancelled its concert that had been scheduled for Tuesday in Riverside Park.

The band made the decision as clean up continues throughout the Neenah parks system. The group is now looking ahead to its Winter Concert scheduled for 3 p.m. Dec. 6 at Neenah High School.



Storm damage remained Sunday in Kimberly Point Park. The city's planned National Lighthouse Day Celebration has been postponed while cleanup efforts continue.

Consumers advised to be cautious when seeking home repairs

The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) reminds consumers that they should practice caution when seeking home repairs following last week's tornado.

Consumers with homes damaged during the storm should avoid hiring a door-to-door home repair crew. These transient crews are known as "storm chasers" because they travel to communities struck by severe weather and solicit business at consumer homes.

Despite their tempting promises of quick, cheap fixes, transient repair crews often provide poor quality work or ask for up-front payments, then perform no work at all. They are often not from Wisconsin, so if something goes wrong, it may be impossible for a consumer to get their money back.

Tips for homeowners

- Hire established local contractors.
- Ask for recommendations from trusted sources like friends, neighbors and insurance agents.
- Check with a local building inspector if permits are needed for the repair job, then have them inspect the completed work before making final payments to the contractor.
- Make sure there is a written contract which specifies what work will be done, what materials will be used, a start and completion date, and warranty details.
- Receive lien waivers for every payment made for home repairs to any hired contractors.
- Keep copies of all contracts, receipts, communications, warranties and written materials.
- State law protects consumers and

- businesses against insurance fraud. In Wisconsin, contractors:
- Cannot promise to pay any portion of an owner's property insurance deductible.
- Cannot negotiate with an insurance company on behalf of a customer. Contractors can only discuss damages and costs with insurers with the customer's permission.
- Must ask if the work is related to an insurance claim before they enter into a contract.
- Must notify customers of their right to cancel the contract within three business days if their insurer denies any portion of the claim for work.
- Homes are not the only property that sustained severe weather damage. Many consumers rely on their motor vehicles for everyday transportation, and seeking repairs can be a stressful experience. Consumers can protect themselves by knowing their rights, resources and auto repair tips.

Tips for vehicle owners

Ask for shop recommendations from friends, family and other local sources they trust. If the work will be covered by insurance, select a shop with the insurance

- provider.
- Search for online reviews of the company and contact the DATCP Bureau of Consumer Protection to check if a specific shop has a record of complaints.
- Document all transactions and communications, including specific dates, times, expenses, promises made and the names of shop employees.
- Auto body repair shops cannot make repairs that the owner did not authorize or increase the price of those repairs without authorization after the consumer received an estimate or quote.
- A shop may hold a vehicle until the consumer pays for authorized repairs but cannot hold the vehicle if they refuse to pay for unauthorized repairs. After work is complete, the shop must provide an invoice describing and listing the cost for all repairs, replaced parts and labor.

Insurance tips

The Office of the Commissioner of Insurance (OCI) published an After a Storm Hits Fact Sheet which can help consumers understand their policy options and coverage. After severe weather strikes, consumers should:

Notify their insurance agent or compa-

- ny right away to begin the insurance claim process.
- Make a list of damaged items, including any damage to the home's structure.
- Take photos of damages, including dented siding, damaged shingles, broken windshields, etc.
- Keep swatches of damaged material like shingles and siding.
- Keep damaged items – they should not be thrown out without the claim adjuster's agreement.
- Retain all receipts for repairs or replacement of damaged property.
- Contact the Office of the Commissioner of Insurance of Wisconsin at oci.wi.gov or (800) 236-8517 with questions about insurance agents, adjusters or companies.
- For more information and consumer protection resources or to file a complaint, visit DATCP's Consumer Protection webpage at ConsumerProtection.wi.gov or contact the Consumer Protection Hotline at (800) 422-7128 or DATCPHotline@wisconsin.gov.

Resource center opens for tornado victims

Neenah News

Area residents affected by the recent tornado are encouraged to visit the Winnebago County Multi-Agency Resource Center on Friday and Saturday.

The center will provide community members with access to resources and information from numerous community partners and nonprofit organizations in

the area.

The multi-agency resource center will be open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday at the Winnebago County Fox Cities Campus-Engineering Building, 1665 University Drive, Menasha.

A variety of assistance will be available including housing, financial, mental health, food and essential needs.

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Copper Box brings unique mix to venues across area



Submitted photo
Copper Box has been performing at shows across the area this summer, including a performance scheduled as part of the Future Neenah Concert Series Tuesday at Shattuck Park. Band members include Dave Jerabek, Michelle LL Jerabek, Danny Jerabek, Dan Cable and Ben Cable.

By George Halas
NEWS CONTRIBUTOR

The award-winning band Copper Box is bringing their unique mix of folk, rock, blues, jazz, polka and fun to stages across the area this summer.

Copper Box will be performing from 6 to 8 p.m. Tuesday during the Future Neenah Concert Series at Shattuck Park. It's a free concert and, in case of rain, the show will be moved indoors to the Double Tree by Hilton hotel across the street from the park.

In their 24th year, the band has won the Wisconsin Area Music Industry (WAMI) Award for Americana Artist of the Year in 2009, 2012 and 2023 as well as the WAMI's People's Choice Award in 2009 and 2015.

The group received the WAMI Overall Artist of the Year and WAMI Folk Rock Artist in 2024; WAMI Album of the Year and WAMI Folk Album of the Year in 2025 and this year's WAMI Rock/Americana/Roots/Ska Artist.

Lead vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Michelle LL Jerabek won the WAMI for Reed/Brass Player of The Year in 2017 and

has been nominated for the same honor four other times.

Danny Jerabek, whose multiple instrumental talents include the accordion, cornet, harmonica, keyboards, clarinet and sousaphone, won the WAMI Award in the Specialty Instrumentalist of The Year category in 2010, 2011 and 2020. He has also been featured at the International Accordion Festival.

Drummer Dan Cable was nominated for the WAMI Percussionist of The Year in 2020 and 2023.

Not content to rest on their laurels, the band is "always evolving," said Michelle LL. "We love the chemistry of the band. It's a fun group, fun music and we like adding original songs while keeping that good vibe."

The return of bass player Dave Jerabek and the addition of Ben Cable, Dan's son, on lead guitar has given the band expanded performance options.

"Ben brings youth and energy. He takes the bull by the horns when we want to rock," said Danny Jerabek. "It gives us a big, powerful sound, a really cool sound."

"We've been adding more original songs and we've been soloing more, extending the songs," Jerabek added. "With the whole band trading solos, it keeps the music fresh and it's a great visual experience for the audience. We take great pride in every song we do and people have been really digging it."

"It's kinda cool having Dan's son, Ben, playing with us. Dan is very proud of him," said Michelle LL. "He's a guitar prodigy and he's been doing a lot of great things with us."

Based in Oshkosh for 20-plus years, Danny and Michelle, who consider themselves "polka kids who became friends, then fell in love and everything worked," originally had a high-powered polka band, Kick, "but we wanted to break out and add original songs," Danny Jerabek said. "The name Copper Box was Michelle's idea. She started with squeeze box and noted that copper is a good conductor of electricity."

Copper Box has appeared many times at Waterfest in Oshkosh over the last 20 years, opening for headliners including The Doobie Brothers, Huey Lewis and The News and, most recently, former Beach Boy Al Jardine's band.

"Mike Dempsey, who books the bands for Waterfest, has always had a soft spot for Louisiana-style music," Jerabek said. "It's been good for us to play and it's always been awesome."

"We were digging Al Jardine and his band," he added. "They were very tight and they made a point of saying nice things about us."

In addition to the Shattuck Park, concert Copper Box has appearances coming up throughout the area.

"We would like people to go to our website and get on the mailing list to stay connected," Michelle LL said.

For the band's schedule and other information, go to copperboxband.com.

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Photo from Neenah Public Library

Art explorers

Kids can spend an afternoon this summer during the Art Explorers program at the Neenah Public Library. The program provides an open space with a variety of materials available to provide a little inspiration for the young artists. The next programs are scheduled for noon to 3 p.m. Aug. 19 and Aug. 26.

Students compete in physics video contest

Neenah News

Neenah High School students Jaden Vondracek and Ryan Porsche finished second in the UW-Madison Wonders of Physics video contest. The pair produced a two-minute video explaining refraction. The contest has been running since 1984 and recognizes original videos created by people of all ages. Vondracek is a

2026 graduate and will attend UW-Milwaukee in the fall, while Porsche will be a senior at Neenah High School this fall. Vondracek and Porsche created the video in Scott Hertting's AP Physics class. Hertting was also recognized with an award, winning the Vernier Physics Teacher Award for the teacher with the highest-scoring video.

School district sets open house dates

Open houses and school supply drop-off dates have been set for all schools in the Neenah Joint School District.

Alliance – 5-6:30 p.m. Aug. 26
Coolidge – 4:30-6 p.m. Aug. 26
Clayton – 4:30-6 p.m. Aug. 26
Horace Mann - 4-6 p.m. (kindergarten families from 3-4 p.m.) Aug. 27
Lakeview - 3:30-5:30 p.m. Aug. 26
Spring Road - 4-5:30 p.m. Aug. 26
Taft - 4-5 p.m. (tailgate from 5-5:30 p.m.) Aug. 26
Tullar - 4:30-6 p.m. Aug. 26
Washington - 3-6 p.m. (scheduled times - signup will be shared the week prior) Aug. 26
Middle School - 3:30-5 p.m. Aug. 26

Additionally, Future Neenah and the school district are hosting a “Boogie Back to School” Night on Aug. 26 in downtown Neenah for families. Following the open houses, Boogie and the YoYoz will be putting on a free community-wide concert. The event will feature food trucks and family games and activities from 6 to 9 p.m. The high school will take school photos and have yearbook pickup from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Aug. 17 and 18. The middle school will have fees, forms, photos and food from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Aug. 19 and 20. Food trucks will be on site at the middle school each day from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.



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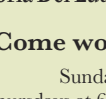
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Local college graduates

The following students from Neenah earned degrees from the University of Wisconsin-Madison in May.

Emma Bowman, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences, Bachelor of Science, genetics and genomics

Sam Brazee, College of Engineering, Bachelor of Science-Civil Engineering, civil engineering

Carson Clark, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science, data science, economics

Faith Demerath, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, legal studies

Addison Fett, School of Education, Bachelor of Science-Kinesiology, kinesiology

Adam Gerarden, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, linguistics, graduated with distinction

Victor Guerra, School of Business, Bachelor of Business Administration, business: information systems, business:

marketing

Taylor Gustafson, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science with honors in the major, neurobiology, religious studies, graduated with distinction

Austin Henderson, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, history, graduated with distinction

Cody Lenz, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, English

Will Liebeskind, School of Human Ecology, Bachelor of Science-Consumer Behavior and Marketplace Studies, consumer behavior and marketplace studies

Stephanie Manthei, College of Engineering, Master of Engineering, engineering

Haley Mayer, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences, Bachelor of Science, biology

Lily Meisel, College of Agricultural & Life Science, Bachelor of Science, environmental sciences

Stephanie Much, College of Letters and Science, Master of Arts-Library and Infor-

mation Studies, library and information studies

Gabriella Mullally, School of Med & Public Health, Doctor of Medicine, medicine

Isabelle Murphy, College of Engineering, Bachelor of Science-Environmental Engineering, environmental engineering

Ashlynn Numrich, School of Education, Doctor of Occupational Therapy, occupational therapy

Will Ranger, College of Agricultural & Life Sciences, Bachelor of Science, biochemistry

Khaled Saleh, School of Business, Bachelor of Business Administration, business: finance, investment and banking

Maya Schmidt, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Landscape Architecture, landscape architecture

Malina Schulz, School of Education, Bachelor of Science-Kinesiology, kinesiology

Eli Strasman, School of Education, Bachelor of Science-Health Promotion and Health Equity, health promotion and health equity

Henry Teckam, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Arts, communication arts

Tiffany Vogels, School of Education, Master of Science-Educational Leadership & Policy Analysis, educational leadership and policy analysis

Sally Welsch, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science, computer sciences

Melia Wendt, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science with honors in the liberal arts, psychology, graduated with distinction

Lauren Wilharm, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science, Biology

Caleb Youngwerth, College of Letters and Science, Bachelor of Science, astronomy - physics, French, mathematics, physics, French

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Photo from Neenah Police Department

The Neenah Police Department invited the Fox Crossing Police Department to join the National Night Out event at Memorial Park after Fox Crossing’s gathering was cancelled due to ongoing storm cleanup efforts.

Night out

FROM PAGE 1

ly, due to the amount of resources that are being dedicated toward our community we are taking priority to servicing them.”

Benoit said it was important for members of the neighboring communities to be able to attend the event.

“We’re going to move forward and have as much fun as we can, try to get together and get to know your local officers,” Benoit said.

Wiechman invited community members to take a break from everything else going on in the community for a couple of hours. He encouraged those impacted by recent events to share their stories and officers would be ready to hear those stories and concerns while answering questions.

“This is an opportunity to step away and have a little bit of silver lining in this tragedy and to get to better know your law enforcement agencies dedicated to serving you in thick and thin, just like we have this past week,” Wiechman said. “We know how much this event means to so many, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who had committed to volunteer their time, efforts and resources to help make it possible.”

Wiechman thanked the community for its understanding, resilience and unwavering support for the police and one another.

“Together, we will rebuild, and we look forward to gathering again under brighter circumstances,” he said.

National Night Out is a nationwide community-building event that promotes positive relationships and camaraderie between residents and the police.



Photo from Neenah Police Department

Members of the community, including American Legion Post 33, joined the Neenah Police Department for National Night Out on Tuesday at Memorial Park.

Local college graduates

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

Amelia Holtz, Bachelor of Science, marketing major, honors

Bryce Konwinski, Bachelor of Arts, archaeological studies major

Will John Hunter Kordus, Bachelor of Science, marketing major

Payton James Kramer, Bachelor of Science, biology major, honors

Brooklyn Cate Lewis, Bachelor of Science, clinical laboratory science major, highest honors

Joseph Jerome Paider, Bachelor of Science, finance major

Lauren Joan Palau, Master of Science, recreational therapy

Eli Schmidt, Bachelor of Science, management major, honors

Jared Smit, Bachelor of Science, biology major: biomedical science concentration

Vivian Renee Vande Corput, Bachelor of Science, exercise and sport science major: exercise science - pre-professional track, honors

Chloe Josephine Vogel, Bachelor of Science, exercise and sport science major: exercise science - pre-professional track

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