New shelter grows with the need

Day by Day is year-round with expanded facility

By Jonathan Reich
Oshkosh Herald

The new Day by Day Shelter has been open for two months as a low-barrier shelter that only requires guests to be adults and are provided a bed and a meal or the evening.

The homeless shelter was established as a nonprofit in 2011 when a group of about 60 community members noted the increasing number of people becoming homeless. The warming shelter was established at a church at 449 High Ave. with a contract to have 25 beds between Oct. 15 and April 15.

Molly Yato Butz, executive director, said the initial goal was to give people a place to stay and food during the coldest months of the year. Attempts to build a permanent shelter in 2015 and 2018 didn’t work out. The group tried again in 2020 with the goal of raising more than $5 million to build the current facility at 420 Clover Ave.

“In 2020 we really pressed forward because we were one of the only organizations that was open at the time of COVID,” Yato Butz said. “We were serving an enormous amount of people and we were seeing an increase in homelessness in general.”

She said that since 2020 homelessness has tripled throughout Winnebago

See Homeless shelter on Page 23

Conductor lesson

ALPS Charter School student Cora Volkening was selected to conduct the Oshkosh Area Community Band out of 14 young people who auditioned for the role at the Potpourri Concert where the annual Children’s Conducting Competition was held last week at Oshkosh North High School. Band conductor David Berndt coached the students on baton techniques.

Legendary rocker Lita Ford ready to hit Waterfest stage

By Steve Clark
Oshkosh Herald

One of the hardest rocking women of the late 1980s will be taking the stage at the Leach Amphitheater for a Waterfest performance Aug. 10.

Even after roughly 50 years since she started her musical journey, Lita Ford still plans on cracking up the amps to give fans a high-energy, rock ‘n’ roll show.

“We are going to shake the place and rock the house," Ford said in a recent phone interview from her home in Arizona. “We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Oshkosh and putting on a great show.”

Ford will be sandwiched between two bands that had their heyday during the hair-metal surge. Firehouse will open the night’s show, followed by Ford and then Warrant.

Ford, who at age 64 still plays around 150 shows a year, credits a healthy lifestyle and top-notch people around her for keeping her going.

While many people her age may be thinking about slowing down or retiring, for Ford that is simply not an option. She said that she is already planning changes to her show for a 2024 tour.

“I’ve been doing it 50 years and there is no stopping me now. I’m not about to quit. That’s just not an option,” Ford said. “I love my band and I love my crew and I have a really great team of people working for me and it’s the greatest. I don’t know why I would want to do anything else.”

Ford started her music career at age 16 when she was recruited to play guitar in The Runaways, a band that also featured Rock and Roll Hall of Famer Joan Jett.

The group officially disbanded in 1979 after four years together and Ford entered the 1980s taking aim at a solo career.

Her first solo album in 1983 did not gain much commercial success while her follow-up record fared only slightly better.

It wasn’t until 1988, when she released her self-titled album “Lita,” that Ford skyrocketed into the mainstream. The song “Kiss Me Deadly” was her biggest hit on the U.S. music charts followed by a duet with Ozzy Osbourne, “Close My Eyes Forever,” that was her biggest hit reaching No. 8 in America.

Ford had another big hit in the early 1990s with “Shot of Poison,” before stepping away from music in 1996. She

See Lita Ford on Page 21

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Four killed in weekend air crashes

Oshkosh Herald
Two separate air crashes Saturday claimed the lives of four people and injured two in Oshkosh as EAA AirVenture was in its sixth day of its annual weeklong aviation event.

The Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office received multiple calls just after 9 a.m. Saturday about an airplane that had crashed into Lake Winnebago. The Winnebago County Marine Units with Dive/Recovery Team members, along with emergency response from Oshkosh, Winneconne, Neenah Menasha, Calumet County, Wisconsin DNR and the U.S. Coast Guard.

There were two occupants in the T-6 Texan plane – Devyn Reilly, 30, of Guadalupes, Texas, and Zach Collermooreno, 20 – pronounced dead after recovery efforts.

One witness told a local TV station they believed it was a trick, but then saw it crash into the lake.

Reilly was the daughter of two-time Super Bowl champion Bruce Collie, who played for San Francisco 49ers teams that won the title in 1988 and 1989.

Winnebago County Sheriff’s Communications Lara Vendola-Messer said Monday that the majority of the T-6 has been recovered from the lake. The sheriff’s office is continuing to work with the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) to see if there is anything else in the lake they might need to dive/search for.

At 12:24 p.m. Saturday, a midair collision between two aircraft at the south end of the AirVenture flightline at Wittman Regional Airport killed two people and injured two others, emergency respondents reported. The injured were taken to a local hospital and were listed in stable condition.

The two fatalities were identified as the pilot, Mark Peterson, 69, of Foley, Ala.; and Thomas Volz, 72, of Amelia, Ohio. Members of Volz family told an Ohio TV station that he had attended AirVenture every year. This year Volz, an Air Force veteran, was there with his grandson, who ended up making the call to his grandmother saying he had died.


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According to the NTSB, the aircraft involved were a Rotorway 162F helicopter and an EAA 10 Eclipse gyrocopter that belonged to event attendees and not involved in the air show. Aircraft operations at Wittman were halted while the accident was initially investigated and the after-air show began around 2:45 p.m. after a short delay.

The Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department is working with EAA, the NTSB and the Federal Aviation Administration in the investigation.
Housing development plan approved on south side

Apartment project set for Oregon, Ripple

By Jonathan Richle
Oshkosh Herald

A new apartment complex planned for the south side of Oshkosh is set to have 96 units in eight buildings on 16 acres of land near Oregon Street and Ripple Road.

Premier Ripple Road is a planned multifamily development on the east side of Oregon Street south of West Ripple. It is the second phase of the developers’ plan after the Oregon Place Apartments was approved and built. The project is slated to have eight 12-unit apartment buildings and the development application filed by Aaron Breitenfeldt and Robert E. Lee & Associates shows it will cost an estimated $15 million.

The new development will use the current driveway Oregon Place residents use. The general plan was approved June 20 by the Plan Commission.

The apartment buildings will be built behind five houses on Oregon Street and a few of those residents came to the council meeting to voice their concerns about the placement of a berm and fence proposed to surround the development.

Dennis Hughes and Wanda Berholtz were both concerned about the fencing and berm, which is raised ground often used as a buffer between properties.

“It’s privacy, that’s what we’re looking for — privacy,” Hughes said. “The condos themselves aren’t going to be far from our houses.”

He said it would be best if the berm or fence was on the property line.

Berholtz said she understands the project is necessary for Oshkosh to grow.

“ar not opposed to this. I know that Oshkosh needs to grow. City is meeting country,” Berholtz said. “My big thing is I want my privacy.”

She added she is not in favor of a white vinyl fence but instead would like one that fits with the surrounding area.

“I don’t think we’re asking for much,” Berholtz said. “Instead of approving this right away — we need to work back and forth on this.”

She said this development could be the foundation of the eventual expansion of Oshkosh building more in the rural area.

Hughes said he’s not in favor of the plan and would like to see an 8-foot fence around the entire development.

“I just don’t understand if they’re going to put fences up on both ends and put a berm in the middle, why they can’t just continue on with one fence,” Hughes said.

Council member Paul Eslinger was at the Plan Commission meeting where the berms and fence were discussed, saying he was under the impression that a meeting would be set up between concerned property owners and developers regarding the berm. That meeting didn’t take place.

Community Development director Kelly Nieforth said city staff explained to the developers, based on Plan Commission recommendations, that the berm and fence should be taller than originally proposed. The plans were revised to have the berm at 7 feet tall instead of 5 feet and the vinyl fencing at 8 feet tall instead of 6 feet.

“That information was passed along to nearby landowners. “The developer is going above and beyond what is required by code,” Nieforth said. “This is a planned development, but at the end of the day we don’t have the requirement that we can go back and say you have to do it this way.”

Jared Schmidt of Robert E. Lee & Associates said the developer has planned this apartment complex for the area as a low-density residential project. He added the plan will not please everyone but follows all codes and guidelines put in place by the city and based on feedback from area residents during an open house earlier this year.

The council voted 5-0 in favor of the general development plan with members LaKeisha Haase and Joseph Stephenson absent.

Nieforth said there is a site plan review process that will need to be approved before construction can begin.

New tool helps locate affordable Internet service

The state has launched the Internet Discount Finder website (apps.psc.wi.gov/InternetDiscountFinder) to help households find free and discounted Internet service available to eligible residents.

The Internet Discount Finder matches eligible residents to low-cost home Internet service and discount programs by entering their address and identifying eligibility criteria. The tool will show available plans and describe next steps for enrollment in the Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP). The ACP helps eligible house-
Chalk Walk to color Opera House Square

Artists will flood the sidewalks with color when the 10th annual Downtown Oshkosh Chalk Walk returns from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday around Opera House Square downtown.

The community art event presented by Community First Credit Union and the Downtown Oshkosh Business Improvement District Artists begins drawing at 8 a.m. and continues throughout the day. Rain date for the event is Aug. 12.

"It's an amazing experience to watch art being created," said Sandy Prunty, owner of Atomic Katz and former event organizer. "You get the chance to watch the drawings go from basic outlines to full color works of art in a matter of hours."

There will be a brat fry to benefit Oshkosh Masonic Lodge No. 27, live music, a children's mural children can participate in creating and other activities in the square.

Child Care Resource and Referral is sponsoring the Kids' Area around the sundial.

Prize money is $400, $200 and $100 for first through third place in the adult division; $200, $100 and $50 for the top three entries in the youth division. Winners are determined by public voting.

Send business bits

Our readers are looking for information on what businesses are doing in Oshkosh. Help us share the news by emailing businessbits@oshkoshherald.com or calling 920-383-4512.

The Grand ready to celebrate its 140th birthday as theater

The oldest operating theater in Wisconsin celebrates its 140th birthday with two days of family-friendly festivities.

The Grand Oshkosh will host Birthday Bingo on Aug. 8 with special guest caller Lamb Chop as Mallory Lewis, daughter of famed puppeteer and ventriloquist Shari Lewis, will be in Oshkosh for a two-day residency with lovable Lamb Chop. Bingo will start at 6 p.m. and Lamb Chop will fill in as guest caller starting at 7 p.m. No ticket is required and cards are purchased at the door on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Shari Lewis Legacy Show will take the stage at 7:30 p.m. Aug. 9 with comedy, songs, rare video footage and personal stories. Tickets are reserved through a pay-what-you-can donation. Guests will be able to enjoy birthday cake afterward in the Grand Lounge.

This show is part of the Alberta S. Kimball Foundation Series and is primarily designed for grown-ups to enjoy.

Throughout the month, The Grand has a “140 donations” campaign to raise money for programming through 140 donations of any size to celebrate 140 years. Ticket information and other details are at TheGrandOshkosh.org.
The GRAND OSHKOSH 2023-2024 Season

September
The Allibis | Sept. 21-23
Presented by Oshkosh Community Players
UPTOWN | Sept. 29
Part of the 2023-2024 Alberta S. Kimball Foundation Series

October
31 Days of Haunted Happenings
"Kip's Grand Escape" | Oct. 1-2
An Escape Room-like Scavenger Hunt Throughout The Grand
Ghost Tours | Oct. 3; Oct. 6-9; Oct. 13; Oct. 22 & Oct. 29
Craft Cocktail Class | Oct. 4; Oct. 12 & Oct. 26
Trapper Schoepp | Oct. 5
 Summoning Spirits with Peter Boie | Oct. 14
Part of the Alberta S. Kimball Foundation Series
Spirts of The Grand Tours | Oct. 15-18 & 20-21
Glow Yoga | Oct. 23
Trick or Trivia | Oct. 24
Tarot Card Class | Oct. 25
Chris Moon: Psychic Medium & Paranormal Investigator | Oct. 27
Paranormal Sleeperow | Oct. 28
Halloween Eve | Oct. 30
Halloween | Oct. 31

January
The Piano Men II: Still Rock ‘n Roll to Me | Jan. 13
Part of the 2023-2024 Alberta S. Kimball Foundation Series
Missoula Children’s Theatre: King Arthur’s Quest: Auditions | Jan. 22 Rehearsals | Jan. 22-26 Performances | Jan. 27

February
Matilda The Musical | Feb. 15-18
Presented by Oshkosh North High School

March
The Fourth Wall Hybrid Arts Ensemble:
Fruit Flies Like a Banana | March 2
The Grand Golf Outing: Mini Golf Fundraiser | March 9
Lourdes Academy Spring Musical | March 14-16
The Four Phantoms In Concert
PBS SPECIAL TAPING | March 21-23
FOR NATIONWIDE RELEASE SUMMER 2024

April
Arthur Miller’s Death of a Salesman | April 4-6
Presented by Oshkosh Community Players
Red Hot Chilli Pipers | April 7
Assisted Living The Musical | April 11-12
STEEM | April 19: Presented by ROCK | LLC
Rhinestone Cowgirls | April 20
Mutts Gone Nuts! | April 27
The Amazing Max | April 28

May
Broadway’s Chrysie Whitehead: In My Own Little Corner-My Journey with Bipolar Disorder | May 3
The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee | May 23-25; May 30-31 & June 1
Presented by Oshkosh Community Players

June
Grand New Year’s Eve Party | June 30
Featuring Mojo & The Bayou Gypsies

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PBS
UPTOWN
UFOs discussed at EAA in line with Washington hearings

By Jonathan Richie
Oshkosh Herald

There’s a company that wants to know if you’ve seen a UFO because, as elected officials discuss transparency, there’s an app that uses artificial intelligence to gain valuable data on these sightings.

The term UFO (unidentified flying object) has been interchanged with unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAPs). An exhibitor at EAA AirVenture last week was teaching people about UAPs.

Ben Hanlon and Alejandro Rojas of Enigma Labs were at EAA to talk to pilots about the issues with reporting UFOs or UAPs. The company has an app that anyone can download to report a sighting.

Hansen began the presentation Friday inside the EAA Museum saying he was not there to substantiate or even suggest UAPs are extraterrestrial life forms, but instead that the government needs to be more open about them for the safety of pilots.

This goes in line with what was happening in the nation’s capital last week with congressional hearings on the subject.

The House’s Oversight & Accountability Committee’s National Security, the Border, and the Foreign Affairs subcommittee held hearings to discuss UAPs. Wisconsin’s 6th District Rep. Glenn Grothman opened the hearing stating the government needs to be more transparent when it comes to UAPs.

“The lack of transparency regarding UAPs has fueled wild speculation and debate for decades eroding public trust in the government,” he told the hearing.

Kirkpatrick with science being the driving force behind finding answers.

The term UFO (unidentified flying object) has been interchanged with unidentified anomalous phenomena (UAPs). An exhibitor at EAA AirVenture last week was teaching people about UAPs.

“However, despite these offices being set up on his thermal camera.

Grothman added that in 2022 the Department of Defense established the All-domain Anomaly Resolution Office, ‘to protect, identify and investigate UAPs’. The AARO budget remains classified.

“However, despite these offices being established there lies a pressing demand for government transparency and accountability that cannot be overlooked and that’s been a problem for 50 years,” he said.

Grothman also noted the Chinese balloon that was shot down earlier this year. Former U.S. Navy pilot Ryan Graves also gave testimony saying he has experienced UAPs firsthand and has concerns.

Graves said there were three critical issues that demanded action. The first is there are UAPs in U.S. airspace but are “grossly underreported” by military and commercial pilots.

“These sightings are not rare or isolated – they are routine,” he said.

The second issue is the stigma attached to reporting UAPs. Graves said some commercial pilots fear repercussions if they report them. The third issue he cited is that the government is using excessive classification practices to keep records hidden when it comes to these sightings.

“The American people deserve to know what is happening in our skies,” Graves concluded.

Hansen and Rojas spoke at the EAA Museum about the importance of documenting UFO/UAP. Hansen said it was important that these hearings were taking place. He said it’s about safety.

“Safety of pilots, military or commercial, needs to be taken seriously,” Hansen said. He added the hearings in Washington, D.C., are “pretty incredible.”

Rojas and Hansen both investigate UAPs with Rojas’ background being a journalist and Hansen a pilot. Hansen told the audience he has seen a UAP before – an odd-looking balloon that only showed up on his thermal camera.

Hansen also discussed the importance of the AARO and current director Sean Kirkpatrick with science being the driving force behind finding answers.

“He’s a physicist and wants to work with NASA on the topic. He’ll be taking the scientific approach and the nature of sci...
AirVenture volunteers make the week come together

By Anya Kelley
Oshkosh Herald

In 1953, Paul Poberezny gathered the first group of airplane lovers to attend the Experimental Aircraft Association’s Fly-In Convention. At the time, it was just a small section of what was once the Milwaukee Air Pageant.

Now, 70 years later, EAA AirVenture is a world-renowned event drawing more than 600,000 people from around the world and at the center of it all are the volunteers.

Dick Knapinski, EAA director of communications, estimates that there were around 5,000 volunteers this year but they’ll take as many as they can get.

"There are areas on the grounds that are totally organized and coordinated by volunteers," Knapinski said. "For instance, the aircraft movements on Boeing Plaza … are organized and operated by a completely volunteer crew."

You don’t have to be a pilot to volunteer at EAA, but many are that share a passion for aviation.

"Many of our volunteers do it because they are EAA members and want to participate in making our biggest event a success," Knapinski said. "Others say they volunteer because it gives them a unique perspective on AirVenture, from an insider’s view."

Ralph Harrison is one of those people. "I’ve been doing EAA for three years now, two years as a supervisor at the main gate," he said. "This year, I’m an inside supervisor of the four hangars."

Harrison, a Winnebago County supervisor, has been living in Oshkosh for 54 years and volunteers often in the community.

"I love and am so proud of Oshkosh and what we have here, I want to help show it off," Harrison said. "I’ve lived and worked here for 54 years in the automobile business and want to give back when I can."

Though Harrison has never been a pilot, he loves meeting people from all around the world who travel to Oshkosh for AirVenture.

"EAA is (a fun way) to meet great team members and people from all over," he said. "As you do it year after year, you make friends."

Like Harrison, Mike Arcamuzi has a passion for volunteering at AirVenture and has been helping out along with his wife since 2002.

"It kind of started (because) we have five kids," said Arcamuzi. "We would go to KidVenture and the KidVenture people noticed (my wife) was there every day."

"They asked her if she would like to volunteer and the couple have been hooked ever since. In the beginning, the Arcamuzis’ kids were too young to volunteer. Now, EAA has become what Arcamuzi calls an ‘anchor point’ for the family."

"All seven of us would come up here every year. We used to have competitions to see who would keep the wristband on the longest," he said.

Arcamuzi said volunteering was just natural for him and his family.

"I’m a retired FedEx pilot, all five of my kids fly," he said. "Three of them went into the airline business, two of them are United pilots. We love aviation."

"Though Arcamuzi lives in Memphis, he said coming to Oshkosh every year and volunteering feels like coming home."

"Once people figure out how much fun it is, how it’s just an incredible opportunity, the opportunities are just boundless," he said.

Even though his passion is aviation, Arcamuzi said his favorite part of volunteering is the people.

"You get to connect with so many people, it is the feeling you’re really doing something," he said. "Don’t turn out the lights, we love being here. We don’t want to go home."

Ralph Harrison has been volunteering on the EAA grounds for the past three years.

UFOs

FROM PAGE 6

"You get to connect with so many people, it is the feeling you’re really doing something," he said. "Don’t turn out the lights, we love being here. We don’t want to go home."

Some of the volunteers working EAA AirVenture last week are shown at the first aid station.

Mary Beth Germain
Hugo & Janet Paulick
Dennis & Carolynn Cady
Tom of Dekoven
Town of Dekoven
Jim Sella & Wayne Winstinster
Jean Kofelmemm
Norm & Joan Ruffner
Vicky Cipriane
Jean M. Colker
Shelley J. Long
Jeff & Ann Tromble
Aaron A. Tresslar
Paul & Less Crawford
In Memory of Judy Broman
Colly Salzman
Ann Nelson
Ann Rosell
Barbara F. Liehebe
Larry & Karen Teich
James Miller
Sue Stein
Anonymous
Cindy Sturbridge
Beth Wanner
David & Kristin Janssen
Phil & Mary Cundy
Joyce Miller
Kathy Fenich
James & Mary Patterson
Dane & Herb Scharke
Thomas Wilkinson
Michael & Michele Hammett
Mark & Patt Stockly
Nacho B. Arlo, Tatiana Romansky
Shmuel Haskes
M Courtaul
Manal B. Kheeres
Mike & Debbie Angelo
Brendon & Corl Reese
Jacob Kope
James & Mary Jurkis
Alan & Gail Beyers
Barbara Hengst
Steve & Carol Regis
Carol Krajew
Anonymous
Janny Kromer
In Memory of Irene Blanchette
Paul & Sharon Janty
Cindy Berg
Ann Moeller
Becky & Greg Powers
Debbie Strange
Anonymous
Sun Meyer
Arin Kekias
In Beloved Memory of H.S. Mantas
Lou Avis Polishensky
David & Kathy Ziegls
Kenneth & Rose Leach
In Memory of Richard Lewis
Jo Auier

T. Schulte
Annette Luick-Fitzgerald
Jason & Cameron Pilar
Gary & Karen Knuck
Social Order of the Rebeauc
Jack & Jean Thieren
In Memory of Bob & Joyce Reihm
In Memory of Amanda Marie Reese
Kathleen Ohr
Renegades
Jim & Sharon Kempinga
Barbara Goldthoide
Armed Auxilary Post 7
Anonymous
Dennis & Ann Wendt
Sandra Rissel
Bob & Connie Brandbricker
Caring Grandmas
Joyce Miller
Doug & Jan Zeller
Tim & Judy Young
Dr. & Sherry Flutie
Jenett & Dick Schond
Patricia Wustenhagen
Pete & Sue Krumnow
Oshkosh Herald
George & Julie Zinna
Sandy & Rick Vondra
Jeff & Karen Schneider
Gary & Deb Herman
Nancy Pitz
Jean Nani

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UFOs

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Fernau’s Garden a family business with deep roots

By Randy R. Domer

Growing legacy began Fernau’s Garden a family business with deep roots to work on this land,” he said. “The 'first sitting down for a few minutes to tell his County A just past Harrison Street. The dirty, one does not need to look too far the Fernau acreage in two. 

In the 1880s, the railroad came to Osh- kosh and the tracks heading north split around the same time. She traveled from Omro to Oshkosh by oxcart and took the floating bridge to cross the Fox River. My great-grandfather was looking for a house keeper and when their paths crossed they decided to get married.”

Stories handed down through the Fernau family over the years claim that the Fernau family over the years claim that his wife-to-be came to this area married. ”

“I suppose my grandfather, Chas Fernau, “I suppose that cow was the best in the herd!” A quick glance from the elder Fernau con- 

Chas Fernau was also doing a little combining on the side for some extra cash, until he realized there was more money coming in from the roadside stand than riding the tractor all day. So, sometime in the 1950s, he took an old wood shed that stood on the property, built a lean-to on it and added glass. It would be the first greenhouse and a move that would serve the Fernau fami- ly well in the future. The benefit of having a greenhouse was being able to start plants sooner, as the person who offered their produce first was able to get higher prices. Being first to the market meant people were willing to pay a little more. 

Soon, customers that visited the road- side stand started asking to buy plants. So, plants were added to the mix. Bob recalled that at first plants were raised, in hand-built cold frames made from wood, tar paper and old windows. As customers bought them, they were pulled from their growing bed by hand and wrapped in newspaper. Over time new greenhouses were added. 

But managing the dairy business, milking cows twice a day, running the roadside market and managing the greenhouse plantings became too much for Bob’s dad and grandfather. The dairy cows were sold, leaving only the roadside market and greenhouses to work. Eventually the decision was made to close the roadside market and focus solely on greenhouse plantings. 

Today there are 11 greenhouses and most plants sold at Fernau’s are planted from seed by Bob himself. Some plants that are propagated from cuttings are par- ented and must be purchased from a licensed grower. Years ago, Bob would propagate his own cuttings, but the practice is no longer allowed. 

Most of us will have a day or two off work and even take a vacation occasion- ally. Bob works at his garden center seven days a week – and no vacation. What does he do in the winter months? “After the summer growing season is winding down, we start on next year’s business,” Fernau said. “Starting in August we sterilize soil and used potting containers. Then in November, gerani- um cuttings come in and must be root- ed. The planting of seeds of various kinds of cardboard flats that customers use to carry plants to the checkout. 

There are also various maintenance things that can get to be a little too much,” he added. The seeding process begins in late February or March. During the spring peak season, an 80-acre cow pasture was part of Bob’s farm. “I have a great team of about eight seasonal employees that help during the busy season with transplanting or selling. Otherwise, it’s just my brother, Dicky, and me to do.” “The seed planting process is still done the old fashion way, same as my dad and grandpa did it” Bob said. “It’s still the most efficient use of space and time for a smaller operation like ours.” As one can imagine, watering is one of the biggest and most important jobs on any farm.

“We spend about five to six hours a day watering. In late spring, when tem- peratures start to get hotter, some green- houses must be watered 2-3 times a day,” Fernau said. “The seeding process is still done the old fashion way, same as my dad and grandpa did it” Bob said. “It’s still the most efficient use of space and time for a smaller operation like ours.”

There are dozens of tomato vari- eties available today, so I could not resist asking, “What is your favorite tomato variety and why?” Bob playfully in stitches: “I hate tomatoes!” he said with a chuckle. His top three sellers are Big Boy, Early Girl and Jet Star. 

“Raspberry pinks is also a good part of the fall business at Fernau’s. Pum-kins raised here are only sold to the pub- lic, not to retail outlets. One of the secrets of buying local means there is always an expert on site to answer questions. When asked what the most common complaint is from customers, he said it’s rabbits, deer and squirrels. How to prevent them? Build a fence and use wire fencing with small holes or the small rabbits will still get in. When asked how he competes with the local “big box” retailers, “Quality is our No. 1 advantage. Keep- ing plants watered and in the right tem- perature environments produces strong, healthy plants,” he said. “Some of the other places might pull someone from the automotive department and put them in their garden center. Things are just not get cared for as well. Also, we have the experience and knowledge to help people who have questions.” Asked about any plans to retire, Bob smiled and said, “it’s always been the family tradition to die on the job, and I plan to continue that!”

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Homeless issues best mitigated with collective response

If you have spent much time downtown or near Riverside Park this summer, you have no doubt noticed a population of Oshkosh residents experiencing homelessness. While this is not a new issue, it is one that appears to be growing in visibility across Wisconsin, and across the United States.

What can we here in Oshkosh do to address homelessness in our community? Homelessness is an issue on which I get frequent contacts in my official capacity, and while I am always happy to answer any questions on the topic, I also readily admit I do not have the answers. In my day job as a Public Administration professor, we call homelessness a wicked problem. That is, a societal challenge for which there is no easy solution, and one that cannot be addressed solely by the public, nonprofit or private sector.

In addition, there is much disagreement about the causes, impacts and appropriate policy responses to homelessness. Hence, I think it is worthwhile to establish some basic facts, and share some thoughts, around the issue.

What is the size of the homeless population in Oshkosh? Getting reliable numbers on a transient population is a challenge, but state education data can provide a window into the current situation in Oshkosh and neighboring communities. The latest data from the Department of Public Instruction indicate that 1.9 percent of students were experiencing homelessness in 2022-23. That’s 1.9 percent of the school district. In comparison, 2.6 percent of students in the Appleton Area School District, 2.7 percent in the Fond du Lac School District, and 1.3 percent in the Neenah Joint School District were homeless. Statewide, 1.9 percent of students were experiencing homelessness, putting Oshkosh right at the state average.

Of course, these numbers do not tell us about the adult population, though I do know that our local emergency shelter has been at capacity some nights this summer. Whatever the actual population, we know it is substantial.

Understanding why people are homeless is complicated. On more than one occasion I have been told the issue is that people want to be homeless, i.e., that it is a choice. While I am sure there are instances of individuals who, for whatever reason, want to be homeless, it is the exception and not the rule. Like any complex challenge homelessness is a function of many factors, including but not limited to unemployment, medical bills, addiction, domestic abuse, and mental health.

I also hear the occasional horror story about an individual being transported to an Oshkosh facility by out-of-town law enforcement. Again, such anecdotes are not representative of the well-meaning people behind their development, created far more misery than we know and do not know, and also be willing to challenge our own thinking on the issue in a way that brings us together toward a common cause.

Michael R. Ford is an associate professor of public administration at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, where he teaches graduate courses in budgeting, state and local government, and nonprofit management. He also serves on the Oshkosh Common Council.

Public help sought on deer, game birds surveys

The state Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is seeking the public’s help collecting crucial deer and game bird management data starting Aug. 1 through the Operation Deer Watch Survey and the Game Bird Brood Observations Survey.

The surveys are designed to measure the reproductive status of deer and game birds. Data is used to collect crucial deer and game bird management data, including a fawn-to-hen ratio for deer and a poult-to-hen ratio for game birds.

They solved. Here in Oshkosh we have no shortage of well-intended people, but we need more strategy, more cooperation, more empathy, and more operational capacity if we are going to make progress on the issue.

Hence it is encouraging to see Winnebago County putting resources into linking the many public and nonprofit organizations working to be part of the solution. Easier said than done, but at the very least the approach recognizes that progress will not come from one municipality or one nonprofit working alone.

I am hopeful we all, myself very much included, can be honest about what we know and do not know, and also be willing to challenge our own thinking on the issue in a way that brings us together toward a common cause.
A Tavern evolus while still serving history, and hot dogs

By Lee Reiherzer
Herald contributor

There is no other place like Bob’s Trails End. The tavern at 500 Merritt Ave. is the product of a distinct Oshkosh neighborhood and the persistence of a few tavern keepers who have made this place their life’s work. Trails End is an institution unto itself.

Bob Winkelman has been running the tavern since buying Trails End in 1985. But like many Oshkosh natives, this place has been a part of Winkelman’s life for almost all his life.

“Oh yeah,” he says, “I had hot dogs here when I was a kid, and we’d come in here on Friday nights and have fish, or get chicken on Saturdays.” At that time, it was called Van’s Tavern and it was already more than 60 years old.

The first tavern in this building at the northeast corner of Broad and Merritt came into being in 1897. The location was excellent. The neighborhood, in the heart of the old Fourth Ward, was populated with beer-loving European immigrants. They were joined by travelers who made the saloon their first stop after arriving at the Chicago & Northwestern Railroad Depot just across the street.

The saloon soon became one of the most popular spots on the east side. The early success led to the Oshkosh Brewing Co. purchasing the property in 1896. The move ensured that only OBC beer would be served there. In 1897, the building was expanded and two bowling alleys were squeezed in. It was all good until Prohibition arrived in 1920.

The lively saloon had devolved into little more than a lunchroom by the time Bill Vandenberg bought the business in 1923. Vandenberg kicked things back into gear, converting the former saloon into a speakeasy. He lived with his family in the house next door and devised a special serving method to subvert the dry law.

Vandenberg’s great-granddaughter Michelle Benton was told the old stories.

“T here was a doorway that connected the house and the bar,” Benton says. “My great-grandmother ran the door from inside the house and would serve the drinks from there.”

When Prohibition ended in 1933, Vandenberg’s Speakeasy became Van’s Tavern. It would remain so until 1960 when it became Trails End. The tavern had fallen on hard times by the time Bob Winkelman arrived in 1985. Winkelman was committed to the tavern’s revival.

“I thought of it as something long term,” he says. “I sold my house to buy this place. It pretty much became my life.”

Part of that revival included bringing back Clarence “Pop” Steinhilber, who had left in the early 1980s after having been involved with the tavern as far back as the 1920s.

See Trail’s End on Page 11
“He was a great guy,” Winkelman says, “I don’t think he ever said a bad word about anybody. Pep was an old-time bartender. He always wore that bar apron.”

Steinhilber wasn’t the only original making a return. The 1926 recipe for the famous Trails End hot dog came with him. “After I bought the place, Pep told me the people before me had changed the recipe for the hot dog sauce,” Winkelman says. “So we put everything back to the original recipe that Vandenberg first used.”

A year after Winkelman took over, Julie Feldner came on board. She and Winkelman have brought Trails End into the tavern’s third century. The journey has included steering the bar through its second pandemic. The 1918 flu pandemic led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 1929 Great Depression led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 1980s recession led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 1990s recession led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 2000s recession led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 2010s recession led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt. The 2020s recession led to a ban on public gatherings that wreaked havoc for the saloon at Broad and Merritt.

“Tales End into the Tavern’s Third Century of Oshkosh History.”

The symbolism is inescapable. The blue fish is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity. The fabled white horse is a traditional symbol of good luck and prosperity.
By Shirley Brabender Mattox

Oshkosh’s treasured bungalows made clean statement

I moved to Oshkosh in 1967 but it wasn’t until 1985 that I decided to buy a house and settle down. I looked at more than 50 old historic houses; the second one was a bungalow which felt just right as soon as I walked in the back door.

I never considered buying a bungalow; I was more of a Victorian or Queen Anne person. However, there was something comfortable and solid about this home; I had fallen in love with a bungalow.

There are several hundred bungalows built between 1900 and 1930 interspersed throughout Oshkosh neighborhoods on both sides of the river. The North Main Street Bungalow Historic District, listed on the State and National Register in 2013, consists of one or one-and-a-half story modest homes with most of the living space on one floor. This was the first modern house for the working middle class.

Bungalows were a reaction to the opulence and overly ornate Victorian architectural style. Bungalows were sturdy with clean lines, functional design and emphasized quality craftsmanship using natural materials of stone, brick and wood.

The bungalow’s exterior had low-pitched rooflines with exposed rafter tails and decorative brackets under the eaves. Many had a wide front porch beneath the main roof with tapered or square columns supporting the porch; this porch became an extension of the living space and a connection with the surrounding environment.

Above the porch, a dormer in a shed, gable or hip design allowed light in the attic or second-floor living space. Many bungalows also had a sunroom bay at the front or back of the house with walls of windows, useful year round. There were many double-hung windows that were 4-over-1 or 6-over-1 and provided natural air and light.

The bungalow floor plan put the public rooms, living room, dining room and kitchen on one side of the house and the private rooms on the other side. The living room may have an impressive brick or stone fireplace and exposed wooden beams in the ceiling.

The Craftsman Bungalow had many built-in furniture options such as colonnades that served as room dividers, a buffet in the dining room, window seats, a breakfast nook in or near the kitchen, linen closets, and bookcases or benches in the bedroom closets, and bookcases or benches on either side of the fireplace.

The craftsman who built the Oshkosh bungalows fortunately had easy access to millwork from local lumber companies. Hardwood floors, cove moldings, banisters, baseboards, beautiful doors and window casings were all created from the old-growth timber that drove the economy of our city. A color palette of warm earth tones complemented the beauty of the bungalow’s natural woodwork.

Many bungalow owners can proudly claim their house is 100 years old. The effort to preserve and maintain their historic homes is how our community can achieve greater sustainability. Preserving these homes is how our community can achieve greater sustainability. Preserving these bungalows contributes to the revitalization of neighborhoods and has also proven to be a powerful economic tool. May these bungalows constructed by Oshkosh craftsmen serve another 100 years.
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Collaborative approach takes on fall-related injuries

From Rebuilding Together Fox Valley

Sister Mary and Sister Mary Jo have lived on Patriot Lane in Oshkosh for 20 years. After more than six decades spent helping others, they realized that they could use a little help themselves.

They needed to make a few updates to their home like the installation of a grab bar in the bathroom to help prevent falls. Thanks to coordinated efforts between Rebuilding Together Fox Valley, the Oshkosh Fire Department, the Aging Disability Resource Center (ADRC), and other community partners, the sisters received the home modifications they needed at no charge.

“Everyone prefers to stay at home rather than go to assisted living,” said Sister Mary. “This truly is a step in that direction.”

On average, the Oshkosh Fire Department responds to someone who has suffered a fall more than five times a day. “Falls are not a natural part of aging,” stated Erin Roberts, a Winnebago County provider. The Winnebago County ADRC provides free home fall risk assessments.

“When responding to a fall-related call, we help to connect the individual who fell with home safety modifications and personal health and well-being services to prevent future falls,” said Oshkosh Fire Chief Mike Stanley.

Grants totaling almost $160,000 from the Ladies Benevolent Society’s Advocates for Older Adults Fund and U.S. Venture Fund for Basic Needs within the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation supported development of a collaborative approach to the growing number of fall-related injuries.

Rebuilding Together Fox Valley installs grab bars, toilet seat risers, bathtub transfer benches, night lights, and bathtub anti-slip strips at no cost to qualifying homeowners. The Winnebago County ADRC ensures that individuals have access to nutritious food, exercise classes and transportation to appointments. They also see that individuals are using the benefits that might be available to them through their health insurance provider. The Winnebago County Health Department provides free home fall risk assessments.

“Falls are not a natural part of aging,” stated Erin Roberts, a Winnebago County public health nurse who visits residents in their homes. “There are simple things that you can do to reduce the likelihood of sustaining an injury due to a fall. Things like managing your health from head to toe with eye exams and physicals, engaging in regular exercise to build strength and improve balance, and making your living environment safer.”
Better Than Ezra brings its tour to the Leach with Train

By Chase Millam
Oshkosh Herald

Alternative rock band Better Than Ezra is opening for Train at the Leach Amphitheater on Sunday and halfway through their Hot Summer Nights tour. “This tour has just been a ball. We’ve known the guys from Train for a really long time and have a history,” frontman and co-founder Kevin Griffin said. “They used to open for us back in the day.”

The band formed in 1988 and has been leaving its mark on the music scene ever since. Producing electric live performances and bringing an innovative sound to the table, they are best known for hit songs “Good,” “Extra Ordinary” and “Desperately Wanting.”

Griffin said audiences can expect a variety of songs at the show.

“We’re playing a lot of the old hits, we’re doing some new ones, we’re doing some deep cuts and then we’re doing some really fun covers that have audience participation,” he said. “So we’re just having a good time. It’s been a really good vibe on the road. Everyone gets along.”

Better Than Ezra released its latest single “Mystified” on July 18, the first since 2018, which has been met with a positive response from fans. “This song just has an instant reaction from fans,” Griffin said. “People dig it, it feels familiar to our old fans; it’s been a really great reception.”

Griffin said his wife growing up in the Midwest and moving out to San Francisco was a muse for the song. “I wanted it to be this song about America,” he said. “About this Midwestern girl that goes West and things don’t quite work out the way she thought. It felt like it needed to be this wide-open road type song.”

Griffin said they are set to release their next album in 2024, their first since 2014. “We’re putting out two more singles this year and the album will come out in March,” he said. “We just finalized that.”

The band strives to bring a diverse sound and wide range of influences to each album.

“There are some bands that do really great with the same sound on every record,” he said. “We want each record to sound fresh, new and relevant. I also write and work with a lot of different artists so what they’re into and their songwriting style rubs off on my own.”

This fall the group will be embarking on a Return of the Legends of the Fall tour, a sequel to last fall’s tour.

“We went out and did this three-week tour and it was really successful, so we’re like, ‘Let’s do that every year,’” Griffin said. “Legends of the Fall is a great tour name. Let’s just rebrand it like sequels of movies. Next year will be Legends of the Fall Tokyo Slide. Because we’re going to start naming them after ‘Fast and Furious’ sequels. It’s just stupid enough to be funny.”

Griffin spends his downtime hanging out with family and exercising. “I love my kids, that’s my biggest joy,” he said. “The irony is even when you’re tired that’s smarter than you, more talented, but where you can win is just by not quitting,” he said. “We have never broken up, we just keep playing. We’ve been together for over 35 years.”

Better Than Ezra lead singer Kevin Griffin (second from left) talks about his band’s current tour and plans for a new album for release next year.

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Hard rock band Firehouse enjoys Waterfest vibe

By Chase Millam

Lead guitarist and founding member Bill Leverty of Firehouse is no stranger to Wisconsin stages, having played more than 60 shows in the state with his band.

“Wisconsin has treated us so well, I love playing there,” Leverty said. “I think our music has resonated in Wisconsin and we’re really thankful that it has, we’re going to keep coming back until after our career is done.”

Leverty views Waterfest, where his band will open Aug. 10 for Lita Ford and Warrant, as a great family event.

“I like the multi-generations we’re getting to see out in the crowd,” he said. “Used to be the kids were there, then the parents were bringing their kids, and now there’s grandkids out there, it’s a wonderful family vibe and we’re honored to be part of that.”

Leverty said one of his favorite memories of playing in Wisconsin was the last time Firehouse took the stage at the Wisconsin State Fair.

“That fair is probably the best in the country,” he said. “The last time we played there was absolutely awesome. We’ve been playing the fair there since the very beginning, it was just such a great feeling to be back there again and have all the people singing the words to our songs.”

Firehouse has had a steady touring schedule since 2005, performing all across the country and world.

“We always wanted to get into this so we could play live, we were always on call to play gigs,” Leverty said. “We just want to keep going. It’s the greatest job you could ask for.”

Even when he’s not on tour, Leverty plays guitar every day, working on new solo material.

“I put out five solo albums and I just put out a single,” he said. “What I do is release a song and then start working on the next song. When I’ve got 10 songs done I’ll press them up and put them out as an album.”

Firehouse’s compilation album called “Full Circle” was released in 2011. The band has no definite plans for a new record, but according to Leverty, they all want to do it.

“We’re waiting for that magic song to come through where we all say, ‘That sounds like our next song, let’s start here,‘” he said. “Hopefully it’ll come soon, we all would love to do it.”

“Thanks so much to the fans out there who have made it so that we can do this full time,” Leverty said. “Our first record came out in 1990, we’ve been doing it for a long time thanks to you, we hope to see you at the show.”

Winnebago County Fair Online.com
Cost of living in region has many families treading water

By Jacob Resneck
Wisconsin Watch

Shannon Pikka loves the work-life balance of her job in construction. She left an office job in insurance and now enjoys being up early and working with her hands as part of a drywall finishing crew. The single mother’s workday ends around 3 p.m. – just in time to greet her two children from school.

“Kids are coming home at that time, and we got the whole evening now to –” Pikka said. “Our job should not dictate our lifestyle.”

Despite changing careers nearly four years ago, she’s still earning apprentice wages due to setbacks during the pandemic when her youngest was in third grade and schools switched to distance learning.

“I would be a journeywoman right now I had a baby-sitting option so I could have still shown up for work and gained all those hours in the year – so that set me back,” the De Pere, Wisconsin resident said.

The difference is a full $9 an hour. As it is, she’s making just shy of $27 an hour. But with two school-age children in her household, paying all the bills is a stretch. Pikka gets no child support, and she relies on her parents who live nearby to provide child care for the days she needs to be at a full-time job for days or even weeks at a time.

“I am just trying to make ends meet,” she said.

But government statistics show many in the community earn a lot less than they do.

The state Department of Workforce Development estimates that two adults working full-time earning $25.20 an hour each is just enough to be self-sufficient in a household with two children when factoring in the cost of housing, transportation, food and child care.

The average wage in Green Bay, according to the most recent federal Bureau of Labor Statistics report, was $26.29 in 2022. But the median earnings were $21.84 an hour, meaning that half of workers earn less than that.

In other words, many workers supporting families in northeast Wisconsin are just squeaking by, especially at a time when the cost of living is increasing in Wisconsin and across the nation.

“Self-sufficiency is attainable for the majority of full-time workers if children are not involved,” wrote DWD spokesperson Jennifer Sereno. “However, the situation rapidly changes when just one child is brought into the picture, let alone multiple.”

That’s because the cost of child care can rival tuition at a state university, the Wisconsin Policy Forum wrote in a recent report. A state survey of child-care facilities found the annual median cost for school-aged children starts at around $10,000 but can be as much as $40,000 a year for high-quality infant care in urban areas like Oshkosh and Green Bay.

Pikka’s household has no second income, yet she is still well above the level to qualify for many public assistance programs.

Her story represents a growing segment of Wisconsin’s working population: those earning too much to qualify for most public assistance programs but not enough to afford child care and transportation.

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so they beat us up," she said. At age 4, a pair of school teachers adopted her and raised her in northeast Wisconsin. If it wasn’t for her parents helping with child care, Pikka said she could never maintain her higher paying career in construction.

“I wouldn’t be able to do it," she said. “I’d have to go back to my office job.”

The dearth of affordable child care in Wisconsin is well-documented. The staff shortage in day care centers itself has a ripple effect. On paper, there are roughly 37,500 slots for children in the 19 counties in northeast Wisconsin. But a survey last year of 1,173 child care centers in Wisconsin found nearly half were below capacity.

"It is important to note that this is life-or-death for providers and may not be using all slots due to staffing shortages, low enrollment, or other factors," wrote Gina Paige, a spokesperson for the state Department of Children and Families, which licenses day care facilities.

Affordable housing is another key to family sustainability. But a shortage of supply has driven up rental prices across the board.

"It doesn’t really matter what the availability of jobs is like if young folks are getting priced out of certain areas because housing is too expensive," Long said.

Real estate data show that housing prices across the state continue to rise even as sales slump due to constrained supply and rising interest rates that have added to the cost of borrowing.

In April 2023, the median house in northeast Wisconsin cost $260,000. That’s $23,000 less than the statewide median. But the median cost rose 7% across the region in the previous year, similar to the increase statewide. All this happened while real estate transactions slumped after interest rates spiked from historic lows at below 3% to more than 6% for a fixed-30 year loan in May.

The numbers are stark. There were more than 1,500 residential home sales in June 2022, just as the Fed hiked interest rates for a third time in response to inflation fears. Ten months later in April of this year, the region saw half as many home sales deals at 77%.

Property owners who are locked in with relatively low interest rates are less likely to list their homes now because they’d pay higher rates on their next property, said real estate broker Kevin Jones, co-owner of Adashun Jones in Fond du Lac and Oshkosh.

"There are more people pursuing the few properties that are on the market," he said.

The region has already faced supply constraints as baby boomers live longer and stay put, leaving fewer properties for younger aspiring homeowners.

"We have healthy baby boomers – I’m one of them – who are staying in their homes longer, and millennials who are clamoring to find homes and are at a disadvantage because they increasingly..."

Lita Ford

returning to the stage in 2008 after the more than 10-year hiatus and has been rocking nonstop ever since.

"Music has saved my life over and over so many times. We’ve really come full circle in life and now it is who we are,” Ford said. “When it hits the fan and weird things happen because life does do that to people, I always turn back to music and it gets me through.”

Ford said she had to adjust to a different music industry when she returned to performing in 2008. She jokes about talking with her then-manager about all of the cell phones she was seeing filming her at shows.

"I was like, can’t you make them stop filming me, and he was like, ‘Well, not really,’” Ford said. "At the time I thinking, can’t they just check them at the door or just throw them all in a big box when they come in? Now, I’m used to it and don’t feel that way.”

She also talked about how different touring is with the rise in costs that goes into putting a schedule of shows together.

She has to rely on borrowed money, Marquette University economics professor David Clark said at a recent economics forum.

He said many millennials of child-bearing age – those born in the 1980s and 90s – “kind of got dealt a bad hand” coming out of the Great Recession with a weak labor market and so “logically and rationally stayed out of the market” during the time when working Americans would tend to purchase first homes.

Jones, the real estate broker and Fox Valley landlord, said the rental housing market is also hot with rents increasing by 10% to 20% annually.

"I think it’s because a lot of the rentals have been consolidated into a small group of investors – that’s one side of the story," he said. "And the other side is there’s just not enough homes and developments that are being built.

In 2022, the National Low Income Housing Coalition – an advocacy group – listed the fair market price for a two-bedroom apartment in northeast Wisconsin – $757 – at below the $889 in the Oshkosh area. The study, citing U.S. Census figures, also found the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment at $687 across northeast Wisconsin – for that matter, across the entire state is higher than the recommended 30% of the average income renters in those counties make.

Home ownership remains elusive for Pikka. For three years, she has rented a two-bedroom apartment for $875 in De Pere where she enjoys living despite the higher housing prices compared to neighboring Fox Valley. She feels she needs the hours for journeyman wages, she said she will try to buy something.

But Pikka, who is 41, said that’s at least three years away. In the meantime she is pursuing another dream. Pikka would like to visit Colombia with her children to reconnect with her birth parents.

"Before you could just hop on a bus and go but now so much has changed,” Ford said. “We just keep plodding through and just keep going.”

This story is part of the KEW (Northeast Wisconsin) News Lab’s series, Families Matter, covering issues important to families in the region. The lab is a local news collaboration in northeast Wisconsin made up of six news organizations. The University of Wisconsin-Green Bay’s Journalism Department is an educational partner.
Valley Christian excited to field own football program

By Steve Clark
Oshkosh Herald

Once again, Valley Christian will have its own football program.

After spending the last six seasons in a co-op with St. Mary Catholic, the Warriors’ blue and silver will be back on the field as the school is set to support an eight-player football team.

“We could not be more excited,” Valley Christian Athletic Director Daniel Clayton wrote in an email to the Herald. “We believe that football will help bring more athletes to the school which will expand our already growing student population, it will increase the student sections participation, and continue to grow our sports program as we endeavor to bring all of our sports under the umbrella of Valley Christian School.”

The last time that Valley Christian fielded its own team was when the school had an eight-player program in 2016. That season after injuries left the team without a quarterback, Valley Christian’s football program was shut down midway through the season.

When Clayton began his tenure at Valley Christian, the school only enrolled 64 students, with approximately half of those being boys. Factor in that not all students might be interested in playing football and it makes for a small pool to choose from.

In fact, Clayton said the most players that Valley Christian sent to the co-op with St. Mary Catholic was last season when eight players were on the team. Yet, being part of the co-op was essential to keep football going.

“I want to publicly thank (athletic director) Matt Schoultz and the coaching staff at Saint Mary’s for bringing us along as a co-op to help create more interest in our football program at Valley Christian,” wrote Clayton, who also acknowledged Adam Bates, who was the athletic director at St. Mary Catholic when the co-op began.

While in the co-op with St. Mary Catholic, Valley Christian brought Dave Birr – the last head coach of the Warriors’ 11-man team in 2002 – back to the school. Birr, who will serve as the team’s head coach, along with assistants Ben Birr and Mat Rieckhoff began to generate interest in the program at the middle school level.

Last fall, Clayton said a deadline was set with a minimum of 20 student-athletes needed to sign up for football in order to have a team and presented the idea at a parents meeting.

“Twenty-five boys ended up signing up for football,” Clayton said. “The interest did not stop there, however, as we currently have over 30 boys signed up for football this year. We could not be more excited. The coaches talk to the boys all the time about helping being a part of a legacy that continues to build up young men to make an impact for Christ on and off the field.”

Valley Christian’s eight-game schedule this season begins with a road game at Sevastopol and includes three home games, the first on Aug. 31 against Green Lake/Priceton.

However, the Warriors will not be playing their home games on the field behind the school. Instead all three home games are slated to be played at Xavier High School in Appleton.

“Our field at Valley does not have lights, and there is nothing better for these boys than to experience a night football game,” said Clayton, who added that it was a homage to the previous 11-player teams at the school, which played their games in Appleton from 1998-2002. “It was helpful as an AD to have previous experience with football at the school. I don’t know that things would have happened so rapidly if we were not experienced in this area.”
Day by Day Shelter executive director Molly Yatso Butz, shown in the facility’s open space, said simple things like having the beds off the ground has been great for guests and employees. Yatso Butz says everyone loves him.

The shelter's guest employment program offers janitorial jobs such as cleaning and dusting, organizing the kitchen and low storage of guests' personal items being off the floor, which now has no days off. Everything has changed in the last two months and we've been working hard tweaking and fine-tuning our policies and procedures,” Yatso Butz said. “The challenge is we work with people that are in crisis and generally they've had some significant trauma, so no day is ever the same.”

She said the best way for people to understand the shelter is to consider volunteering. They welcome residents to be part of a meal team, help with laundry or serve as hospitality volunteers who assist staff.

Yatso Butz said the shelter is fortunate to have the support of so many in the community, able to stay open thanks to grant funds, donations and volunteers. The facility recently added a service dog, which she said is just another way the shelter is providing guests with more of a home than just a place for the night.

The dog is named Phoenix and Yatso Butz said the shelter is fortunate to have the support of so many in the community, able to stay open thanks to grant funds, donations and volunteers. The facility recently added a service dog, which she said is just another way the shelter is providing guests with more of a home than just a place for the night.

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Building team chemistry big goal of early practices

By Steve Clark

Tuesday marked the official start of the 2023 football season and excited players and coaches hit the practices fields ready to embark on the latest journey.

Much of the practice time the first week is spent installing the offensive and defensive formations and philosophies, as well getting plenty of conditioning in, but there is another common goal for the initial practices.

“One of the most important parts (of the first week) is to come together as a team, chemistry-wise,” said Oshkosh West’s first-year head coach Joseph Ray. “We want our guys to start gelling and being comfortable around each other. Essentially with us being a new staff, having the kids comfortable around the coach and the coaches being comfortable with each other is important.”

Lourdes Academy head coach Kevin Wopat also said that X’s and O’s are just one of the important aspects of the opening week.

“Yeah, you want to get all of the base stuff installed,” Wopat said. “Then, we are just looking for the team to come together, support each other and have each other’s backs during the tough times.”

Ray said that there will be time each day of practice the first week where the players will be able to come together to discuss “real-life things” before hitting the practice field.

West is also planning a picnic for the seniors Friday and then an open practice and family barbecue Saturday, where families can also build a stake in the program.

“The picnic with our seniors will give them a chance to talk about what their goals are, what they want to see happen this year and how much the team means to them,” Ray said. “Then we will have our community day on Saturday.”

Saturday also is one of the bigSenior-bonding moments for the Knights’ program, too.

Although Wopat said that the team will do different team-building events throughout the week, a Saturday staple for the program is the coaches versus players paintball event.

“We try to mix it up every year so the kids are maybe caught a little off guard and kind of keeps a little bit of an unknown to it, but we always finish the week with our coaches versus kids paintball and that is something the kids look forward to,” Wopat said. “For some kids that may be the highlight of the season. It’s just laid back and fun with your coaches in a setting you normally don’t get to see.”

Both West and Lourdes Academy are also planning a unique experience for the end of the first week of practice as both programs will hold a mom’s clinic where the players mothers will get to enhance their knowledge of the game and interact with their sons on the practice field.

“We had done it in the past and it had kind of become stagnant so we stopped. Some parents asked about bringing it back and so we have a whole new group who haven’t been through it before,” Wopat said. “Having that as an opportunity both for the kid and the mother to have a different football experience is a fun event.”

Wopat has been through the work and the fun of the opening week many times before as the longtime head coach of the Knights.

For Ray, this is his first opening week as the head coach of a program, which brings an added level of anticipation. But there is just a little more on his plate as his tenure at West begins.

“We are expecting the first child any day now,” said Ray, who was offered the West position and found out he was going to be a father on the same day in January. “It’s been crazy since January when I got the job. Finishing out at Hamilton and making sure things are getting rolling here and then getting here over the summer. I’ve been proud of the steps we’ve taken in June and July and we are very excited to get things going.”

Oshkosh North also started practice this week but calls to head coach Luke Ott were not returned.
Rec softball

July 24

Monday Reetz South
Dobbs Trophy def. Kelly’s 12-4
LeRoy’s def. Community Church 10-7
Jerry’s def. Wyedood Baptist Church 12-10
Molly’s def. Jerry’s 12-10

Monday Veterans
Ratch & Debi-Hendaw def. Ratch & Debi-Fredick 20-3
Ratch & Debi-Granfour def. Trails End 16-4

July 25

Tuesday Reetz South
Jerry’s def. Ultimate Towing 23-7
Jinschele Insurance def. Terry’s 17-0

July 26

Wednesday Reetz South/Country Park North
The Fountain def. Players 18-4
Obliss def. SNC Manufacturing 21-5
Edetics def. Turtle Suites 7-0
Associated Appraisal Consultants def. The Grounds Guys 6-3
Evil Roy Slades def. Terry’s 10-5

Wednesday Veterans
Terry’s def. Winkler’s Westward Ho 11-7
Pioneer def. Wally Schmid Excavating 12-10
Fletch’s def. Camera Casino 12-7
Houge’s def. Camera Casino 11-3

July 27

Thursday Coed
T&D Lanes def. Dobbs Brook Forfeit
Houge’s-Hoffman def. Houge’s-Westphal 12-10
Big Daddy’s-Miller def. Big Daddy’s-Porter 14-12
Reprint def. Fifth Ward 13-12
Dublin’s def. LeRoy’s 1-0

Obituaries

Debbie Steines
Debbie Steines, 73, of Oshkosh, passed away peacefully July 30, 2023, with her family by her side. She was born to the late Edward and Joyce Whitney, December 20, 1951, in Neenah, Wisconsin. Debbie graduated from General Douglass MacArthur High School, Levittown, New York in 1969 with a degree in cosmetology. She later went on to receive a BS from Lakeland College, in Information Technology.

Debbie worked for various companies and ultimately retired from UPS Air after 20 years of service. She loved her job as a Tech Pub Analyst and enjoyed her coworkers. Debbie had so many talents and things she was passionate about. She was an amazing baker who loved to decorate cakes and cookies for family and friends. Debbie had a creative eye and was able to create beautiful pieces of art, she enjoyed sewing, quilting, stamping, painting, and handcrafting.

Debbie is survived by her husband, Jack Kuhl, Dennis, and Lois Steines along with Nieces and Nephews. She leaves behind a dear friend and confidant, Susan Golden, as well as many friends and family, too many to list.

Debbie was immensely proud of her family, and leaves behind nothing but beautiful memories. As her health declined, she looked to her faith for guidance and comfort she longs to meet her family and friends awaiting her in Heaven.

Please help us celebrate the bright light of Debbie’s life. The memorial will be held at Lake View Memorial Park on Friday, August 4, 2023, at 11:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers a memorial has been established.

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Obituaries

Matthew L. Hostak

Matthew Lowell Hostak died July 23, 2023 in Oshkosh, WI of cancer. He was born on November 11, 1962 to Jack and Gloria Hostak in St. Joseph, MI. In 1964, he moved with his family to Rochester, MN. After graduating with honors from Mayo High School in 1981, Matt enlisted in the Armed Forces. He served in the U.S. Army two years active duty in Germany, and ten years reserve status. Upon discharge from active duty, Matt attended the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire on the G.I.Bill and a collection of baseball cards. He graduated in 1998 with a B.S. in Hydrology, with a secondary emphasis in Geology.

Matt’s first and only job out of college was with the State of Wisconsin - Department of Natural Resources. His most recent position before disability had been that of Air Pollution Engineer. In recent years, he was a frequent volunteer with the Lake Winnebago Basin Association and served in the U.S. Army two years active duty, Matt attended the University of Wisconsin - Eau Claire on the G.I.Bill and a collection of baseball cards. He graduated in 1998 with a B.S. in Hydrology, with a secondary emphasis in Geology.

Matt’s hobbies over the years included scuba diving, furniture building, salvaging and rehabbing houses, historic Oshkosh, and most recently, privy digging with his friend Bob Bergman. Bob showed Matt the ropes of digging pits at the sites of old outhouses, and he amassed quite the collection of antique bottles and other ephemera of the past. Most of all, Matt was a kind, generous, and loving soul. Matt never met a stranger and had friends from all walks of life. His Bright Light will forever shine in everyone he touched. He was also quite a cat lover and cared for a passel of cats over the years.

Matt was preceded in death by his dear sister Julie, who died unexpectedly of natural causes on March 30,2022. He is survived by his loving parents, Jack and Gloria Hostak, cherished brothers Chris Hostak and John M. (Diane) Hostak, fond nephew John C. Hostak (partner Olivia Silva), and beloved longtime friend Laura Ann Day.

A private family service will take place at the time of interment at the family cemetery in Kewaunee, WI. Memorial gifts may be made to the Parkinson’s Disease Foundation, Mayo Clinic, 200 First St. W, Rochester, MN 55902, which goes to help people afford medical care. Also, St. Croix Hospice, 93 S. Pioneer Rd., Ste 100, Fond du Lac, WI 54935. See you on the other side, Matt.

Ronald Siekerke

Ronald Siekerke, affectionately known as “Hermie” or “Big Ron”, passed away unexpectedly due to complications from surgery on Monday, July 24, 2023 at the age of 65. He was born in Oshkosh on November 11, 1957 to the late Francis and Marion (Ludwig) Siekerke.

Ron was a graduate of Oshkosh North High School. At the age of 16, he began building race cars and repairing engines. He enjoyed participating in demolition derby as a driver, working various jobs as a mechanic including the Eagles and Shoreview Lanes. He was a member of the Fraternal Order of Eagles for 36 years. Ron is survived by his siblings, Julie Boese, Peggy (Dave Schumacher) Siekerke, Gary and Mark Siekerke; sister-in-law, Teri Siekerke; uncle, Walter Ludwig Jr; aunt, Elisena Velazquez; as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins, and friends.

In addition to his family, he was pre- deceased by his brothers, Lawrence, Steven; half-brothers, Marvin, Donald, Glen, Francis Jr. and Dennis Siekerke; brother-in-law, Norman Boese Jr; aunt, Janice Ludwig.

An Eagle service with a funeral service to follow will be held at Konrad-Behlman Funeral Home Eastside, 402 Wagoon Ave. on Thursday, August 3, 2023 at 7:00 PM. Visitation will be held from 4:00 PM until the time of service. Burial will be at Peace Lutheran Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, a memorial will be established.

Lance E. Patrie

Lance E. Patrie, age 63, surrounded by his family at home went to be with his Lord and Saviour on July 22, 2023, after a long battle with Leukemia.

Lance was loving, generous and honest. His favorite hobbies were gardening and beekeeping. He enjoyed visiting small town antique shops and eating at many of Wisconsin’s wonderful supper clubs. A particular highlight of Lance’s life was traveling with his brother Tyler aboard the USS Nimitz from Hawaii to San Francisco and on to San Diego.

Lance is survived by his mother, Audrey Allmers, siblings: Joyce Engelman, Fawn (Michael) Barman, Tristie (Jeffrey) Ludwig, Tyler Patrie, nieces and nephews and extended family. Lance is preceded in death by his father Willard Patrie, brothers-in-law Richard A Jones and Jeffrey Engelman.

Per his wishes, there will be no funeral service. A Celebration of Life will be held (date not set).

— Only A Sinner Saved By Grace —
Arlette M. Smith

Arlette M. Smith (Young) of Oshkosh, WI was born to eternal life July 24, 2023, at the age of 85. Arlette was born June 21, 1938, in Milwau- kee, WI. Arlette grew up in Milwaukee with 3 sisters and a brother. As a young girl, she met the late Curtis R. Smith, with whom she married on September 25, 1953. Arlette worked together for 68 years. They worked together building their family and a business in Milwau- kee. Together they moved to Oshkosh in 1978 to pursue new opportunities.

Arlette was a devoted mother to their three sons, the proud grandmother of their 9 children, 11 grand children and 3 great, great grandchildren. Family was her greatest joy.

Arlette’s loving heart cared for many over her lifetime. In addition to raising her own children, she cared for patients over her lifetime. In addition to raising her own children, she cared for patients in care districts especially Kirstin and Jennifer, the Residence Oshkosh, and Advocate Aurora Health ICU. Her compassion and support were so appreciated.

A prayer service and inurnment will be held on Thursday August 3, 2023, at 3:00 PM at Lake View Memorial Park Chapel, 2780 Northwoods Rd., Oshkosh, WI 54901. The family will receive friends and family from 1:00PM until the time of service. For online condolences, please visit https://www.seefuneral.com
An old-fashioned lemonade stand makes cents in busy, modern times! Few people take the time to squeeze fresh lemonade. Follow our “recipe” for success and start a lemonade stand of your own!

**STEP 1: The Business Plan**

You will need to invest a little cash to get started. Visit or call a local store to find out what the things you need cost. Add up your costs to determine your price and profit. Here is what the math looks like:

**EXPENSES:**
- 12 lemons cost $1.20
- 1 3/4 cups of sugar cost $0.60
- 20 paper cups cost $0.20
- Total cost for 20 cups of lemonade: $2.00

**INCOME:**
- 20 cups of lemonade at 50¢ each: $10.00

**PROFIT:**
(The money you make after covering your expenses) .................  $8.00

On a hot day, in the right spot, you might sell 100 cups of lemonade! How much money would you earn?

**STEP 2: Make a Big Sign**

Make a big, bold sign to attract people to your stand. If it is OK with your neighbors, put up several colorful signs to direct people to your stand.

**STEP 3: Punch Up Profiles**

Offer your lemonade in cups made out of oranges. To make one, cut the top off of an orange and scoop out the insides with a spoon. Pour in the lemonade and serve with a straw. Give your lemonade stand—a bright, sunny success story! They're fun to make and to eat! Thread some of your favorite treats onto a string of licorice.

**Jewels to string:**
- Jelly beans
- Gum drops
- Fruit snacks
- Raisins
- Mini marshmallows
- Cereal

Kevin and Melanie have everything they need for their lemonade stand—except customers. Draw some customers purchasing lemonade to complete this picture.

**Lemonade Recipe**

Here is a recipe for making 20 cups of fresh lemonade.

**INGREDIENTS:**
- 1 3/4 cups white sugar
- 8 cups water
- 20 lemon slices
- 1/2 cup fresh-squeezed lemon juice

**ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIRED!**

**DIRECTIONS:**
1. In a small saucepan, combine sugar and 1 cup water. Bring to a boil; remove from heat and add 1 3/4 cups water. Allow to cool to room temperature, then cover and refrigerate until chilled.
2. Remove seeds from lemon juice, but leave pulp. In a pitcher, stir together chilled syrup, lemon juice and remaining 7 cups water.

**Summer Scavenger Hunt**

Read through the newspaper for:
- a number between 200 and 500
- a price greater than $100
- a number divisible by 3
- a number between 200 and 500
- a number divisible by 2
- a number divisible by 4

Look through the newspaper for:
- a price greater than $100
- a number divisible by 3
- a number between 200 and 500
- a number divisible by 2
- a number divisible by 4
- a number divisible by 4

**How I Earn Money**

Are you an eagle-eyed reader? Circle the nine errors in the article below. Then, rewrite it correctly.

This summer, I built a lemonade stand. My friend Ricky helped me. We had a lot of customers on a very hot day. That day we made over $7.00 in profit! We got the lemons from the lemon tree in my backyard. We made signs and the neighbors let us put them in their yard.

Even our mail carrier, Molly, stopped for a cool glass of our delicious lemonade!