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District's budget issues continuing

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

The Oshkosh Area School District is going to be working through a structural budget this year and, based on a recent report, the budget issues will not be an easy fix.

OASD assistant superintendent of operations Brian Yerkey presented a budget update on Aug. 12 to the Board of Education. The district, due to self-described poor budget forecasting, is facing a potential \$6 million deficit going into this school year.

Yerkey explained that a balanced bud-

get was presented by the business services staff for the 2025-26. The district ended the school year spending more than \$3.3 million over that board-approved budget. This is, in part, due to increases to healthcare costs and employee benefit increases.

The district moved the \$3.3 million from the general fund balance to cover the deficit. This means the district's general fund balance has 7% of

the previous years' fund balance. District policy states that percentage is supposed to be between 12% and 18%.

"The district continues to operate with a structural budget deficit," Yerkey said. "Operating expenditures continue to outpace our recurring revenues placing ongoing pressure on our district resources. There are many challenges that come with public school funding."

Yerkey acknowledged he's heard a lot of people compare the district financial struggle to a business.

SEE **Budget update** ON PAGE 9



Yerkey



Photo by Michael Cooney

Faithful celebration

Peniel Welsh Chapel celebrated three milestones Sunday, 170 years of preserving Welsh faith and culture, its 104th annual Gymanfa Ganu and new recognition on both the Wisconsin State and National registers of historic places. Voices filled the 1856 chapel in four-part harmony during the annual Gymanfa Ganu, a Welsh festival of congregational hymn singing that has connected generations of Welsh families in the Lake Winnebago area.

Council members raise ideas for downtown dog park

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

A downtown Oshkosh dog park might sound pretty spectacular but whether one will be built remains uncertain.

Oshkosh Common Council member Joe Stephenson brought the idea to a recent council meeting. However, city staff noted they don't have the time or people to explore the idea.

Stephenson wants the city staff to look at the feasibility of a downtown or urban dog park in Oshkosh. Stephenson noted that the lack of an Oshkosh dog park is often mentioned during parks department

community surveys. Looking at the possibility of adding a dog park is also part of the city's comprehensive plan.

"I'm bringing forward one of our goals that's in a park plan," Stephenson said. "The intent behind this would be to try to narrow down a location, style, design of dog park, what any maintenance cost, what any total cost would be."

He added that the city has a new cultural and enrichment department headed by Anna Cannizzo with a division specifically for raising funds and fund development. Stephenson proposed this would fit with that division's goal, and the community

could start donating to the project.

Council member Alec Lefebber supports making a dog park study a priority for city staff. He mentioned an idea where the city builds one large dog park and then uses green space in other city parks to create smaller community-run dog parks across Oshkosh.

Council member Brad Spanbauer, who serves on the advisory park board, added that the city staff should investigate current park space and possible repurposing current park space to accommodate an off-leash dog park.

Dogs are allowed in all Oshkosh parks;

however, owners are strongly encouraged to keep dogs on leash for the safety of all parkgoers.

Kylie Hansen presented her idea of an indoor dog park to the council earlier in the Aug. 4 meeting. Carmen Scott added during public comment that she would like to see a dog park in the downtown area.

Five of the seven members of the Oshkosh Common Council have dogs and many members of the council spoke in favor of the idea, but there are concerns that

SEE **Dog park** ON PAGE 8

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www.oshkoshherald.com.



Photo from City of Oshkosh

The ADA-accessible caboose for the Menominee Park Train is now fully operational.

ADA-accessible caboose arrives

Oshkosh Herald

The ADA-accessible caboose for the Menominee Park Train has arrived and is now fully operational.

The caboose includes a rear access platform that folds down to provide a ramped boarding option for guests using wheelchairs and other mobility devices. This enhancement helps ensure the Menominee Park Train experience is more accessible and welcoming for all riders.

The city had ordered the ADA-compliant caboose for the train that was not sent by the manufacturer in time for the start of the summer season over Memorial Day weekend. This is the first year the trackless train has replaced the previous long-running tracked-attraction at the park after the tracks were taken out due to maintenance issues with the track, the train engine, staffing issues and costs.

The train is scheduled to operate through Labor Day.

Volunteers needed for neighborhood cleanup

Oshkosh Herald

Habitat for Humanity of Oshkosh is looking for volunteers to help with Rock the Block in September.

Volunteers are needed to help with Rocking Bent Woods’ Block. Rock the Block is all about bringing the community together to beautify neighborhoods and the community through lawn care, exterior home repair and more.

No Habitat experience is necessary. The tools, safety gear, direction and plenty of opportunities to make an impact are provided.

Breakfast, coffee, snacks, lunch, beverages and a T-shirt are also included.

Opportunities are available from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Sept. 15, 17, 22 and 24.

Sign up at habitatoshkosh.galaxydigital.com/agency/detail/...

Activities set for Hmong National Labor Day Festival

Oshkosh Herald

Hmong National Labor Day Festival will take place at the Winnebago County Community Park on Sept. 5 and Sept. 6.

The festival, which has been held for over 35 years, will showcase Hmong heritage, food, music and community activities. The event will feature soccer, volleyball, stage competition and topspin.

Hours are 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. each day. No

entry after 6 p.m. Admission is \$8 per person. Children under 36 inches tall are free. No pets are allowed.

Earlier this year, the Hmong National Labor Day Festival was honored with the Arts, Culture and Heritage Award at the Wisconsin Governor’s Conference on Tourism. This recognition came after the festival was selected from more than 30 nominees across the state.

Board approves naming rights for sports complexes

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

Winnebago County can now sell naming rights and sponsorship recognition at Winnebago County Community Park and Sunnyview Expo Center.

The Board of Supervisors approved an amendment to a county ordinance at its Aug. 18 meeting allowing the change.

The rule change will allow naming rights to be sold for the soccer, rugby and pickleball complexes projects planned for Community Park. For the improvement projects, the county is paying a portion of the cost, leaving the clubs to fundraise the remaining amount.

The local soccer clubs have a potential large donor for their project, but there are no rules on how to handle it, so a new rule needed to be created. For phase 1 of the project, the county will pay \$672,294 from the Spirit Fund and the local soccer clubs will pay \$168,074. For phase 2, the Spirit Fund will pay \$372,212 and the soccer clubs will pay \$140,234.

For the soccer project, the plans call for the fields to be tilled, graded and crowned, more topsoil will be added, and irrigation will be adjusted. An additional soccer field will be added west to the quad. Phase 1 will address the east side of the complex and Phase 2 will address the complex’s west side.

In addition to a naming rights sponsorship, the parks department is looking to create a program to allow smaller annual sponsorships for banners and signs at Sunnyview Expo Center.

Back in the Day



Oshkosh history by the Winnebago County Historical Society



August 18, 1903

Oshkosh Lumberman Gunned Down:

Thomas R. Morgan, President of the Morgan Company and City Alderman, was murdered in cold blood on the property of his lumber company. His assailant, Frederick Hampel, was an employee of the company. Reports indicate Hampel was extremely intoxicated when he approached Thomas Morgan out in the yard around 10 a.m. this morning. There was a brief verbal exchange between the lumber magnate and the employee before Morgan turned and walked away toward Oregon Street. Hampel opened fire, shooting Mr. Morgan in the back. Another employee grappled with the assailant as more shots were fired before he was subdued. Reports say the incident was unprovoked and no reason for the assault was apparent. Thomas Morgan was transported to St. Mary’s Hospital but expired before arriving there. Hampel was transported to the lock-up and around noon was found dead in his cell, the result of suicidal actions.

Source: Oshkosh Daily Northwestern, August 18, 1903; “We Shall Never Pass This Way Again” by Randy R. Domer

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Classified deadline: Thurs. 9/3 Noon

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Dragon boat club makes waves at inaugural festival

Oshkosh Herald

The Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club may be new, but its members are already finding their rhythm on the water.

After months of learning, practicing and building a club from the ground up, the Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club traveled to the Minocqua Dragon Boat Festival on Aug. 15 for its first-ever festival appearance — bringing three teams to the water and returning home with plenty to be proud of.

The club was represented by its three teams: the Fox Valley Phoenix, a Breast Cancer Survivor (BCS) team; the Fox Valley River Dragons, a mixed community team; and the Fox Valley River Raptors, a youth team.

For many members, the weekend was about much more than racing. It marked the end of a season of learning something new, meeting new people and discovering what it means to move together as a team.

“It was incredible to watch this group come together,” said Coach Lisa Ziemer. “We have people who had never been in a dragon boat before, breast cancer survivors, experienced paddlers, and young people all learning side by side. What stood out most was how supportive everyone was of each other. That’s what made the experience so meaningful.”

The club’s mission goes beyond competition.

The Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club, Inc., a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, was created to bring people together through the sport of dragon boating while promoting fitness, friendship and community. At the heart of the club is a commitment to inclusion, encouragement, teamwork and



The Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club will be back on the water Saturday for the N.E.W. Dragon Boat Festival in Oshkosh.

lifting one another up.

That spirit was especially evident in Minocqua.

The Fox Valley Phoenix, the club’s Breast Cancer Survivor team, was recognized with the BCS Spirit Award, honoring their positivity, encouragement and connection with other teams. The River Dragons, in their first season together, finished just 0.15 seconds out of the medals.

The River Raptors, the club’s youth paddlers, also had the opportunity to experience festival racing and gain confidence on the water, with several youth members joining up with the Minocqua Dragon Riders during the event. The team went undefeated and brought home a gold medal.

For a club that received its first dragon boat less than a year ago, the growth has been steady and community-driven.

And the Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club is just getting started.

The community will have another opportunity to see the sport in action Saturday in Oshkosh at the N.E.W. Dragon Boat Festival, held at the Leach Amphitheater. The event will bring together teams from across the region and will also feature cultural food and dance performances.

Festival activities begin with the awakening of the dragons at 8:30 a.m., followed by the first race at 9 a.m.

Spectators are invited to attend, watch the races and experience the festival atmosphere. Members of the Fox Valley



Members of the Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club traveled to Minocqua on Aug. 15 for the group’s first-ever festival appearance.

Dragon Boat Club will also have a booth at the event where visitors can meet paddlers and learn more about the club.

Dragon boating is open to everyone — no experience is needed. Many people try it for the first time simply looking for a new way to stay active, meet people or be part of a welcoming community.

“Our first festival showed us what can happen when people come together and support one another,” Ziemer said. “We’re building something meaningful here in the Fox Valley, and we’d love to see more people get involved.”

From their first season on the water to their debut festival, the Fox Valley Dragon Boat Club has grown into a vibrant, close-knit community-one built on encouragement, teamwork and a genuine commitment to supporting one another both on and off the water.

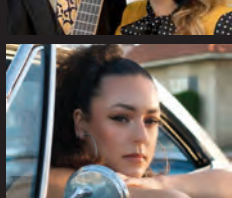


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County passes data center moratorium for 4 towns

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

The Winnebago County Board of Supervisors at its meeting Aug. 18 approved a 12-month moratorium on data center applications.

The moratorium only covers the four towns where the county controls zoning: Algoma, Omro, Neenah and Nekimi. County Executive Gordon Hintz said the

Tornado siren testing week to week decision

Oshkosh Herald

Tornado sirens have not been heard in Winnebago County since the July 27 tornado struck northern Winnebago County. Winnebago County Emergency Management Director Eric Rasmussen said the county is taking it a week at a time when it comes to deciding whether to test the sirens as is customary at noon on Saturdays from April through fall.

“We’re trying to be sensitive to the im-

county will work with other municipalities on writing similar rules if they wish.

“These 12 months will allow us to evaluate and develop rules and regulations in case someone approaches us about a data center,” he said.

The county’s Planning & Zoning Committee heard commentary at several meetings and held a public hearing about the moratorium. Supervisor Dean Spoehr

pacts that testing may trigger, but we also know these sirens are an important part of our warning system,” he said. “We need to make sure they’re working properly when people need them.”

When Winnebago County decides to restart testing its sirens, it will share the news on its social media pages and with local media.

Siren testing is expected to resume at noon Saturday.

said speaker after speaker spoke in opposition to data centers, citing their high use of water and electricity, noise, possible health effects and lower property values.

“The people are asking for this,” he said.

During the 12 months of the moratorium, county staff will evaluate the potential impacts of a data center on utility infrastructure, transportation systems, emergency services, land use patterns, agricultural resources, environmental resources and neighboring property owners. They will also work on developing recommendations for definitions, zoning classifications, siting criteria, performance standards, buffering requirements, infrastructure requirements, environmental protections and operational standards applicable to future data center development.

Supervisor Howard Miller said the moratorium does not mean the county is against data centers.

“It’s just providing us with time we need

to write regulations,” he said.

Supervisor Andrew Buck made a motion to shorten the moratorium to six months in case the county may miss out on an opportunity, but the motion was voted down.

“I think we leave it at 12 months,” Miller said. “If we get the regulations done earlier, we can always end it earlier.”

As more municipalities and counties put moratoriums in place, Supervisor George Bureau believes AI companies will change how data centers are built.

“These are smart people,” Bureau said. “They’ll figure out that if they want a data center that they’ll need to develop closed-loop system to limit water usage and develop their own power sources so not to pull from the grid.”

Winnebago County joins 10 other Wisconsin counties with data center moratoriums, including Dane, Door, La Crosse and Manitowoc.

Business news roundup

Zach Zabel of Oshkosh has been named the new CEO of the nonprofit organization **Covey**. The organization Covey empowers individuals with disabilities and their families. Zabel brings a record of nonprofit leadership, most recently in veterans services, where he championed the unique needs of individuals and families, built strong community and government partnerships and led initiatives to improve access to services and quality of life. In his new role, Zabel will advance Covey’s mission to provide meaningful respite, residential and community-based

programs, and support for adults with IDD and the families who care for them.

Daniel Ruedinger has been appointed to the board of directors for **Verve**. He currently works for Castle Pierce in Oshkosh, where he focuses on acquisitions, project management, mentoring and executive-level leadership. A resident of Oshkosh, Ruedinger is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh and is actively involved in numerous charities and community boards throughout Winnebago County.

County plays key role in tornado recovery

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

In the first meeting of the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors since the July 27 tornado, one theme resonated above the others: Gratitude.

Whether it was Supervisor Shiloh Ramos sharing his story of the countless volunteers who appeared in the yard of his hard-hit Neenah neighborhood to help with cleanup, County Executive Gordon Hintz thanking the many county departments and employees who stepped up and helped where they could or Neenah Mayor Brian Borchardt who thanked the county for its leadership and putting an emergency management plan in place, people praised how the community came together at a difficult time.

While cleanup has started and a lot of vegetation debris has been hauled away and houses have tarps on them, Hintz said the recovery is just beginning and may take years to complete.

“Two thousand homes and businesses were damaged in the county,” he said. “It’s still a miracle no one was killed. While FEMA was here last week, I want to remind you that those affected by the floods in April just received their funds in July, so this is going to take a while.”

Hintz said during the county board’s Aug. 18 meeting there are multiple challenges ahead, including ensuring people’s basic needs are being met, housing needs, financial assistance and administering funds to those in need.

The county executive ran through different county departments and how they helped from Planning & Zoning, which provided detailed maps, and Human Services, which arranged for portable toilets in areas without water, to Parks, which provided equipment to help with brush cleanup to Solid Waste & Management, which provided advice to residents on how to separate their debris into separate piles to make it easier for cleanup and to take items to the Outagamie County Landfill since it was closer.

The former UW-Fox Cities campus, which is owned by the county, served as the center for volunteer operations and a donation collection site for supplies in the days following the storm. The engineering building served as a multi-agency resource center where people could meet with different nonprofit agencies to get the help they need.

“There are going to be immediate needs and more long-term needs, and we need to continue to work together on this mov-

ing forward,” Hintz said.

Housing is expected to be a critical need moving forward, he said.

“Menasha had the tightest housing market before the storm hit, and now that’s only going to get worse,” Hintz said.

Supervisor Kristl Laux, who represents the area in Menasha hardest hit by the tornado, agreed housing is going to be a core issue in the storm’s aftermath.

“We had houses explode into their basements,” she said. “We didn’t have enough housing to begin with and now we are going to have real problems. Most of these homes were rentals and renters don’t have a safety net for their housing.”

Hintz and Board Chair Frank Frassetto thanked Emergency Management Director Eric Rasmussen and his team for their efforts in leading the county’s response to the tornado.

“They’ve done an excellent job of being there to provide support to the municipalities and are out doing the work,” Frassetto said.

National Guard: The Wisconsin Army National Guard said that it had concluded over two weeks of state activation supporting storm recovery efforts in Winnebago County as of Aug. 15.

Gov. Tony Evers said activating the Wisconsin National Guard ensured that every available resource was employed to support cleanup, restore essential services and ensure the safety of communities during recovery efforts.

Soldiers with the 1157th Transportation Company in Oshkosh were the first assigned to assist Winnebago County civil authorities as part of Task Force Sturgeon.

“Some of the soldiers on mission lived in the very community we were serving,” said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Joshua Baranczyk, the task force officer-in-charge during the activation. “That brings a special aspect of appreciation for the mission.”

Eighty-five soldiers from multiple Wisconsin National Guard units facilitated street closures for utility repair work, managed vehicle access to severely damaged residential neighborhoods and oversaw natural debris collection sites.

MARC goes virtual: The county created a virtual Multi-Agency Resource Center where storm victims can connect with nonprofit organizations and the resources, information and support in the weeks and months ahead.

The site will be updated regularly as needs evolve and new resources become available. The virtual MARC site is located at shorturl.at/MOiki.

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Bookstore brings readers together, building community

By Hope Hahn
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Rose Ann Hall sees bookstores as truly a magical place.

When customers first walk in, they see shelves upon shelves of different genres, ranging from horror, romance, fantasy, sci-fi, thrillers, fiction, young adult and the kids section. It's a world anyone could get lost in because there are so many choices; it's hard to decide where to start,

Hall, the owner of a store named The TBR Anonymous Bookstore (or To Be Read) in Oshkosh, wants living in the world of books to be easier and more convenient than anyone ever imagined.

Located at 1207 N. Main St., which is before the intersection of New York, Harrison and Main Street, the store is described as a cozy, chaos-friendly and welcoming space tailored for modern book enthusiasts and

"booktok" favorites. It offers curated self-care treats, beverages, themed accessories and special edition book releases.

"TBR Anonymous Bookstore is truly a dream come true," Hall said. "I have sold books online only for a couple years and never thought that it would lead to opening a brick and mortar store. I saw the need in the Oshkosh community for a place like this, where people can not only buy books, but also become a part of a community of readers, who share the love of books."

Hall said TBR is abbreviated "To Be Read" Anonymous to represent a safe space for those of who have a bookish addiction.

"We are independently, female and minority owned," Hall said. "We have several genres, everything from thrillers, horror, romance, fantasy and sci-fi. We also have a young adult and kids section as well."

Hall said TBR Anonymous is more than just a bookstore. It was created from a passion for bringing readers together and building a welcoming community where books spark conversations, inspire learning and stir every kind of emotion. Whether a reader is chasing their next favorite read, or looking to connect with fellow book lovers, Hall said they'll always find a place at the store.

The store hosts Storytime every Saturday in the kids section. For those that are not looking for a book, TBR also sells a variety of puzzles and craft kits such as Pixel art, paint by number and a candle and blind date with a book bar.

Hall said the local Oshkosh community has been receptive and has shared great feedback. They have also had several people from surrounding cities and even out of state stop by.

TBR offers in store pick-up and local delivery for customers that order on their website at tbranonymousbookstore.com.



Submitted photo

TBR Anonymous Bookstore offers a range of books from different genres at 1207 N. Main St.



Submitted photo

Summer spectacular

The Courtyard at Oshkosh Assisted Living and Memory Care hosted a Summer Spectacular Ice Cream Social on Aug. 12. Residents and guests built their own sundaes at a full ice cream bar while enjoying live jazz from The Mike Malone Jazz Trio.

Buelow announces plans to run for mayor

Oshkosh Herald

Following the announcement last week that Mayor Matt Mugerauer is not seeking a third term, a common council member has thrown his hat in the ring to serve as Oshkosh's next mayor.

Deputy mayor Karl Buelow announced on Aug. 18 that he intends to run for mayor in the spring. The non-partisan mayoral seat is one of four council seats that will be up



Buelow

for election in April.

"Oshkosh has tremendous opportunities in front of us, and some real challenges, too," Buelow said. "I want us to strive to be a city that is welcoming, responsive, responsible and unafraid to think big — while remembering that the 'small' things matter, too."

Buelow is currently serving his second term on the council, which concludes in April 2027.

If three or more candidates submit the proper election paperwork by the Jan. 5 filing deadline, the city will hold a primary election in February to whittle the field down to two candidates.

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Oshkosh man found guilty in shooting after altercation

Oshkosh Herald

An Oshkosh man has avoided a potential 40-year prison sentence by accepting a plea deal with state prosecutors. He pled no contest to one of six felony charges and could face just seven years in state prison.

Vincent M. Graham has been found guilty after pleading no contest to one count of first-degree recklessly endangering safety. He pled no contest to the charge during an Aug. 10 hearing.

Graham, 21, shot a firearm into a vehicle that had five juveniles following an altercation in the Walmart parking lot in March. Graham has been in custody at the Winnebago County Jail since March 14 on a \$100,000 cash bond.

The prosecution is expected to argue for

a sentence of seven years of initial confinement followed by five years of extended supervision.

Graham was facing five counts of first-degree recklessly endangering safety and one count of physical abuse of a child. He was originally facing more than 40 years in prison. The additional charges will be dismissed but read into the record for sentencing purposes.

According to the criminal complaint, police responded to a weapons complaint at 8:43 p.m. March 13 that originated at a home on Blake Court. Officers met with the victims at a local hospital in Oshkosh where the gunshot victim was taken.

The wounded victim, a 15-year-old male, was later transported to a hospital.

He was sitting in the back passenger seat of the vehicle at the time of the alleged shooting.

The victim was part of a group of five juveniles that went to Walmart that evening. There was a verbal altercation with another vehicle in the parking lot. The victim told police the vehicle he was in left the parking lot and was allegedly followed by the car Graham was driving.

All five occupants of the vehicle have been identified as victims in the case. The person identified as V3 is the only one who was physically injured during the incident.

Graham was in a vehicle with two females when they approached the car the injured victim was in on Blake Court. The females allegedly got out of Graham's car and approached the other vehicle.

The injured victim reported the two females, who were identified as 17-year-old sisters, were banging on the windows of the car with the five juveniles. The victim said the man that was driving the car, identified as Graham, was 15 to 20 feet away from the vehicle when he heard a single gunshot.

The victim felt a buzzing in his arm and at first did not know that he had been shot.

Police reviewed surveillance video of the event that seemed to confirm the details of the altercation in the Walmart parking lot and then both vehicles left with Graham's vehicle following the vehicle the victim was in.

Oshkosh Police utilized the Flock camera system in the city to locate Graham's vehicle on March 14. Officers believed Graham was at his home in the 400 block of Sullivan Street. Police conducted a traffic stop on the vehicle and Graham was taken into custody without incident.

Graham spoke to an officer at the Oshkosh police station. Graham admitted he and the two females were at Walmart when another vehicle pulled into a parking space next to his vehicle. Graham believed the other car's occupants were yelling at the people in his vehicle.

Graham alleged that occupants in the other car were throwing food and drinks at his vehicle. When both vehicles were stopped on Blake Court, Graham and the two females exited their car while nobody exited from the victim's car.

When the victim's car left the scene, Graham thought the car had almost hit him. Graham said he "discharged a firearm at them," "or near them, one time."

The complaint alleges Graham admitted the incident happened so fast and that he wasn't planning on doing anything, but his instinct took over and he allegedly fired at the vehicle.

A search warrant was executed at Graham's home. Police allegedly found the suspect's firearm. Officers also found the clothing worn by Graham and the two females during the incident in a garbage bag while executing the search warrant.

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Pedestrian killed in downtown crash

Oshkosh Herald

The Oshkosh Police Department is investigating a fatal crash that occurred last week at the intersection of High Avenue and North Main Street.

The incident happened around 4:12 p.m. Aug. 18. Police said the crash involved a pedestrian who was struck by a commercial vehicle.

Police identified the pedestrian as Christopher Brink, 58, of Oshkosh.

Paramedics from the Oshkosh Fire De-

partment and police responded to the incident.

Brink was transported by the Oshkosh Fire Department to ThedaCare Regional Medical Center in Neenah. Brink was later pronounced deceased.

Members of the Oshkosh Police Department's Crash Investigation Team and Criminal Investigation Division responded to the scene of the accident.

Police did not release further information about the incident.



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Hegseth makes visit to Oshkosh Corporation

Oshkosh Herald

Secretary of War Pete Hegseth traveled to Oshkosh Monday to deliver remarks to the workforce and leaders at Oshkosh Corporation.

Hegseth is continuing on the nationwide “Arsenal of Freedom” tour, a call to action to revitalize America’s manufacturing might and re-energize the nation’s workforce. The tour’s message emphasizes that national security and the peace of the world move at the speed of the Defense Industrial Base (DIB) and rely on the hard work of the American workforce.

According to a Department of War statement, American manufacturing is the bedrock of American strength. The men and women fueling this work are on



Hegseth

the frontlines, alongside warfighters, furthering the nation’s efforts every day they show up to work.

The tour champions a new approach to defense acquisition, one that prioritizes and awards speed, innovation and a “commercial-first” mindset.

This includes cutting bureaucratic red tape, empowering program leaders and providing the stable, long-term contracts necessary for industry to invest and expand.

The goal is to create a defense ecosystem that is more agile and accountable, capable of delivering the tools the country’s warfighters need, when they need them.

The Department of War said the “Arsenal of Freedom” tour is more than a series of speeches; it is a movement to restore the nation’s industrial prowess and secure freedom for generations to come. It is a reminder that the strength of the nation is not just in the military, but in the ingenuity and spirit of the American people.

Grants support tornado relief efforts

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

Within hours of the July 27 tornado in northern Winnebago County, financial donations began pouring in to help those affected by the disaster.

United Way Fox Cities, the Community Foundation for the Fox Valley Region and the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation created the Community Response Fund to support response and recovery efforts for those impacted by the storm. Since the fund was created on July 28, \$651,500 in grants has been awarded to 30 local nonprofit organizations supporting response and recovery efforts.

Some grants awarded include Leaven, \$40,000; the Samaritan Counseling Center of the Fox Valley, \$25,000; St. Joseph Food Program, \$25,000; Community Clothes Closet, \$25,000; Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley; and Volunteer Fox Cities, \$25,000.

Samaritan used its grant to partner with Celebration Church Fox Valley in Menasha to offer free walk-in crisis support to those affected by the tornado. The service is offered at 6 p.m. Wednesdays until Sept. 2.

After the storm, organizations across the area jumped in and helped where they could, said Samaritan Executive Director Rosangela Berbert. She said helping people with their mental wellness is what Samaritan does best so opening a free clinic was how the organization decided to help.

“We know disasters don’t only damage buildings and uproot trees,” Berbert said. “They shake people to the core. Recovery will be a long journey, and we saw a need to start early, offering a place where people can be heard, have someone hold space with them, and begin working through what they are feeling.”

The Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley used its grants to expand its operations at its Menasha site, remaining open as a place for community members to access donated supplies, find respite and connect with one another during a difficult time. The Neenah Club expanded support by welcoming the community for evening meals, water and snacks. Additionally, youth without prior memberships were welcome to attend the Neenah Club at no cost during the first few weeks following the storm.

The Menasha center resumed traditional youth programming on Aug. 10. Tornado relief efforts continue through direct assistance, family support and recovery-focused

programming, said Melissa Wurzer, marketing and communications director for Boys and Girls Club of the Fox Valley.

The grant also helped fund emergency supplies and distribution of gift cards to Menasha-area families in the weeks right after the storm. Going forward, the funds will help stock and distribute hygiene products through its Home Base program, develop and distribute Family Resource Packets that connect families with community resources through no-cost services through the Connections Grief Center to help children and families process loss and trauma and waive Club fees for Menasha families from July 27 through the end of the year.

After the initial outlay of grants, the next stage of the funding will focus on helping affected households address recovery-related expenses and unmet needs, said Penny Ransom, United Way Fox Cities director of development. She said the Community Response Fund has committed at least \$1 million for this next phase of assistance.

The funds will be provided to households through local nonprofit organizations to engage directly with affected people to provide the assistance. The next step is to identify and engage with these organizations, who will work directly with affected households to understand needs and determine the most appropriate form of support.

Depending on a household’s circumstances, assistance may be provided directly to individuals or paid on their behalf to landlords, utility providers, contractors, hotels, childcare providers or other organizations that can help families remain stable and move forward in their recovery. Grant applications have been distributed to organizations.

“We understand that many families are facing urgent needs today,” Ransom said. “We share that sense of urgency and are committed to moving this work forward as quickly as possible while distributing these resources in a fair and responsible manner.”

She said communities that have experienced natural disasters of this scale consistently find that many needs emerge over time as insurance claims are processed, repairs begin, housing situations change, and the full financial impact of a disaster becomes clearer. With that in mind, community partners are also working to identify the best approach for addressing longer-term recovery needs.



Photo from Town of Algoma Volunteer Fire Department

Firefighters worked to bring a structure fire under control Aug. 15 in the Town of Algoma.

Firefighters control Algoma house fire

Oshkosh Herald

The Town of Algoma Fire Department responded to a reported structure fire Aug. 15 within the Town of Algoma.

Upon arrival, fire crews encountered an active structure fire and immediately initiated fire suppression operations. The fire was brought under control and knocked down quickly, limiting further fire spread and damage.

The Town of Algoma Fire Department was assisted at the scene by the Omro-Rushford Fire Department through

mutual aid. The Town of Algoma Fire Department appreciates the quick response and assistance provided by its mutual-aid partners.

Crews remained on scene following extinguishment to conduct overhaul operations and check for any remaining fire or hot spots. The cause and origin of the fire remain under investigation.

The Town of Algoma Fire Department would like to remind residents of the importance of working smoke alarms and encourages everyone to test smoke alarms regularly and maintain a fire escape plan.

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Referendum updates on time for first day of school

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

Oshkosh Area School District students will be back in class next week.

Despite a few summer projects being behind schedule, district administrators believe everything will be ready for the first day of classes. These projects are related to the 2025 OASD referendum that is addressing the facilities across the district, including renovations and additions to Carl Traeger, Franklin and Oakwood elementary schools.

The district is also installing air conditioning at a handful of elementary schools.

OASD assistant superintendent of operations Brian Yerkey provided an update on the referendum projects at the Aug. 12 OASD Board of Education meeting. He was joined by Nate Considine of Bray Architects and OASD director of facilities and project manager James Fochs.

Yerkey acknowledged that the projects are under budget but also behind sched-

ule.

“There is a lot going on,” Yerkey said regarding activity at the schools. “Our commitment is to make sure we are ready for the start of the school year. We will be ready.”

Yerkey stated that things like transportation routes, safety plans and classroom setups will be ready to go at the start of the school year.

“You will hear about some of our projects currently being behind schedule tonight,” Yerkey said. “You’re going to likely hear that a few of our projects are a few days behind. I don’t want that to be the focus or the worry, but we will be ready for the start of the school year.”

The Carl Traeger Elementary School addition and site improvements were mostly completed last week, according to Fochs.

Traeger was wrapped up last week, Considine told the board. The school’s parking lot will be used as a playground for the school year, Considine said.

“That large parking lot on the east side, for this school year only, will only be used half of it,” Considine said. “The southern half of the parking lot will actually be used as a temporary playground for the school year as construction is currently in the active playground space.”

“That’s going to be rough,” board member Jacob Wolf said.

Yerkey explained the building leaders at Franklin are working on providing alternative activities to ensure kids are getting exercise.

One element of the referendum that received a lot of positive feedback was installing air conditioning in the older elementary schools across the district. This includes Lakeside, Emmeline Cook and Read elementary schools.

“This project is on time,” Fochs said.

He added the systems are ready to go for the start of the school year.

The Franklin and Oakwood elementary school projects are about two weeks behind schedule overall but will be ready for the start of school, Fochs said. The projects are also within budget. These construction projects will be ongoing and are not set to be completed until the start of the 2027-28 school year.

Fochs explained the parts of the building under construction will not be accessible to students.

Other projects associated with the \$197.8 million OASD 2025 facilities referendum include a new auditorium at Oshkosh North High School and the construction of a new middle school.

Shelter has received more than 300 animals under new contract

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

A change last year in the contract between the city and the Oshkosh Area Humane Society created blowback from community members who felt the move was gutting a valued service in Oshkosh.

Oshkosh Police Department public affairs officer Kate Mann said that the department has had over 100 calls for service to the OAHS so far this year.

Mann said the department has taken 322 animals to the humane society under the new contract, which went into effect in January.

The new contract between Oshkosh and the OAHS states that the city will pay

\$50,000 for the first 500 animals brought to OAHS and \$100 for each animal after that.

At this rate the city appears likely to meet that 500 animal mark by the end of the year.

In previous years the city would provide the OAHS with \$100,000 as part of the contract. Oshkosh Chief of Police Dean Smith said last year during the city’s budget season that part of this restructuring was to provide a budget closer to what other communities provide for shelters.

By comparison, in Appleton the city has budgeted \$16,000 for animal services in 2026 and Fond du Lac reported spending \$19,300 in 2024.

Dog park

FROM PAGE 1

city staff doesn’t have the time to complete a feasibility study at this time.

Deputy mayor Karl Buelow explained that he is likely the most informed member of the council on dog parks as he maps them out for road trips. He asked staff if it was possible to direct staff to look into a dog park.

Community development director Sarah Rutkowski said that staff is interested in the idea of Oshkosh owning a dog park, but staff time is consumed by a number of big projects.

“I would say that the amount of work that we have staff on right now is considerable. We have a lot of high intensity projects happening in the city right now,” Rutkowski said. “What I think you’re really fishing for is – do we feel that we can add another project without kind of shifting priorities for another one? No.”

Rutkowski added her department would need clearer direction from the council.

phenson said. “The nature of a dog park makes it extremely flexible, and we can use already vacant green space, city lots, whatever. We have vacant land to try to coordinate this thing.”

Stephenson mentioned using a small vacant lot for the dog park. The city already owns a number of infill lots, which are vacant lots that are often oddly-shaped or too small to get developer interest. The city has put together a design book to show to developers to increase interest in these lots.

One of these infill lots is 123 Eighth Ave. The Oshkosh Redevelopment Authority (RDA) owns about half the lots on that block between Eighth and Ninth Avenues between Oregon Street and Nebraska Street. That vacant lot is about 3,500 square-feet.

For comparison, there are two dog parks in Fond du Lac that are both approximately 2.5 acres. Appleton has Northland Dog Park that is around 17 acres, and the dog park at Winnebago County Community Park is roughly nine acres.

“If you want us to move forward with an analysis for a dog park...you need to let us know what we can set aside then,” she said.

The feasibility study would require work and coordination between multiple departments with numerous staff members.

“Our plates are figuratively full,” she said.

Stephenson mentioned that municipalities of Oshkosh’s size often own and operate a dog park in the city. Stephenson added that seven out of 10 cities operate a dog park.

“So we’re actually in the minority,” Ste-

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Budget update

FROM PAGE 1

“I think it’s important to clarify that there are things we want to do business-like, but we are not a business,” Yerkey said. “We don’t make widgets. We have a number of kids coming to us with a wide variety of skills and gifts and needs. And sometimes we don’t get to control how much that costs.”

Yerkey made an analogy that businesses can throw away materials they can’t use and write off the expense. But public schools don’t get to do that. Yerkey explained that a student may need services that cost \$100,000 or \$500,000 and it’s a public school’s job to educate that child no matter what it costs.

“We’re going to do a great job educating them,” Yerkey said. “We don’t always have the same luxuries and benefits that businesses do when it comes to finances.”

The district’s business department, formerly headed by Drew Niehans, has seen turnover in the past few months with four of the five employees leaving the district.

OASD hired a new executive director of business services, Cindy Rettler, following Niehans retiring at the end of the school year. With these changes, Yerkey said the district is striving to be transparent in this process, which is likely to be difficult.

“It might get uglier before it gets better,” Yerkey said. “We don’t want any secrets or surprises, and we know our community doesn’t want that, either.”

The district is working with public school financing consultants Todd Hajewski and Todd Gray. Gray worked for the OASD 20 years ago and he told Yerkey the district was facing the same issues at that time.

Board member Barb Herzog said operating at a deficit for two years will make it more difficult to maintain the district’s credit rating and borrow money in the future.

“I’m very concerned about the fund balance being in the 7% range,” Herzog said. “I don’t think it’s ever been that low in my tenure in the school district.”

Herzog noted a financial audit that was reviewed by the OASD facilities and finance committee showed these under-budgeting issues go back to the 2024-25 school year, and it was never reported to that committee before.

“We cannot have this board and the facilities and finance committee not having the information that we should have,” Herzog said. “There was nothing shared with facilities and finance from January to April when the staff report came out saying, ‘Oh and by the way we’re over \$4 million short for this coming year and

now the report we got last week says we’re another million and a half short.’”

Board president Mike Ford said the district is in a period where they have fewer students and there’s more competition for where those students choose to go to school. He said previous budgets were balanced, possibly due to magical thinking.

“That’s what drives our revenue,” Ford said. “We have more cost pressures, and we’ve had a persistent history of refusing to make structural decisions. So, we’re presenting these budgets that are technically balanced, but they’re balanced either on magical thinking or reliance on a fund balance that we no longer have.”

Ford said he doesn’t know where the district will be if those structural decisions are not made. If they don’t make those decisions, Ford said, the district will remain in this cycle for years.

“When bad things are happening, we need to be informed about it,” board member Tim Hess said. It can’t build up and be some big surprise at the end of the year like this.”

Yerkey said the district needs an additional \$5.7 million to \$6.1 million to balance the 2026-27 budget. Some of the causes of this increase is the rise in healthcare costs.

“It comes down to your target loss ratio,” Yerkey said. “What we’ve done in the past in order to fit our budget was to not properly plan our target loss ratio.”

He explained the district would take a three-year average of the healthcare claims and use that number to budget healthcare costs. The district did not factor in risk or trend.

“The recommended calculation was not used,” Yerkey said.

The district has a self-funded healthcare plan that budgets around \$28 million in annual expenses.

Yerkey stated he was being careful to not “throw anyone under the bus” when giving his report. He presented a number of options that the board did not vote on. The 2026-27 budget will be voted on for approval in October.

Hajewski and Gray gave the districts four recommendations, which primarily call to transfer funds from funds to cover costs. This includes moving up to \$3.5 million from the other post-employment benefits (OPEB), which is currently at \$16 million. The district can also move \$1.3 million from the Summer Project fund.

Yerkey said that the OPEB account pays for the “Cadillac” benefits package that the district offers to retired employees.

There is also an option to increase monthly costs for healthcare premiums.

The school board is expected to vote on the 2026-27 budget on Oct. 28.

Bailey resigns from city post

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

Oshkosh needs a new communications and engagement manager.

Drew Bailey submitted his resignation letter on Thursday with the intent of leaving his position as communications and engagement division manager. His last day with the city will be Sept. 11, after starting in the role on Jan. 26.

City Manager Rebecca Grill said that Bailey submitted his resignation last week.

The Oshkosh Communications and Engagement division was created in January in conjunction with Bailey’s hiring. The division was created to tell Oshkosh’s story better, serve as the social media and marketing arm for the city and be more transparent with the community, according to interviews the Herald conducted with Oshkosh Common Council members earlier this month.

A mission statement for the division is currently being developed as part of the



Bailey

city’s rebranding efforts. This includes removing Oshkosh Media from the city. Oshkosh Communications and Engagement (OCE) will soon be the new brand to replace Oshkosh Media.

Bailey said before his resignation that the division had accomplished many things. This included aligning staff responsibilities with a broader communication and engagement role, simplifying the city’s digital presence and advancing the city’s brand.

The division is made up of nine members with an internship program to create an opportunity for students to gain experience in the field.

“During my time so far, I have learned that Oshkosh is a welcoming community with significant momentum, strong community pride, and many opportunities for continued growth,” Bailey said in an Aug. 14 email. “I have seen that City staff, residents, community organizations and local partners care deeply about Oshkosh and work hard to improve the community in their respective roles. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve the City and I look forward to our team helping communicate the many positive developments taking place in Oshkosh.”

Wright not seeking reelection on school board

Oshkosh Herald

After two terms on the Oshkosh Area School District Board of Education, Chris Wright has decided he will not seek another term.

“I am officially not running for a third term on the Oshkosh School Board,” Wright said.

He was first elected in April 2021 and

reelected in April 2024. His current term ends in April 2027.

“Now it’s time to spend more time with my family, friends and hobbies,” Wright said. “Thank You Oshkosh for allowing me to represent you.”



Wright



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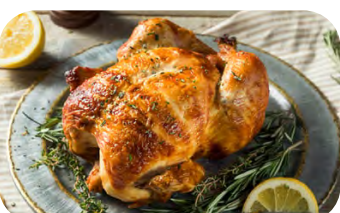


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Calendar of events

Wednesday, Aug. 26
Music on Main featuring Water City Jazz Orchestra and Janet Planet, 5:30 p.m., Opera House Square

Friday, Aug. 28
Grave of the Vampire, 7 p.m., Time Community Theater

Saturday, Aug. 29
Oshkosh Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Northeast Wisconsin Dragon Boat Festival, 10 a.m., Leach Amphitheater
Oshkosh Jazz Festival, 1 p.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Clay Walker with BlackHawk, 7 p.m., Oshkosh Arena, 1212 S. Main St., Oshkosh
Fright Night, 7 p.m., Time Community Theater

Tuesday, Sept. 1
Live at the Leach featuring That '90s Band, 6 p.m., Leach Amphitheater

Saturday, Sept. 5
Oshkosh Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Hmong National Labor Day Festival, 8 a.m., Winnebago County Park
Oshkosh Gallery Walk, 6 p.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Party on the Point featuring Ask Your Mother, 6:30 p.m., Sometimes at Pioneer Island

Sunday, Sept. 6
Hmong National Labor Day Festival,

8 a.m., Winnebago County Park

Thursday, Sept. 10
The Salvation Army of Oshkosh presents Feuding For Families, 5 p.m., LaSure's Hall, 3125 S. Washburn St.
Dean Johnson Concert, 7 p.m., Becket's

Friday, Sept. 11
EAA Remembers 9/11, 7 p.m., EAA Aviation Museum

Saturday, Sept. 12
EAA Chapter 252 Fall Pancake Breakfast and Young Eagle Rally, 7:30 a.m., Wittman Regional Airport Terminal
ReThink Addiction 5K, 7:30 a.m., Solutions Recovery, 621 Evans St.
Oshkosh Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Oshkosh Area Humane Society Walk for the Animals: Get Colorful for the Cause, 8:30 a.m., Sunnyview Expo Center's Barn A
Walk to Defeat ALS, 8:30 a.m., Menominee Park
Kickball Tournament benefitting Oshkosh Kids Museum, 9 a.m., Revs Bowl Bar and Grill
Rockin' For Recovery presented by Unity Recovery Services, noon, Winnebago County Community Park

Thursday, Sept. 17
Friends of the Oshkosh Seniors Center 40th Anniversary Celebration, 4 p.m., 200 N. Campbell Road
Oshkosh Community Players presents The Actuary, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh

Friday, Sept. 18
Oshkosh Community Players presents The Actuary, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh



Photo by Michael Cooney

Growing show

This year's Waterfowl Hunters Expo at the Sunnyview Expo Center was expanded into the newly renovated parking lots with vendors, demonstrations and activities directly in front of visitors as soon as they entered the grounds. Dogs had the opportunity to perform and participate in training and hunting demonstrations. The expo featured more than 160 vendors along with live seminars, shooting demonstrations, decoy carving, Wisconsin duck and goose calling championships and dedicated youth and women's zones.

Event supports Salvation Army programs

Oshkosh Herald

A fundraiser will raise money for the Salvation Army of Oshkosh. Feuding for Families will take place Sept. 10 at LaSure's Hall, 3125 S. Washburn St. A social hour will begin at 5 p.m. followed by dinner at 5:30 p.m. Proceeds from ticket sales will go to help fund feeding programs at the Salvation Army of Oshkosh. Proceeds from the silent auction will go toward funding the hygiene and shower room project. The cost for a game team of five people is \$250. Audience dinner is \$55 per person to cheer on a team. Organizers said the event will feature fun, laughter and friendly competition. Sponsorship opportunities are also available. For more information, go to saoshkosh.org.

Course provides information to help landlords

Oshkosh Herald

Extension Winnebago County is providing information to help newer landlords. Rent Smart for Landlords is a comprehensive course for newer landlords who are looking to have successful relationships with long-term tenants. The meeting will be from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sept. 12 at Extension Winnebago County, 625 E County Road Y, Suite 900 / Room A/B. Topics covered will include housing inspection, applicant screening, rental agreements, ongoing management and more. Attendees will receive a certificate of completion at the end of this day-long course. The \$30 course fee includes lunch and a handbook with detailed information for all eight topics that will be covered. More information can be found at shorturl.at/IWRrs.

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Senior Spotlight is brought to you by:

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Veteran Geiger helps pave way for Spartans’ offense

By Tim Froberg
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Offensive linemen are both protectors and plows.

The good ones keep quarterbacks clean with their pass-blocking skills and blast open holes for the running backs.

Mason Geiger is one of the good ones.

The Oshkosh North senior is one of the area’s top returning offensive linemen. He received second-team honors on the 2025 all-Fox River Classic Conference South team and should push for first-team status this fall.

Geiger, a third-year starter, has been an important part of North’s resurgence on the gridiron. The Spartans had gone a combined 6-20-1 in the three seasons prior to Geiger’s arrival in 2024. But Geiger and the Spartans put a halt to the steady sting of football defeats and began establishing a winning culture. North went a promising 6-4 in Geiger’s sophomore season and reached the WIAA playoffs for the first time in years.

The Spartans made a major jump in 2025, finishing 10-2 overall and taking second in the conference at 6-1. North fired off a pair of Division 2 playoff wins before falling to River Falls (52-38) in a Level 3 game.

Geiger and the Spartans will be gunning for their third straight postseason appearance this season and football has become fun again at North.

“It was a great feeling making the playoffs my sophomore year,” Geiger said. “But after making a first-round exit (with a 60-34 loss to West De Pere) we wanted to show that we could do more. We came back last year with a different mindset. I think we really showed Oshkosh that we’re here now.”

North graduated most of its skill players from last year’s rock-solid team and will be forced to reload with new playmakers. The Spartans will also look to continue their momentum with a new coaching staff. Luke Ott has stepped down after four years as head coach and has been replaced by first-year head coach Alec Gulan, who had been the team’s offensive coordinator.

The strength of the 2026 Spartans is expected to be its experienced offensive line powered by Geiger.

“We have a lot of our linemen back and we have good talent across the board,” Geiger said. “This is going to be a good team.”



Senior Mason Geiger is a three-year starter on the offensive line for Oshkosh and is looking to help lead the Spartans to a third straight WIAA playoff berth.

At 6-foot-2, 260 pounds, Geiger has decent size for a high school lineman and understands the nuances of line play. He’s all ears when his coaches talk and able to make necessary corrections and adjustments on the fly.

“Mason’s ability to be coachable along with his attention to detail make him a very good offensive lineman,” said Gulan. “He’s an experienced lineman who

Senior Spotlight

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has started for us the past two years, so he brings multiple years of experience to our line.”

Geiger started at tackle his sophomore year, but moved to guard last season and is expected to stay inside this season.

“The big difference between the two positions is that at guard you have to pick up the blitz a lot,” Geiger said. “There are pros and cons, but to me, guard is a little easier to play.”

“I work better as a guard, mostly because I feel I’m an explosive lineman. I think it worked best for our line last season – made us more physical. I really enjoy playing guard. I think that’s going to be my home this year.”

Geiger has been an offensive lineman since he started playing tackle football in the seventh grade. He doesn’t care if he seldom hears his name announced at games and enjoys doing the dirty work in the trenches.

“Well, I played a little bit of tight end, but they moved me back to the line pretty quick,” Geiger said with a chuckle. “I like being a lineman. We’re not scoring touchdowns or anything like that and whenever something bad happens on offense, people look right away at the offensive line. All the good that we do isn’t always talked about.”

“But I love it. We’re the first thing that always happens in the game. We’re helping to make the plays. We just don’t get a lot of glory for it. But that’s OK.”

Geiger has some interest in playing college football but isn’t sure if he will get an opportunity. He hasn’t finalized his post-high school plans and is considering moving to Arizona and becoming a contractor with his uncle.

But that’s in the future. In the present, Geiger’s focus is providing quality line play and senior leadership for a Spartans team that is looking to continue its impressive progress this fall.

“I want to step up my game, make first team all-conference and get this team to the playoffs,” Geiger said. “I’m excited about our season.”

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Knights ride fast start to easy win over Timberwolves

By Steve Clark
OSHKOSH HERALD

The gameplan was simple for powerhouse Lourdes Academy.

Score early, score often and don't let Living Word Lutheran ever feel like it had a chance. That's exactly what the Knights did.

Lourdes Academy bolted to an 18-0 lead after the first quarter and sported a 24-point halftime advantage en route to taking down the Timberwolves, 45-14, in the season opener at Titan Stadium last Thursday.

"We always come out with big energy and big aggressiveness. That's always been one of our strong points," senior Michael Santiago said. "We want to put our foot on the pedal and never step off of it."

Brady Bauer threw for five touchdowns – to five different receivers – and ran for another score to fuel the offense, which rested most of its key players for the majority of the second half.

Lourdes Academy scored every time it touched the ball in the first half, including once on special teams when Lucas Neuens returned a punt 44 yards for a touchdown.

Defensively, the Knights allowed just two first downs on the Timberwolves on the first five possessions combined and Living Word Lutheran didn't get on the scoreboard until the final seconds of the first half.

"When we had our starting defense out there, we were rock solid and our offense scored every time we touched the ball. It's a good place to start this season," head coach Kevin Wopat said. "It's awesome to be back under the lights. It was fun watching the kids fly around because we had some young kids getting some opportunities and I think they did a good job."

One of the question marks the Knights faced entering the season was its offensive line, which had to be retooled after

graduation and some position changes entering the season. But Lourdes Academy averaged 6.5 yards per carry for the game – with starting ball carriers Bauer and Maximus Behnke combining for a 8.5 per carry average – and didn't allow a sack.

"It's been a change trying to get people in new positions but I thought we did well this week," said senior tackle Sam Rehm, who moved from center. "I was definitely a little nervous coming into the year. We have some smaller linemen this year and I've been surprised with how well they were doing."

The Knights' defense allowed a 14-yard gain on the Timberwolves first play from scrimmage but then forced a punt three plays later. Lourdes Academy then marched 60 yards in six plays, getting a 33-yard touchdown pass up the left sideline from Bauer to Neuens to get on the board.

After the defense stuffed Living Word Lutheran on the next possession, Neuens fielded the punt and sprinted through the Timberwolves' defenders and into the end zone.

The Knights would lead 12-0 after the touchdown, but Neuens suffered an injury on the play and did not return to the game. Wopat said Monday that he expected the stand-out receiver to be back this Friday when the team travels to Reedsville.

"He's our most dynamic athlete so if he's not able to play that's a blow to our team," Wopat said. "He's worked really hard and put a lot of time into his body so he can play football."

Bauer threw a jump ball to the back corner of the end zone that was hauled in by Harlan Kuehn for a 9-yard touchdown on the next Knights' possession before Santiago made back-to-back big plays leading to the next Lourdes



Photo by Andy Ratchman

Lourdes Academy's Harlan Kuehn leaps high in the air to haul in a 9-yard touchdown pass in the first quarter against Living Word Lutheran last Thursday.

SEE **Knights win** ON PAGE 16

Young Spartans can't keep pace with Jaguars in opener

By Steve Clark
OSHKOSH HERALD

It wasn't the outcome that Alec Gulan was hoping for in his debut as head football coach at Oshkosh North.

But he wasn't disappointed in what he saw from his team.

After graduating 22 seniors and 18 starters from a year ago, the retooled Spartan roster gave Ashwaubenon a tough battle in its season opener but ended up falling short, 28-20, at Titan Stadium on Friday night.

"There are a lot of positives to take from the game. It was a dogfight. Every time they punched, we punched back," Gulan said. "There were plenty of opportunities as a young team to just give up – lay down and let (Ashwaubenon) keep punching us. But every time, our guys punched back. In the end, we just fell short."

Ashwaubenon scored on the first play of the second quarter to take the lead but the Spartans were able to answer on the ensuing possession.

Julian Rew dumped a pass off to Dominic Wyrwicki and the junior running back burst



Oshkosh Herald

Dominic Wyrwicki bursts through the Ashwaubenon defense to score a touchdown on a first-half screen pass on Friday.

through the Jaguars defense all the way to the end zone for a 57-yard touchdown.

"They didn't touch me," Wyrwicki said.

"It was real important and put us back in the game. That put us right back in the game. We kept our heads high and kept scoring from there."

The Jaguars returned the kickoff for a touchdown to regain the lead and stayed in front until later in the period when Wyrwicki weaved through Ashwaubenon defense and dove into the end zone for a 9-yard touchdown that tied the score at 14.

The three-play, 21-yard drive was set up when the Spartans' defensive leader Manny Tlatelpa intercepted a pass to give North a short field.

"I saw it coming. Hands open. Caught it. Popped the kid in front of me. Just a great feeling," Tlatelpa said. "I thought it was going to be more of an out route but then I saw the ball coming to me and I was like this is my chance, I gotta take it."

Getting turnovers is something that the Spartans are looking to do more of as the season progresses.

"During our practice, that's what we talk about – punch out the ball, rip it out, just try to get a bunch of turnovers," Tlatelpa said.

"Everybody was talking it out. We had energy. Everybody had their heads held high in the first half."

Ashwaubenon again pulled back in front with a touchdown on the first drive of the second half, but once again the Spartans had the answer – and it didn't take long.

Jose Diaz took the ensuing kickoff and flashed through the Ashwaubenon coverage team and raced right up the middle of the field for an 84-yard return.

A missed extra point left North trailing by a point and Ashwaubenon kept that margin until late in the fourth quarter when the Jaguars took advantage of a short field and scored to take a 28-20 lead.

The Spartans, which had a pass picked off in the end zone on a drive earlier in the second half, was able to move the ball into Ashwaubenon territory with a couple of minutes to go but couldn't make the march pay off.

An incompleteness on fourth-and-18 after a sack ended the drive and the Jaguars were able to run out the rest of the clock.

Wyrwicki finished with 33 yards on 10 carries and finished with 90 yards of total offense in the game.

Rew, making his first varsity start, finished 13-of-25 for 147 yards and a touchdown, but the North receivers had multiple drops in the game.

"I'm proud of Julian. I don't think you could have expected anything better for a guy that's played in one varsity game," Gulan said. "(They had pass rushers) in his pocket all night. He ran for his life on some plays and took a couple of hits but did a great job."

The Spartans will turn their attention to rival Oshkosh West as the two programs will meet at Titan Stadium on Friday at 7 p.m. for their annual showdown.

North has won the last three meetings between the two rivals and will take some confidence into the showdown with the Wildcats despite the tough loss to the Jaguars.

"Yes, we can take confidence from this game," Wyrwicki said. "It's a tough loss but we put our all into it."

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Wildcats won't let retooled roster diminish plans

Oshkosh Herald

Oshkosh West head coach Will Brydon understands that some opponents may think that the Wildcats are in a rebuilding year this season.

West lost some elite players from last year's roster at different position groups that created some big holes to fill in the lineup so it would be understandable to reach that conclusion.

In fact, Brydon maybe even hopes opponents will see the Wildcats in that light because he knows what truly lies ahead for his squad.

"I believe we are reloading. Yes, we lost talent but we have a deep program and our

Volleyball PREVIEW

varsity roster is full of athletes ready to compete for a top spot in the FVA and make some noise in

the postseason," Brydon commented. "It is a focused and fun group this year."

The most notable returnees for the Wildcats will be junior hitters Emma Liebergen and Kayana Turner.

Liebergen earned second-team all-Fox Valley Association honors last season and finished with 262 kills on the season – second only to the total of FVA Player of the Year Sydnee Nelson – while Turner was third on the team with 134 kills.

Brydon expects the duo to be a formidable 1-2 punch for West this season.

"They have been working hard this off-season, excelling in their other sports and in our program's opportunities," Brydon commented. "I know they are ready to take on ever larger roles in our offensive systems. I'm excited for them to shine in a new way."

Senior Addie Benesh and sophomore Noelle Prickett each played the majority of sets at middle blocker last season after combining for 115 kills and more than 80 blocks a year ago.

Incoming hitters juniors Emjay McConnell, Kinslee Nelson and Kam Stauffacher at the pin position, while junior Sophia Probst will likely see time at a middle blocker spot.

Senior Lucy Jolin saw limited time at setter last year and will be one of players taking on the setter's role this season. Junior Adalynn Her and sophomore Brooklyn Rowe will also be in the mix as Brydon aims to use a pair of setters in West's offense.

"Each (player) brings something unique and necessary to the table and I expect each to contribute meaningfully throughout the season based on what we need at any given time," commented Brydon, who is replacing four-year starter MaKaelyn Clark at that position. "It is a testament to their collective skill that we are able to fluidly transition into a new era of setting at Oshkosh West."

Along the back line, seniors Olivia Xiong and Halle Stern were regulars in West's rotation last year and will anchor that effort this season, while junior Peyton Dorn will also likely figure into the mix.

"We stress that every athlete on our roster is important, so truly each returning player will have a major role in our success this year," Brydon commented. "There is no replacing our graduated seniors ... but we're not looking to replace them. Instead, I want this group to have their own identity, to play in their own way, and I'm looking forward to going on this journey with them."

Oshkosh North

The Spartans have not enjoyed a wealth of success in the FVA in the recent history, but second-year head coach Ryan Seeley believes that can change.

With five returning seniors to build around, Seeley is hoping to shed the records North has posted in the past and get the program heading in the right direction.

"We are not defined by our previous record – we are defined by how we build from here," commented Seeley. "We look to turn last year's record into fuel for an exciting season."

The five seniors that will serve as the nucleus for the squad will include a trio of co-captains in libero Lily Oleson, middle hitter Ella Seeley and defensive specialist Promise Shehi.

Matty Sanneh is a three-year varsity player and will look to compete at the right-side hitter spot, while Abigail Dutscheck will help bolster the Spartans' back line.

Junior middle hitter Lucy Houseworth also returns to the varsity squad this season.

"We have a foundation of five loyal seniors who have been part of the program for four years and a solid group of underclassmen who spent a lot of time in the gym over the summer building the future,"

Seeley commented. "A successful season will require a high-energy gym, shared accountability, a 'next play' mindset and developing a cohesive unit who genuinely care about each other and the outcome of every match."

Lourdes Academy

The Knights may not have the most senior-laden roster in the Trailways Conference but head coach Rachel Laehn has a talented group with plenty of varsity experience and looks to make a run at the best teams in the league.

Junior Adhieu Liabwill and sophomore Naomi Liabwill will lead the list of players returning for the Knights and both have made strides after playing big roles on the team a year ago.

Adhieu Liabwill will likely play as a right-side hitter but proved to be dominant forced defensively at the net, while Naomi Liabwill – who earned honorable mention all-Trailways East honors last year – plays in the middle and will likely be a focal point of the offense.

"Naomi has really developed her connection with our new setter and has become much more confident and consistent with her hitting. This season, she has added a stronger, more aggressive attack to that skill set, which will make her much harder to stop because she can score in multiple ways," commented Laehn. "This season, Adhieu has become quicker and has made tremendous strides with her hitting. She will be a strong offensive threat from the right side while continuing to be a force as a blocker."

Newcomers at the net for the Knights will be junior Sarah Hafemeister and sophomore Kennadie Fronek who will both step in to play outside hitter roles.

The Knights will have new faces at setter and libero this season but Laehn believes this team – which lists just three seniors on the roster – will be tough for opponents to deal with.

"The strength of this season will be their speed and scrappiness. ... They don't give up easily and will challenge their opponents with their ability to move quickly, compete for every ball and keep the pressure on," Laehn commented. "I'm excited to see what this group can accomplish this season."

Valley Christian

The Warriors will be a very young team as they try to defend their Trailways Conference title but head coach Lizzy Potratz believes the talent is there on the team to once again be one of the league's best.

"We are a very young team with a lot of raw talent. Our biggest challenge is going to be that youth and developing new leaders in the program," commented Potratz, who will not have a senior on her roster this season. "There is a lot of potential and we need players to buy into their roles and be happy for their teammates' success as we discover what our starting lineup will be. ... If they can trust the process, be unified, stay loose and have fun, they will be a good team this year."

Valley Christian does have a quartet of key returners from last season, highlighted by sophomores Laila Gostas-Sims and Brielle Birr.

Gostas-Sims was a versatile player that contributed in an array of areas for the Warriors and earned second-team all-Trailways East honors – the only freshman in the conference to land on the first or second team.

Birr brings plenty of size to the net and showed last year she is both an offensive and defensive threat in the front row. She was an honorable mention all-conference selection last year.

"Laila brings a lot of volleyball IQ to the team. Despite being a sophomore, she doesn't play like one and has been a steady presence on the court," commented Potratz. "Brielle is a work horse and does a great job setting an example of coming in the gym every day and going to work. She isn't going to complain and does her job with a good attitude."

Junior Lydia Hardy, who also earned honorable mention all-conference, returns as a setter from last year but will take on a bigger role as the Warriors move to one-setter offense this season.

Junior Ellie Demler played both as a defensive specialist and an outside hitter last season and will add that versatility to the lineup, while freshman Addy Lehman will likely help anchor the back row this season and could play at the libero spot for the Warriors.



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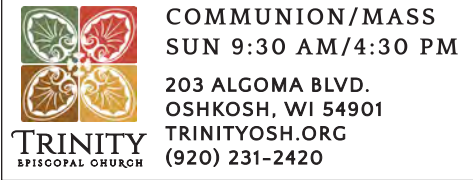
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Prep roundup



Photo by Jim Koepnick

Oshkosh West came up short in its season-opener last Friday against Brookfield Central.

FOOTBALL

Big first quarters sparks Warriors’ win

Valley Christian put up 27 points in the first quarter and rolled to a 47-0 season-opening victory over Montello last Thursday.

Sam Gloudemans led the way for the Warriors, who led 41-0 at halftime before tacking on a third quarter touchdown. Gloudemans finished with 105 yards rushing on just seven carries and scored three touchdowns.

He also led the team in tackles with 13. Quarterback Mason Everts completed the only pass he attempted in the game – a 27-yard touchdown strike to Xander Osinga – while also adding a scoring run.

Noah Elkhorn also scored a rushing touchdown for Valley Christian, while Jay Parish returned a punt for a score.

West drops season opener to Lancers

The Wildcats weren’t able to contain

Brookfield Central as the Lancers dealt West a 27-3 defeat in the season opener last Friday.

West’s only points came on a 43-yard field goal early in the second quarter that narrowed the Lancers’ lead to 7-3.

Brookfield Central would pull ahead 13-3 at halftime and then tally a touchdown in each of the final two quarters.

The game was delayed about two hours after the first half was completed because of lightning.

No other information was available from the game.

GOLF

West comes up short in dual meet

Keeley Toman led the Wildcats with a round of 55 but Oshkosh West fell short of Fond du Lac, 215-236, in a Fox Valley Association dual meet at the Oshkosh Country Club last week.

Hailey Gibbs added a 58 for the Wildcats, followed by Mia Drexler with a 59. Olivia Weigandt rounded out West’s golfers with a score of 64.

Knights win

FROM PAGE 14

Academy score.

Santiago picked off a Ryde Ehley pass on defense and returned just past midfield before hauling in a 47-yard touchdown pass from Bauer on the next play to give the Knights a 25-0 lead just two plays into the second quarter.

“(The interception) was awesome. I saw it deflect off my DBs hands and just grabbed it and started running up the sidelines,” Santiago said. “I was ready for (the touchdown play). We ran that play before but I didn’t get the ball. I was watching it in the air, I knew it was going to be a touchdown.”

Bauer notched a 1-yard touchdown plunge for the Knights’ final score of the first half for a 32-0 lead – a play set up by a nifty 20-yard run by Behnke down to the one-yard line.

Bauer, who completed 7-of-10 passes in the game, capped off his night with a 39-yard touchdown pass to Elwin West Jr. and a 21-yard flip to David Agosto for a 45-8 lead midway through the third quarter.

“It’s fun when you can just block and then watch our guys run into the end zone. It’s a good experience,” Rehm said. “I think we’re feeling pretty confident. As long as we play well and be consistent I think we should have good chance (to be successful).”

A total of 16 players made at least one tackle in the game for the Knights, led by Behnke’s seven stops.

And Wopat was impressed with how some of the younger players fared on that side of the ball.

“I thought sophomores Colton Hable



Photo by Andy Ratchman

Lourdes Academy’s Maximus Behnke finds running room against Living Word Lutheran.

and Reagan Needham were very good defensively and Dominic Goel got some run at safety and played well for being out for football for the first time,” Wopat said. “I thought our older guys were good and I think the younger kids probably surprised themselves with a couple ‘I can do this’ plays.”

Things will get tougher for the Knights this week when they travel to face perennial small-school powerhouse Reedsville.

Lourdes Academy will then host Johnson Creek – another favorite in the Trailways Conference – to open league play.

“It feels very good to get the win,” Santiago said. “It’s good to start out on the right foot. It will help us carry this into the next week and the rest of the season.”

Obituaries

Lawrence Joseph Jungwirth

November 8, 1933 – August 16, 2026

On August 16, 2026, our sweet “Daddio”, Lawrence Joseph Jungwirth, was called home to be reunited with his creator, while surrounded by his five children at Park View Health Center in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. Larry was 92 years old, born November 8, 1933, in Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He was the third son born to Jacob and Catherine Jungwirth.

Larry graduated from Oshkosh High School in 1951. Upon graduation, he served in the Army National Guard. Following his service to his country, he began his 38-year career at Wisconsin Public Service Corporation-Oshkosh. He started as a lineman, transferred to natural gas service, and finished his tenure as a service dispatcher.

Larry married Ann Marie Schmirler on April 8, 1960. They were blessed with



five children, nine grandchildren, two step-grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and one great-step-grandchild. Larry and Ann had numerous pets — dogs and cats.

Larry lived a rich life. He enjoyed the outdoors and all kinds of hunting and fishing, including hunting pheasants in South Dakota with his buddies. He loved his hunting dogs and claimed that Springer Spaniels were “the best dogs ever”.

Dad was very athletic. He enjoyed playing tennis and softball. Larry and his brother, Adrian, were Oshkosh City Doubles Tennis Champs in their younger years. He played softball in Oshkosh leagues until he was 78 years old. A highlight of that time was traveling to Las Vegas, NV, for a senior softball tournament.

In Larry’s later years, he treasured observing nature. He loved watching the changing seasons and Wisconsin’s ever-changing weather. The birds that came to his feeders brought him great joy, even if he had to scare away the “tree rats”. Larry always had an eye out for random deer

and turkey visitors.

Throughout his entire life, Larry was a loyal, avid Green Bay Packers fan. Among the many games he attended, he had the “privilege” of being one of the frozen fans at the historic Ice Bowl in 1967, when the Packers beat the Cowboys to win their third straight championship.

The incredible, full life Larry lived up to his passing was due to the amazing care and Therapeutic Wellness Programming he enjoyed at Park View Health Center and Lakeside 1, where he resided for almost six years. Daddio was part of the PVHC community, and the staff and caregivers he interacted with daily became part of his extended family. He loved them, and they loved him. Daddio’s children are so appreciative of and grateful for the compassionate and respectful care he received throughout his residency and final moments at PVHC.

Larry is survived by his children, Katherine Ann Jungwirth, Paula Jo (PJ) (Brett) Freiberg, Kristine Marie (Richard) Jahns, Elizabeth Mae (Jon) Pupeter, and Jon Pe-

el’s for funeral lunches.

John is survived by his wife, children and grandchildren. John is further survived by his sister Lois (David) Potratz, (Oshkosh). He is also survived by a brother-in-law and sister-in law Jim (Linda) Knutson (Berlin), and Rachel Nutter (Fond du Lac). He is further survived by many nieces, nephews and friends.

John is preceded in death by his parents, his brother Harry Mraz, a sister-in-law, Sil Mraz, brother-in-law, Chuck Knutson, and sister-in-law, Marilyn (Knutson) Colward and brother-in-law Gene Colward.

Services will be held at St. Raphael Catholic Church with visitation from 9:30 am until the time of Mass at 11 am on Monday, August 31, 2026. Father Nathan

ter (Angela) Jungwirth. Larry is survived by his grandchildren Rebekah Hope and Blaise Christian Donner, Stevie-Marie (Jesse) Ehrenberg, Brock Callan Sagmeister (Trevor Wells), Anna Louise and Alex Joseph Pupeter, Brady Joseph, Lauren Marie and Carli Ann Jungwirth; step-grandchildren Cade (Alyssa) and Jordyn Jahns (Andrew De Matteo). Great-grandchildren include Percy Ronald and Adley Marie Ehrenberg, and step-great-granddaughter Paisley Carlene Jahns.

Larry is preceded in death by his parents, brothers, and his wife, Ann.

The immediate family will have a private Celebration of Life October 24, 2026. In recognition of a life well-lived, the family invites anyone impacted by Daddio’s life to share a beer and a memory at an “Open House” to honor him at “The Bar” in Oshkosh on October 24, 2026, 6:00-8:00 pm. Wear your Packer gear. “Let ‘er flicker” in eternity, dear Daddio!



John K. Mraz

Our beloved John K. Mraz passed away on August 21st, after battling cancer for 4.5 years. John was born in Fond du Lac, Wi. on June 15, 1946, son of the late John B and Esther (Schuster) Mraz. On October 5, 1968.

John married Rose Knutson at St. Mary’s Church in Fond du Lac. They had a daughter, Lori (Tim) Collins-Schmidt, and a son, Kevin (Shannon) Mraz. John has 6 grandchildren, Andrew Collins, Wyatt Mraz, Karson Mraz, Harmony Mraz, Haylea Mraz, and Kaylee Collins.



John always loved spending time with his children and grandchildren and attended many of their activities. He played many games with them over the years, of which he kept track of in his “little black book”.

John also enjoyed camping, kayaking, gardening, wood carving, pigeon racing, training in martial arts and spending time with friends and relatives.

John worked over 50 years and retired from Ascension, Mercy Medical Center as a Medical Technologist.

John had a deep love of his Country and served in the United States Air Force from 1968-1972 during the Vietnam War. John was privileged to be included on the Yellow Ribbon Honor Flight in July, 2026.

John loved serving meals at St. Rapha-

Budde will be the celebrant. A military rifle salute will follow for his honorable and courageous sacrifice. Burial will be at Sacred Heart Cemetery, Oshkosh.

The family would like to extend heartfelt thanks to Fr. Tom and to St. Croix Hospice for their outstanding care and support as well as everyone else who supported us through this 4.5 year journey. In Lieu of flowers or gifts, please send donations to the Old Glory Honor Flight.

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Obituaries

Corky Abraham
Corky Abraham, 83, of Oshkosh, WI, passed away peacefully and returned to the Lord's hands on Tuesday, August 18, 2026. Corky was a devout Christian and a loving husband, father and grandfather. He was a true God-fearing man who believed in his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Corky was born on April 2, 1943 in Oshkosh, Wisconsin.

He grew up surrounded by his parents, Alward and Hazel Abraham, and his siblings Judy, Michael and Lynn. On October 30, 1965, Corky married the love of his life, Karla Kuehn. They were married and in love for 61 wonderful years. Their marriage is a beautiful example of love and laughter, which has filtered throughout their loving family. Corky served in the United States Army and was stationed in Okinawa, Japan as a chaplain assistant from 1966 through 1968. Karla joined him in Okinawa, working for the American Red Cross. Together, Corky and Karla ran a Sunday school program with over 400 children. Upon returning to Oshkosh, Wisconsin they gave birth to Jeff Abraham on November 5, 1969 and Eric Abraham on September 12, 1972. Corky attended the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, majoring in Secondary Education, with an emphasis on keyboard and vocal music. He graduated from Marian University, majoring in Business Administration. Corky was employed by Seven-Up Bottling Company, Stratz's Music Warehouse and Lutheran Homes of Oshkosh (now known as Miravida Living) for 25 years, serving in administration and eventually as Vice-President. He was proud of the work he did, especially overseeing the construction of many new care facilities throughout the complex,

Gary Egnoski
Gary Egnoski, age 86, passed away at his home on August 22, 2026. He was born to the late George and Esther (Edblom) Egnoski on April 2, 1940 in Oshkosh. He married Fay Ryf on October 1, 1966. They were married for 51 years before she passed away in 2018. After high school, Gary was in the military and was then employed by Rockwell until his retirement. His passion for the outdoors was a lifelong pursuit. He never missed an opening day of hunting. You could either find him in the woods or on the lake.

Robert J. Zwickey
Robert J. Zwickey, age 72, passed away at Ascension St. Elizabeth Hospital on July 31, 2026. He was born on January 18, 1954 in Oshkosh to the late John and Janet (Notzke) Zwickey. Bob had a passion for gardening. He found joy in nurturing his vegetable garden and tending to his beautiful flowers, eagerly anticipating each planting season. His green thumb was a source of pride and brought smiles to many. He loved being up north with his family, where he could often be found swimming and hiking in the Northwoods. Whether it was the thrill of a swim in the Wolf River or simply enjoying the sights and sounds of nature, Bob found joy and peace in ev-

which has helped thousands of people in Oshkosh and the surrounding communities. He served on the Board Of Oshkosh Family, Inc., the Oshkosh Committee On Aging for 20 years and chairman for 10 years. He was a charter member of Leadership Oshkosh. He also was a member of the Oshkosh Jaycees and Rotary Southwest, serving as President in 1974 to 1975. Corky was also a member of the Oshkosh Elks Club for over 40 years and he was their organist for 10 years. A deep love of classical and Christian music ran throughout Corky's entire life. He enjoyed playing piano for Karla and his large family, especially leading family Christmas Eve services. His amazing voice and skilled piano echoed throughout our lives. He was very proud of his sons' involvement in music, as well. Corky's exceptional music talent was humbly performed during hundreds of church services and directing church choirs for over 20 years. His true passion was directing Christmas cantatas. Large choirs, filled with close friends and family alike, performed amazing works of music at Our Saviors Lutheran Church, now known as Christ Our Savior. Seeing him blend 40+ voices to music, filled with the word of God, was an amazing thing to witness, inspiring all those who sang and heard these Christmas cantatas. One of Corky's favorite hobbies was playing golf with Karla and his brother, Michael, along with other friends and family. He also enjoyed spending time on Lake Winnebago boating and fishing, almost every day. Corky played softball for over 30 years, as well as racquetball. If you knew Corky, there wasn't a day that went by without a cigar and cold beverage in his hand. He loved spending time outside in the backyard patio: talking, laughing and loving with Karla, his brother, Michael, his sons, Jeff and Eric, their wives, Julie and

Gary is survived by his sons, Craig (Alison) and Ty Egnoski; grandsons, Riley and Logan Egnoski, and sister in law Jeanne Egnoski, along with many nieces, nephews, and cousins. In addition to his parents, Gary was preceded in death by his wife, Fay and his brother Dale Egnoski. Per Gary's wishes a cremation has taken place. A celebration of Gary's life will be held at Konrad-Behlman Funeral Homes-Westside (100 Lake Pointe Dr) on Monday, August 31, 2026 from 4PM until 6PM. In lieu of flowers or money, donations may be made to the Otter Street Fishing Club.

ery moment spent outdoors. Bob loved his family. He would eagerly lend a hand during the holidays, helping his mom in the kitchen. And shared his love of gardening with his siblings, showing them how to plant the perfect flower garden. He will be lovingly remembered as a great brother. Bob is survived by his sister, Laurel Berrell and his nephew, Trevor Berrell. In addition to his parents, he was preceded in death by his siblings, Michael, Steven, Brian and Cheryl Zwickey. Per Bob's wishes, cremation will take place and there will be no formal services held.

Brenda, and his grandchildren. He had a great sense of humor and a remarkable memory of his life and experiences. His generosity and kindness are a guiding light to all those who love him. Corky's deep love for his brother, Michael, has been present for 80 years. They are true best friends in every sense of the word. They also worked together at Seven-Up Bottling Company. Their families spent decades camping together, as well as countless adventures and shenanigans that could fill a large novel. More than anything, he loved being Grandpa to his seven grandchildren: Jacob, Ashlyn, Austin, Brooklyn, Spencer, Zach and Sam. Every time he was with one of them or all seven, he just lit up sharing stories and listening to their lives unfold. Words cannot state how proud he was of each and every one of them. Corky and Karla's life was filled with love, laughter and family. Karla would like to thank and send out a huge hug to her family and friends for their continued love and support. Corky is survived by loving wife, Karla Abraham, brother, Michael Abraham, and

his sons, Jeff (Julie) Abraham and Eric (Brenda) Abraham. His grandchildren are Jacob (Samantha) Abraham, Ashlyn Abraham, Austin Abraham, Brooklyn (Chris Atwood) Schamens, Spencer (Cassidy Winkel) Schamens, Zach Schamens and Sam (Sonia Ochowicz) Schamens. Corky was preceded in death by his parents, Alward and Hazel Abraham, as well as his sisters and brothers-in-law, Judy (John) Stowe and Lynn (Bill) Harron. A special thank you to Moments Hospice, Serenity Gardens at Bethel Home and Elijah's Place for your wonderful care and kindness. A visitation and memorial service will be held on Saturday, September 5, at Christ Our Savior Lutheran Church, located at 1860 Wisconsin Street, Oshkosh, WI 54901. The visitation will be from 9am to 11am, with the memorial service at 11am. Fiss & Bills - Poklasny Funeral Homes 865 S Westhaven Dr. Oshkosh, WI 54904 (920)-235-1170

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Arthur Reed Crook
Arthur Reed Crook, 95, of Oshkosh passed away on August 15, 2026. He was born in Mackford Prairie, WI on January 30, 1931, to the late David and Catherine (Roberts) Crook. Art attended grade schools in Rosendale and Markesan. He joined the Army in 1948 and served in Alaska and Okinawa. He married Ruby Bloedow in Port Townsend, Washington. He was baptized and confirmed on December 21, 1952, at St. Pauls Ev. Lutheran Church in North Fond du lac. Art worked for Pepsi Cola Bottling, US Motors and Oshkosh Truck. For many years he operated and owned Crook Paint & Body Shop. Art loved collecting old cars and was a member of the Central Wisconsin Auto Collectors. Art is survived by his sons, Douglas Crook, Dean (Kathy) Crook; daughters, Debra Crook and Darlene (Chris) Karoses; 8 grandchildren: Craig Crook,

Brad (Christina) Crook, Andy (Mary) Mahlke, Jessica Mahlke, Kayla Karoses, Joshua (Elizabeth), Jesse (Emily), and Jacob (Amanda) Crook; fourteen great grandchildren, Christina (Phil) Putsky, Brett Mahlke, Devon Krause, Jordan Koseck, Will Zeddies, Bryce, Liam, Caleb, Eli, Canaan, Eden, Andrew, Adeline, Amelia, Cameron, and Cason Crook; three sister in laws, Lucy Crook, Karen Crook, and Barbara Bloedow, along with many nieces and nephews. In addition to his parents, Art was preceded in death by his wife Ruby; son, David; six siblings: Mae (Lyle) Giffey, Marjorie (Elwyn) Hopkins, Roy, Glen, Donald (Ruth), and Thomas Crook; Services will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, 913 Nebraska Street, Oshkosh, WI, on August 27, at 1:30pm. A visitation will be held from 11:30 until the time of service. A special thank you to all the staff at hospice. They all showed compassion and care for Art. He enjoyed your visits with him. In lieu of flowers donations can be made to the Women's Organization of Grace Lutheran-Oshkosh.

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Obituaries

Bridget Rottman

Bridget and Paul are together again. Though Bridget sometimes longed for this day, the family and friends she leaves behind will miss her beyond words. Bridget Marie Murphy Rottman – aka Boo – lived a big, passionate life full of laughter and adventure, most of it with husband Paul “PJ” Rottman at her side, until he died in 2014. One of her favorite sayings, “I’m in!,” accompanied by a clap of her hands, sums up her philosophy on life. Her joys included throwing dinner parties that sometimes lasted until dawn; boating for any reason or no reason; traveling throughout Europe and elsewhere; caring for beloved pets like Porch and Samantha; and spending intimate time with friends and loved ones. In addition to her own family, she was an honorary member of many of her



friends’ families. Among Bridget’s greatest loves were her niece Molly and nephew Joe, whom she had a special bond with and helped raise after her sister Kitty died. She and Paul, who wanted but never had children, adored them as their own, and often had them to Oshkosh for fishing, boating and family gatherings. She also adored her four grand-nephews and spoiled them to pieces at every opportunity. Bridget found humor in just about everything. She was wildly funny, quick-witted and her unmistakable laugh could instantly light up a room. She made friends effortlessly and is survived by a tight-knit circle of fiercely devoted friends. She was genuine in her friendships; she listened deeply and made each one feel like they were her favorite – it was her superpower. If you had a conversation over drinks with Bridget, you may have learned some of the lesser-known things about her, like she had no sense of smell, which didn’t stop her from enjoying great food, but was a serious problem when her car was on fire

on the highway and she couldn’t smell it; she babysat for Charles Manson’s son as a teenager, whose mother was a family friend; when it came to getting married, SHE proposed to Paul; she nearly died from carbon monoxide poisoning at her family cottage in college, and was only saved when a phone call from her sister Colleen roused others; and she boasted that she was a master stain remover (especially Paul’s wine stains). Bridget had an innate eye for beauty and was always stylish in the way she dressed as well as the way she decorated her home. As the youngest child of Evelyn and Albert Murphy of Eau Claire, Bridget gave her parents more than a few good reasons to worry about her as she grew up, before they both passed away from cancer while Bridget was still in high school. Bridget’s older siblings knew she needed direction, so they enrolled her in college. They chose UW-Oshkosh, dropped her off at Scott Hall, and her wonderful life in Oshkosh began. After graduating from UW-Oshkosh in

1982 with a journalism degree, Bridget had to abandon her goal of “lunching and sunning” and begin an actual career, which spanned from advertising sales at the Oshkosh Northwestern and various ad agencies; through interior design sales at Interior Systems, Inc., in Fond du Lac; and peaked as Director of the Retail Environment Group at Harley-Davidson Motor Company in Milwaukee. Bridget’s sisters Peggy Murphy and Kitty (Fritz) Litchfield also died too young from cancer, and brother Mike died just recently. The family she leaves behind includes siblings Colleen Murphy and Pat Murphy; niece Molly (Dave) Ryder and their children Jay and Drew; and nephew Joe (Lila) Litchfield and their children Conner and Grant. In lieu of flowers, please donate to your favorite cause or to the Boys & Girls Club of Oshkosh, where the training kitchen was a favorite charity of Bridget and Paul’s.

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Obituaries

Robert Adam Hergert

Robert Adam Hergert, age 91, passed away peacefully August 8, 2026 at Aurora Zilber Family Hospice in Wauwatosa, WI.



Robert (Bob) was born April 25, 1935, the son of the late Philip and Anna M. (Lautenschlager) Hergert. He entered the state of matrimony with Judith Ellen Glaeser in 1961 at Sacred Heart church (now St. Jude's) and together they were blessed with 4 children. He spent the majority of his life living in Oshkosh, WI. and was a proud "West Sider!" Bob was a historian of the West Side, knowing and loving many of the families, businesses and culture. As a young boy, he was the bat boy for the Oshkosh Giants baseball team. In his adult life he continued to be known as "Bobby."

Bob was a graduate of Roosevelt Grade School, Oshkosh High School (Class of 1953), a graduate of UW-Madison in 1959, with a Bachelor of Science degree in Dairy & Food Science, and a minor in Business. While attending UW-Madison he was a SAE (Sigma Alpha Epsilon) Fraternity member. He also attended classes at UWO, St. Mary's University of San Antonio and San Antonio College.

While working in the family business as a young man, Bob delivered milk for Hergert Quality Dairy. In 1959 he joined his mother and two brothers Marvin and Warren in transforming the dairy (1946-1959) into Westgate Sport Center. That same year the business was renamed Hergert Sport Center and they became a Mercury Marine dealer. Ralph Hergert became a partner after his father, Warren, passed. The sport center closed in 2023, but Bob continued working and settling the details of the closure until his final retirement in April of 2025.

Christopher A. Brink

Christopher A. Brink, age 58, of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, passed away unexpectedly on August 18, 2026.



Chris was born on September 11, 1967, in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Alvin and Patricia (Wittenbach) Brink. He graduated from Ripon High School with the Class of 1986. He was a vibrant, unforgettable presence who lived life entirely on his own terms. Charismatic, endearingly funny, and truly eclectic, Chris was a natural curator of life who possessed a sharp eye for the unique and extraordinary. Chris spoke with blunt efficiency, sharp wit, and unforgettable delivery.

Chris was a man of intense substance—candid, earnest, and deeply principled. Unafraid of challenging conversations, he brought an uncompromising depth to every interaction and was always ready to engage in meaningful, intellectual dialogue.

He also possessed a profoundly compassionate heart, which shone brightly through his dedicated care for those in need, offering his time and support to anyone facing life's hardships. He had a natural gift for bringing comfort, dignity, and warmth to people who needed it most.

Outside of the family business, Bob was very active in the local community. In 1965 he became an original founder and member of the Western State Bank Board of Directors and served on the building committee. The bank later merged with M&I Bank and Associated Bank. He was also appointed to the Board of Directors of the Oshkosh Area Community Foundation where he honorably served for 10 years. The Board of Governors appointed him to the Foundation Board of Trustees in 1996.

Bob was a member of the Oshkosh West Side, U.S. Sporting Goods and UW Alumni Associations, Paine Art Center & Gardens, Oshkosh Masonic Lodge 27, Jaycees, various social groups including bridge and poker clubs and special breakfast groups. Bob was a true patriot! He served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps from 1955-1957, stationed at Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio, Texas. Visiting the USS Arizona Memorial, Honolulu, Hawaii and the Winston Churchill War Museum in London were very memorable events.

As a father, Bob was always determined to follow his children to their various locations throughout the world, including Japan, California, Colorado and Alaska. He loved road trips and wanted his children to see the U.S and Canada. Bob also developed a taste for international travel, visiting his family in Poland, friends in France and vacationing in other countries. Bob loved London, its culture and enjoying a "pint" at one of the warm and friendly pubs. Other favorite vacations included his Canadian "fly-in" fishing trips, with his sons, in-laws, and close friend Jerry Weber. His ultimate gift was watching his grandson, Jack, perform in sporting and special events in Chicago. He was a proud "Grandpa!"

For many years, Bob's winter "escape" was spending several weeks in Lauderdale-By-The-Sea, FL where he relaxed and enjoyed the beach and ocean. Bob's last trip was visiting Mackinac Island in June, 2024 with his wife, Judy.

Skiing with his family was one of Bob's favorite loves and he often said, "teaching his children to downhill ski was one of his

At the core of Chris's life was his strong, unbreakable faith in Jesus Christ, his Lord. He was a deeply devoted and active member of Calvary SonRise in Oshkosh, a community he loved wholeheartedly and considered family. His presence, lively energy, and unwavering devotion left an indelible mark on his church brothers and sisters. He was often one of the first to arrive and the last to leave. A faithful witness, he was always eager to study the Word and stand firmly in his convictions.

Chris is survived by his loving parents, Alvin and Patricia Brink; his three siblings, John Brink, Amy (Sean) Stark, and Beth (Mike) Mueller; and his cherished nieces and nephews, Alyssa, Ashlyn, and Ellie Stark, as well as Henry, Hudson, and Presley Mueller.

He was preceded in death by his beloved nephew, Ian Brink, with whom he is now joyfully reunited in faith.

A celebration of life will be held on Sunday, August 30, 2026, at Calvary SonRise (222 Church Ave, Oshkosh, WI). Visitation will begin at 11:30 a.m. until the time of the service at 12:30 p.m. A luncheon will follow the service at the church. Casual attire is welcome, we encourage you to wear Hawaiian shirts or tie-dye in memory of Chris.

KONRAD-BEHLMAN
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greatest accomplishments". He treasured his annual "father/daughter" ski days with his daughter Jody, at Granite Peak, Wausau while he was well into his 80's! The family holds fond memories of their many ski adventures throughout Colorado, Michigan, and Wisconsin.

Sports were a big part of his life. Bob was a dedicated Badger and Packer fan and was a Packer season ticket holder. He also enjoyed water skiing (slalom especially), fishing with his sons, was an avid reader, loved Dixieland and jazz music, good old Western movies and Alfred Hitchcock mysteries. Music highlights included seeing Pete Fountain play his clarinet in New Orleans and visiting Preservation Jazz Hall to enjoy performances by other "seasoned" musicians. He also treasured deeply his home and Judy's gardens.

Bob loved his family and taught them kindness, courtesy, compassion and responsibility. He never missed attending any of his children's sporting events or other activities. He was a good Christian, respected all faiths, and was a member of Zion Lutheran Church. He was dedicated to his customers at Hergert Sport Center and always treated them with respect and gratitude. Dedication did have some drawbacks as holidays or weekends were occasionally interrupted by distress calls from skiers or stranded boaters on Lake Winnebago, but he never minded lending a helpful hand.

Bob's frequent evening phone calls always ended with, "Do not say good-bye, only good-night, and see you tomorrow!"

A sincere thank you to his business colleagues, close friends and relatives who took the time out of their lives to visit or call him over the past year, bringing the Milwaukee Journal, delicious chocolate candy, flowers and sending special treats from Minneapolis. He was grateful for their caring and love.

We sincerely thank the staff of Aurora Medical Center in Oshkosh & West Allis,

the E.R. staff team in Oshkosh, nurses, "special" care angels at Evergreen, Pastor Jeff Knoll, Pastor Jeff Farber and Father Louis Golamar. We also have deep appreciation for the staff at Aurora Zilber Family Hospice, Wauwatosa, WI. for their consoling and compassionate care during Bob's final days.

Survivors Include: Judith Hergert (wife of 65 years) Daughter: Jody Hergert-Andresen (David), Sons: James Hergert (Irena), John Hergert (Kathryn Stevens) Grandson: Jack Hergert Bob's family in Warsaw, Poland Special "adopted" godchild: Ann (Ott) Faust, nieces and nephews, feline pal, Palmer and all of his families' grand-pets. Deceased family members include his beloved daughter, Susan Kay Hergert, parents Philip and Anna Hergert, brother Marvin (Margaret) Hergert, Warren, (Elizabeth "Boots") Hergert, Doris (Doug) Allen, In-laws: John and Helen (Norkofski) Glaeser, Donald Glaeser, Leita, Brad, Barbara and John (Jack) Glaeser, Jr., Raymond Hergert, Patricia (Hergert) Barney, and Philip Hergert. His "Over the Rainbow" beloved cats and dogs, especially Simon his feline buddy.

Memorials in Bob's name would be deeply appreciated to the Oshkosh Area Humane Society (<https://www.oahs.org>) Oshkosh Senior Center (<https://www.oshkoshwi.gov/SeniorServices>) or any charity of choice.

Funeral Services will be held on Wednesday, September 2, 2026 at 12 noon in the Fiss & Bills Poklasny Funeral Home, 865 S. Westhaven Dr., Oshkosh. A time of Visitation will be held at the funeral home from 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Pastor Jeff Farber will officiate. Full military honors will follow the service at the funeral home and private interment will follow at Riverside Cemetery.

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STATE OF WISCONSIN
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WINNEBAGO COUNTY
NOTICE TO CREDITORS
(INFORMAL ADMINISTRATION)
CASE NO. 26PR216

IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF Alfred J. Reisler
PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:

- An application for informal administration was filed.
- The decedent, with the date of birth 05/29/1943 and date of death 11/24/2025, was domiciled in Winnebago County, State

of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 3019 Lake Rest Court, Oshkosh.

- All interested persons waived notice.
- The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is November 24, 2026.
- A claim may be filed at the Winnebago County Courthouse, Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Room 242.

DATE SIGNED: August 19, 2026
Electronically signed by Sara Henke, Register in Probate, Probate Registrar
Form completed by: Attorney Nathan P. Olson
OLSON LEGAL GROUP, LLC
Address 21 W. New York Avenue Oshkosh, WI 54901
Telephone (920) 230-7020
Bar Number 1059348

Runs: August 26, 2026, September 2, 2026 and September 9, 2026.

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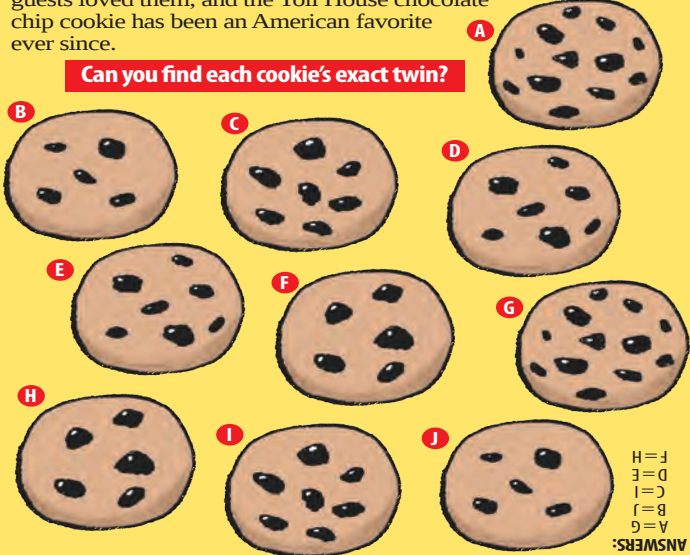
The First Chocolate Chip Cookies

Hotel owner Ruth Wakefield was trying to create a new treat for guests of the Toll House Inn.

She made a buttery cookie dough. Before baking, she added some broken bits of chocolate bar to each cookie. Ruth had expected the chocolate to melt and mix with the cookie dough.

The chocolate bits softened, but they didn’t melt into the dough during baking. Ruth’s guests loved them, and the Toll House chocolate chip cookie has been an American favorite ever since.

Can you find each cookie’s exact twin?



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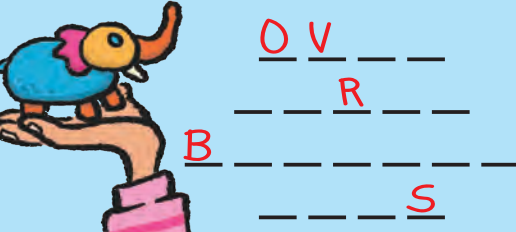
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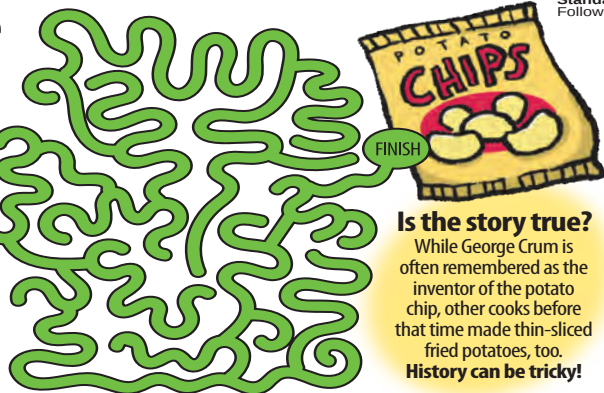


Standards Link: Reading Comprehension: Follow simple written instructions.

Potato Chip Surprise

In 1853, an angry customer at a restaurant complained that his fried potatoes were too thick and soggy. Cook George Crum was annoyed by this complaint. He decided to slice the potatoes as thin as possible, fried them until they were crisp, and added a lot of salt.

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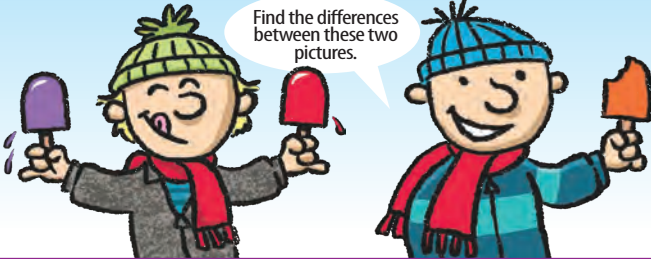
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I Q V P D O U G H O
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W T J S Y T L A S W

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

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Standards Link: Language Arts: Write descriptively using supporting details.



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