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INSIDE



Rivals collide

Warriors down Knights
in volleyball matchup
Page 16

State Assembly

Palmeri, Paterson vie for
District 54 post
Page 14

Student in custody after handgun is located at North

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

An Oshkosh North High School student was arrested last week after a school resource officer located a handgun in the student's possession, leading to an evacuation of the building and closure of the school the following day.

The Oshkosh Police Department responded to the school Sept. 23 for an active incident. A large law enforcement presence was outside the school as police searched it for an additional weapon and a second student thought to be involved in the incident.

Police Chief Dean Smith said that a social worker had told the North school resource officer (SRO) about an incident with a gun. Smith said the social worker found out from a mother who said her child had been shown a gun on Sept. 22 by the student that is currently in custody.

SEE **Weapon found** ON PAGE 9

Campaign supports local journalism

By Grace Lim
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

For the first time in its nearly nine-year history, the Oshkosh Herald is launching a fundraising campaign. The goal: 5,000 people giving \$50 a year to help keep local journalism local.

Every week, the Oshkosh Herald shows up in your mailbox whether you paid for it or not.

I'm Grace Lim, founder of Humans of Oshkosh, and for more than a decade I've been telling stories about the people who make this community what it is. Now I'm partnering with the Herald on a different kind of storytelling project, one that will introduce you to the people behind your local news and the people who believe it's worth supporting.

And I'm going to start by asking you for \$50. Hear me out.

For nine years, reporters went to meetings, photographers covered games and community events, stories were written and edited. The paper was printed and mailed to your home. You paid nothing for it, but somebody did.

For nine years, when advertising and

other revenue haven't been enough to cover the cost of producing the Oshkosh Herald and its sister newspapers, the Schneider family has personally covered the gap.

So the \$50. Fifty dollars is \$4.17 a month, less than \$1 a week. Less than a dollar a week. Let that sink in. For that \$50, you're helping make sure someone is still showing up at Common Council meetings and school board meetings. They are covering your kids' teams, reporting on your schools and telling you what's happening in the community where you live.

The paper is free. The journalism isn't.

And here's something else you may not know: In nearly nine years of publishing, the Oshkosh Herald has never held a formal fundraising campaign. That's about to change.

In April, the Oshkosh Herald, Neenah News and Winneconne News officially became part of the nonprofit Winnebago Media Group. The change was designed to keep the newspapers locally owned and create a way for them to survive long af-

SEE **Support journalism** ON PAGE 10



Oshkosh Herald

Oshkosh Herald founder and publisher Karen Schneider, left, and Humans of Oshkosh founder Grace Lim launch Winnebago Media Group's Founding 5,000 campaign. The campaign is seeking 5,000 people to contribute \$50 a year to help sustain non-profit local journalism in Oshkosh, Neenah and Winneconne. Scan the QR code to join.



Oshkosh Herald

Former Oshkosh West and Winneconne athletic trainer Dan Gehri talks to a collection of Winneconne athletes following Friday night's football game in Winneconne. Gehri recently had a brain tumor removed and is facing chemotherapy and radiation treatments.

Gehri gearing up to face adversity

Former athletic trainer has plan for cancer diagnosis

By Steve Clark
OSHKOSH HERALD

Dan Gehri has spent his professional life making sure high school athletes are healthy.

Now, he's going to be relying on them for support as he tries to navigate his own health issues.

Gehri, who has served as the head athletic trainer at Winneconne High School the past two years after a long career at Oshkosh West High School, has been diagnosed with an aggressive form of brain cancer and had surgery to remove a tumor in early September.

Go Fund Me Page

A Go Fund Me Page for Dan Gehri has been set up by his daughter. The page can be found at <https://gofund.me/ea1ad872c>

That hasn't stopped the 61-year-old father of three from attending events and keeping those he once treated aware of his situation.

"Some might say I am oversharing, but these kids are tough and they want to know what's happening," Gehri said. "For me, it's about making sure the kids are OK with what is happening to me., That's what I care about."

Gehri suffered a catatonic seizure while at Oshkosh West High School on Wednes-

day, Sept. 2 – the second day of classes – while he waited in the school's athletic training room before speaking to a physical education class.

When he didn't show up to speak, the staff at Oshkosh West discovered him in the grips of the seizure and called for an ambulance.

"I was basically frozen," Gehri said of the seizure. "I remember I opened my eyes and I could see a face and it would go away. I remember seeing Marina (Kodet, the Oshkosh West Dean of Students), and I remember of the ambulance guys because he was a former student, but I don't remember the ride to the hospital."

It was more than a day later when Gehri

SEE **Gehri's battle** ON PAGE 19



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Corrections
It is the policy of the Oshkosh Herald to correct all errors of fact. For correction information, call 920-385-4512.

About the newspaper
A 501c3 newspaper published weekly and mailed free of charge Tuesdays for Wednesday delivery (may vary based on U.S. Postal Service and holidays) to more than 31,000 homes and businesses in the Oshkosh area.

Winnebago Media Group, Inc.
36 Broad St., Suite 300, Oshkosh.
An E-edition of the newspaper can be accessed at www.oshkoshherald.com.

Senior expo features former governor as speaker

Oshkosh Herald

The Time of Your Life Senior Expo, produced by Selective Shows LLC, will be welcoming former Gov. Martin J. Schreiber as their keynote speaker.

Schreiber is scheduled to speak at noon Tuesday at the Oshkosh Convention Center. This is a free event to expo attendees taking place from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. It is the expo's 10th anniversary.

Schreiber is an advocate on Alzheimer's disease, dementia and caregiving. He will share his experiences

as a caregiver to his wife and high school sweetheart, Elaine, offering humor, compassion and words of wisdom.

His book "My Two Elaines: Learning, Coping, and Surviving as an Alzheimer's Caregiver" has received praise from the caregiving community and is listed among Caregiving.com's "best caregiver books." His public service includes roles as the youngest member of the state Senate, lieutenant governor and 39th governor of Wisconsin.



Schreiber

Unemployment rate remains steady in August

The Oshkosh-Neenah metropolitan area (MSA) and Winnebago County saw their unemployment rate stay the same at 3.3% in August as it was in July but up from 2.9% a year ago, according to preliminary

data from the state Department of Workforce Development.

Preliminary August 2026 unemployment rates increased in one metropolitan area over the month: Kenosha. Rates

decreased in five metropolitan areas over the month and stayed the same in the remaining seven metropolitan areas. Rates increased in all 13 metropolitan areas over the year.

Preliminary August 2026 unemployment rates increased in seven of Wisconsin's largest cities over the month. Rates decreased in 13 cities over the month and stayed the same in the remaining 15 cities. Unemployment rates decreased in three cities over the year. Rates increased in 30 cities over the year and stayed the same in the remaining two cities.

Preliminary August 2026 unemployment rates increased in 10 counties over the month. Rates decreased in 36 counties over the month and stayed the same in the remaining 26 counties. Unemployment rates decreased in four counties over the year. Rates increased in 64 counties over the year and stayed the same in the remaining four counties.

Estimates of unemployment and employment statistics are from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

New name for Oshkosh Community Fridge

Oshkosh Herald

The refrigerator and food pantry with free food for Oshkosh residents at Trinity Episcopal Church, 203 Algoma Boulevard, celebrated its first anniversary with a new name.

As community fridges continue to appear throughout Appleton and the Hope Fridge grows stronger in the Menasha community following the tornado response, Oshkosh partners decided to rename the Hope Fridge Oshkosh to the Oshkosh Community Fridge, said volunteer Jennifer Skolaski.

The fridge's mission remains the same: neighbors helping neighbors by providing food.

The fridge is based on a simple belief that everyone deserves access to food and every neighbor has something to contribute.

Food may be donated or taken as needed, without applications, appointments or judgment.

The Oshkosh Community Fridge held an event Sept. 23 of the fridge's first anniversary celebrating everyone who has made it possible, including donors, volunteers, community partners and the neighbors who use the fridge as a shared community resource.

Attendees were encouraged to bring food to help stock the fridge. Especially useful donations include items that can be eaten without a stove or can opener, making them accessible to as many neighbors as possible.

For updates, donation suggestions, and additional information, follow Oshkosh Community Fridge on Facebook.

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Oshkosh history by the Winnebago County Historical Society

Stein's Premier Gift Shop in 1930 before it was destroyed by fire.

September 30, 1947

Premier Dress and Gift Shop Destroyed by Blaze: Stein's Shop, owned by Frank Stein & Co. was the scene of a disastrous fire Tuesday evening. The estimated loss at the women's dress and gift shop and tearoom was estimated at \$150,000. About 90% of the stock and 50-60% of the building suffered damage from fire, smoke and water. This elegant three-story home's hand-carved solid mahogany, and other precious wood fixtures and walls and a two-manual pipe organ were irreplacably lost. The building was known nationally as a "show place of a unique design." Cause of the fire appears to be a faulty oil-burning heating system that had not been operating properly for several days. The business was once the private residence of George W. Gates (Diamond Match Co.) and was converted to an exclusive women's shop in 1924. Mr. Stein reported the loss would be covered by insurance.

Source: Oshkosh Northwestern, October 1, 1947

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COMMUNITY PARTNERS

Church celebrates founding pastor's ministry, retirement

By Hope Hahn
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Living Water Lutheran Church will celebrate 28 years of God's blessings as they hear the farewell sermon on Sunday by their founding minister and pastor, the Rev. John S. Dorn.

Community and congregation members are invited to celebrate Dorn's retirement at 9 a.m. Sunday at 1585 S. Oakwood Road. A special celebration with food and fellowship will take place immediately following the service.

Dorn's 28 years at the church have included multiple weekly services, weddings, baptisms, confirmation classes, communion, plus the joys of Christmas and Easter celebrations.

Church members said one of Dorn's most valued gifts has always been his kindness to everyone and sharing the unending promise of God's love throughout his 44 years of ministry during worship, home visits, hospital calls and funerals. Living Water members will always cherish Pastor Dorn's leadership, dedicated service and friendship.

Exploratory mission work on the west side of Oshkosh, due to the growth and development of the city, led the WELS Home Mission Board to extend a divine call to Dorn. He accepted the call, and as of Oct. 1, 1998, Dorn began serving this mission field through faith and outreach.

Dorn and his family hosted Living Water's first meeting and original services at their parsonage on Nov. 22, 1998, with a core group of 17 members. Those humble beginnings quickly grew to Living Water Lutheran Church dedicating their first Ministry Center and hosting their opening church service Sept. 12, 1999, in



Submitted photo

John Dorn is preparing to retire after serving as the pastor at Living Water Lutheran Church for the past 28 years.

a storefront on the west frontage road – Washburn Street in Oshkosh.

Following years of prayer, planning and blessed growth, Dorn led the Living Water congregation in a groundbreaking service in June 2008. The Living Water Lutheran Church's new building and grounds were later dedicated on Dec. 7, 2008, at 1585 Oakwood Road.

Living Water's church family growth and convenient west side location allowed for many fun and out of the ordinary outreach opportunities. Dorn's community mindedness encourages giving back with

donations, collections and member involvement for Back to School Supplies, Salvation Army, Toys for Tots, Coats for Kids, plus 'Remarkable' community projects. Dorn is a familiar face, who frequently shares Christ-Centered Services with other Oshkosh WELS Congregation's, seniors, widows, and assisted living facilities.

The latest Living Water Lutheran Church expansion in 2018 included dedicating the north addition with multiple meeting rooms, as well as an expanded parking lot that serves the Oshkosh community and is a voting location.

On July 12, 2026, Living Water celebrated the installation and Ordination of its new pastor, the Rev. Caleb M. Foelske, a recent graduate of WELS Seminary. Living Water Lutheran is welcoming Foelske and his family as new additions to the Living Water Church family.

“Looking to the future, Living Water presses forward with its mission statement—Our Mission: Your Salvation,” Foelske said. “Through the faithful preaching and teaching of God’s Word, the Lord has made this once small gathering of believers into a church community of over 500. With the Lord’s blessing, Living Water aims to do more community events to reach more people with the gospel such as movie nights, family fun days, and outdoor spaces to enjoy. We have installed a Little Library in front of our property for our neighbors to enjoy. Our classrooms also remain a space for music lessons and in-depth Bible study.”

Foelske added, "As Oshkosh grows, supporting our families and young people remain a high goal. The congregation aims to strengthen the youth and young adult



Submitted photo

Caleb Foelske is leading the church after being named as its new pastor in July.

demographic in the promises of God's Word. Utilizing our long-time members to mentor and support the young families and kids will be important. Through Sunday School, teen activities and community service, we want to be a supportive home for the next generation."



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September 30

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October 1

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Admission is FREE
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 polka, pretzels!

October 3

Fall Outdoor Market
Parnell's | 2-6pm | FREE
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October 3

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DORA zone guidelines now set as Sawdust District added

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

Things are happening on South Main Street after the creation of the Sawdust District Entertainment Collaborative (SDEC).

The group has continued its efforts to promote the Sawdust District, which now includes a downtown outdoor refreshment area (DORA).

The SDEC DORA stretches from the Fox River to West 17th Avenue along South Main Street and then runs along the historic Sawdust District sprawling slightly starting at West Ninth Avenue and reaching the corner of West Sixth Avenue and Oregon Street.

The DORA includes both the Jackson/Oregon Street bridge and the Main Street bridge to connect with the original downtown DORA and the riverwalk. The original DORA was first introduced in 2022 as an opportunity for people to enjoy alcoholic beverages while enjoying the downtown area within the boundaries at specific hours.

The SDEC DORA will have the same hours as the downtown DORA – 5 to 10 p.m. Wednesday through Friday and 1 to 10 p.m. Saturday.

“We had a great vision for what this could be,” said Zach Clark, who is co-owner and operator of Fifth Ward Brewing, which will be included in the new DORA.

Andrea Reichenberger of Flights Wine and Cocktail Club told the council that DORA “is not just a convenience; it’s an economic development tool that helps create a more vibrant, walkable and competitive downtown.”

Becket’s owner Kris Larson helped the



The downtown outdoor refreshment area (DORA) will now be extended south of the Fox River to include areas in the Sawdust District.

SDEC to get started and initiate the new DORA process. He spoke in favor of the

new DORA and commended city staff on writing a good policy that has now been

replicated across the state in Milwaukee, Madison and Neenah.

The DORA received skepticism of city officials, including Mayor Matt Mugerauer, at the time but council members and the police agree that there hasn’t been major issues with the DORA since its inception.

City staff initially rejected the proposed SDEC map, stating that the area was too residential for the designation. But after conversations regarding the issue amongst the council and with Oshkosh Chief of Police Dean Smith giving his approval, the council decided to use the map the SDEC first proposed.

However, Smith said having different hours for the DORAs could cause confusion for officers who would have to police the areas differently based on the time of day and where someone was standing.

The SDEC initially requested the DORA be active from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m. every day. This was largely due to the Oshkosh Arena holding events earlier in the day on Saturdays and some Wisconsin Herd games being played on Sundays and Tuesdays.

The council agreed with Smith and voted to approve the same hours for the SDEC DORA as the downtown DORA with the option to revisit the hours.

The idea was proposed to possibly say both DORAs should start at 11 a.m. on Saturdays. Smith was cautious about that idea because of the Downtown Farmers Market that goes until 12:30 p.m. on Saturdays and he had concerns with a DORA being active with that many people in the area.

The resolution passed the council with no opposing votes.

Wisconsin Street bridge improvements to start

Oshkosh Herald

Governor Evers last week signed a \$1.27 million contract to improve the Wisconsin Street Bridge (WIS 44) across the Fox River in Oshkosh.

Work begins Oct. 8 and is expected to finish by the end of March 2027. The bridge will remain open to motor vehicle traffic and pedestrians.

Omega Coatings from Palm Harbor, Florida, is the prime contractor.

This is a bridge painting project. The major item of work on this contract consists of cleaning and repainting the structural steel for the movable span of the WIS 44 structure over the Fox River. Additionally, the pedestrian gates will be replaced with the work on this contract.

The primary anticipated benefits of this bridge painting project center on safeguarding and extending the functional life of the structure.

By thoroughly cleaning the structural steel of the movable span and applying a new, high-performance paint system, the project will effectively halt ongoing corrosion caused by the natural environment. The new coating will form a durable pro-

TECTIVE barrier that prevents moisture, salts and other corrosive agents from reaching the steel, thereby preserving the structural integrity of the primary load-bearing members.

This protection is expected to extend the overall service life of the bridge along WIS 44. Without timely intervention, progressive corrosion could compromise the steel’s load-carrying capacity, potentially leading to more extensive and costly structural repairs or even accelerated replacement needs in the future.

In addition, the new paint system, combined with the replacement of the pedestrian gates, is anticipated to reduce long-term maintenance costs. A properly applied modern coating requires less frequent intervention than a deteriorating system, lowering the need for repeated inspections, spot repairs, and emergency interventions related to corrosion.

The bridge will remain open to motorists. At least one lane in each direction will be open for traffic during work on the project.

The project will maintain a minimum of one open sidewalk during the work on the project.

From Oct. 8 through April 8, the Wisconsin State Bridge at Mile 56.72 over the Fox River will be secured to masted navigation and scaffolding that hangs approximately four feet will be installed under the bridge. Vessels able to pass under the bridge safely, without an opening, may do so at any time.

The DOT asks that motorists slow down, be patient and pay attention to their surroundings in this and all work zones.

For updates, go to the WIS 44 construction website at projects.hub.wisconsin.gov/projects/61102600.

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\$4.99

Zoup! Chicken & Beef Bone Broth was 7.99

\$5.49

Sabrina's Coffee Cakes

\$29.99

Megafood Men's & Women's Daily Vitamins was 41.99

\$6.99

Skimmers Vodka Iced Tea Cocktails 4 pack was 8.99

\$10.49

Flybird Wine Cocktails 750 ml was 12.99

Offers valid 10/01/2026-10/04/2026 while supplies last. Must be 21+ to purchase alcohol.

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2 Bedroom Plus		\$29,000	\$1,225
2 Bedroom Deluxe		\$35,000	\$1,357
2 Bedroom Grand		\$45,000	\$1,610
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District needs to cut \$7M from budget for school year

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

The Oshkosh Area School District’s fiscal woes continue as there will need to be \$7 million cut from this year’s budget.

The Board of Education learned last week that the district was facing a \$14 million deficit for the current school year. The district and school board have already made approximately \$7.8 million in cuts and are looking at funds it can draw down as well as changes to the healthcare plan.

“We cannot continue to operate like this, we just cannot,” board member Barb Herzog said.

The district made \$4.6 million in reductions in January and another \$3.1 million in reductions in April, but another \$7 million in reductions is needed to balance the budget for the 2026-27 school year.

OASD officials have a plan to cut approximately \$7 million as the deficit has reached \$14.8 million. These increases come from better forecasting that says employee health costs, special education and retired employee benefits costs are going to rise while the district is also anticipating less grant funds.

“The healthcare strategy we’re talking about tonight is directly related to helping us reduce costs from a district standpoint as we’re thinking about this year’s budget,” OASD Superintendent Bryan Davis said during the Sept. 23 board meeting.

The district will receive the final state aid for 2026 on Oct. 15 and the final vote to approve the 2026-27 school year budget is expected to take place on Oct. 28.

The district’s current healthcare plan,

which is self-funded, has monthly premiums for single employees at \$50 per month and family premiums at \$100 per month, according to district documents.

The proposal the school board heard last week calls for employees to cover 12% of the healthcare costs, which would mean single employees’ monthly premium would go up to \$99 per month and family coverage would be \$337 per month. This would save the district around \$1.6 million.

The district plans to move money from the facilities fund and the other post employment benefits (OPEB) fund along with introducing the 12% employee share of health insurance premiums.

The school board did not vote on the proposed changes but the issue will be coming back to the board at the Oct. 14 meeting leading up to the budget discussions later this year.

OASD assistant superintendent of operations Brian Yerkey said that in the past, when Drew Niehans was running business services, there was one person that had all the information on the healthcare plan. Yerkey said his team, which includes business services and human resources, are still working through how things were done for years at the district.

“Figuring out how we got here isn’t the easiest piece right now,” Yerkey said. “We’ve been very transparent with our frustration and we’re also sick of coming to the board with these surprises.”

He added, “I apologize for those pain points, I wish I knew the system in and out better. I wish I had the historical pieces to why things were done the way they were. We don’t have any of those resourc-

es available to us other than the Avergent team. We are committed to fixing this and getting it right. I apologize we haven’t had those resources to be able to thoroughly explain to you why certain things are the way they are. We’re just not able to do that with some of these pieces.”

Yerkey was joined at the meeting by two members of the Avergent team, which is a consulting firm the district contracts with for benefits like the healthcare plan. Yerkey stressed this process will likely take multiple years to clean up but by having a team figuring it out together is the best way forward.

Board member Tim Hess had a number of detailed questions for the Avergent team and is set to meet with them separately to go over the financials.

Short term borrowing

Yerkey explained that the district needed to open a new line of credit with Nicolet Bank to avoid cash flow issues, which could include issues with employee paychecks and healthcare costs.

“In order to be able to pay our bills - based on revenue coming in, expenditures going out, including payroll, healthcare costs - we have to short-term borrow. It’s a common practice,” Yerkey said.

He added that possibly 90% of school districts do what Oshkosh has done, which is short-term borrow to cover these costs. The district is set to pay around \$113,000 in interest costs for the \$20 million it is borrowing.

“If we don’t short-term borrow, we will struggle to make payroll and pay the bills,” Yerkey said. “If we don’t do this, we will have some trouble.”

Hess said he supports short-term borrowing but questioned the legality of short-term borrowing. He said that statute allows the district to short-term borrow for the current school year.

Board member Chris Wright asked if Hess believed it was illegal or if an attorney had told him it was illegal. Wright was concerned with Hess stating district actions were illegal.

“It’s my opinion,” Hess said. “We are

Class reunion raises donations for scholarships

Oshkosh Herald

The Oshkosh North Class of 1976 recently held their 50th class reunion.

As part of the reunion, they asked for donations for scholarships. They raised enough to present three checks of \$1,976 each to the Oshkosh Area School District Education Foundation.

Linda Blackwell Tedlie presented a check for a college bound 2027 ONHS

taking money without having the authority to.”

Board president Mike Ford said if any member thinks the district is acting illegally, they should bring in legal counsel to advise the board on the issue. The board directed Davis to have legal counsel look at the issue.

Wisconsin Statute states the district can borrow money as needed; however, no loan can extend past Nov. 1 of the following school year. Yerkey did say that bills are still coming in for the 2025-26 school year.

Ford pointed out that hundreds of school districts across Wisconsin may be breaking the law if Hess’s theory is accurate.

Hess was the only opposing vote for the measure on approving \$20 million in short-term borrowing.

Preliminary budget

OASD executive director of business services Cindy Rettler took over the role from Niehans, who retired earlier this year. Rettler presented a balanced budget to the school board of \$146.2 million.

The preliminary budget was presented and approved so that the district could approve the \$20 million in short-term borrowing.

Rettler stressed the numbers were preliminary and that most aid numbers will not be known until after the third Friday student count is finalized. That number will be available in mid-October.

She’s anticipating the special education reimbursement at 40% and a potential \$31.5 million increase in healthcare costs.

“So we can anticipate this may change,” Ford said.

Ford added that Rettler reported to the facilities and finance committee that “this is based on much more conservative and realistic assumptions than were used in the past and it’s not based on any type of anticipated usage of our fund balance.”

Herzog called the budget “transparent, open and a realistic budget.”

The preliminary budget passed with no opposing votes.

graduate, Tom Sitter presented a check for a technical college bound 2027 ONHS graduate and Linda Gutsmedl Johnson presented a check for a 2027 ONHS art major bound 2027 ONHS graduate in memory of Jodie Clark Schoonover, a classmate that taught at Oshkosh North for over 20 years.

The class of 1976 hopes other classes will take up the challenge to put together scholarships for their school.

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The Power of Local



Sheriff’s budget plan includes adding four deputies

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

The Winnebago County Sheriff’s Department is looking to add four correctional deputies as part of the 2027 county budget.

Sheriff John Matz shared a detailed look at the department’s budget at the Judiciary & Public Service Committee on Sept. 24 as it begins consideration of the 2027 bud-

Sheriff explains how county used Flock cameras

By MaryBeth Matzek
OSHKOSH HERALD

Although the Winnebago County Sheriff’s Office turned off its Flock Safety cameras earlier this month, Sheriff John Matz said the cameras enhanced the department’s work.

The county had 15 Flock cameras it rented for an annual fee of \$52,500. The cameras were located on major thoroughfares, which are ingress and egress points into municipalities. On Sept. 4, Matz sent a 30-day notice to the company, ending the contract. All cameras have since been bagged.

Matz shared with the Judiciary & Public Safety Committee at its Sept. 24 meeting how the county used the cameras and the decision to end the contract.

“Flock enhanced our investigative abilities,” he said. “It was an effective tool for us.”

Flock cameras capture license plate images and vehicle characteristics along with a date/time stamp and the camera’s location.

The sheriff shared multiple examples of how Flock helped law enforcement find and arrest suspects by using the cameras to find vehicles associated with the crime.

He said Flock cameras were used in major investigations, including when a Town of Omro resident was defrauded out of \$298,153. The victim’s neighbor had security cameras, which helped the department get a general description of the vehicle, which was later stopped in Walworth County. The suspect was arrested and brought back to Winnebago County.

Matz said the corridor from Green Bay

get. Matz said the four deputies — in addition to the six deputies hired in 2026 — restore the corrections department back to the numbers it had prior to the closure of Pod C in 2021. Earlier this year, Pod C reopened, requiring more deputies.

“All of our jail pods are in operation,” Matz said. “Our numbers are not going to go down and we won’t be closing any pods.”

The 2027 executive budget is asking to Fond du Lac is well connected and if one municipality is looking for a vehicle, Flock could help another one track it down.

Accountability was essential when the department operated the Flock cameras, said Ryan Hathaway, a detective sergeant. He said audits were done every two weeks to make sure the searches done were legitimate. This is important since officers in other jurisdictions, including one in Menasha, had been charged with using Flock cameras for personal purposes, he said.

“We also limited how long we stored the footage from 30 days down to 14 and all of our search activity is logged so we know who was looking for what,” Hathaway said.

Matz said when he decided to cancel the contract with Flock it was due to information that he obtained from another sheriff that Flock data was released in other states in response to open records requests.

Some of those records were tied to active investigations, although none were connected to Wisconsin.

There was also concerns about safeguarding agency data.

“I feel now that some of the information we received that led to us canceling our contract was misleading, but I know there is a lot of people out there who are opposed to Flock cameras,” Matz said. “They may have privacy concerns, but there are a lot of devices out there that spy on us already, especially our phones.”

Matz is retiring at the end of the year, so it will be up to his successor to decide what the department should do about future Automated License Plate Reading (ALPR) technology, although he hopes the state Legislature will put some rules into place regarding the technology.

“I think we need to wait for legislation to catch up before moving ahead with anything related to ALPR,” he said.

for \$2.67 million, an increase over the approved 2026 budget of \$2.31 million. One way the department saved money in 2026 was switching to a new provider for inmates’ medical and mental health needs, Matz said.

Under the advice of County Executive Gordon Hintz’s office, the sheriff’s department took some of its planned 2027 purchases and will purchase them now with capital outlay funds.

The department plans to purchase new SWAT/Dive vehicles to replace vehicles that no longer meet team needs and improve emergency response effectiveness.

In the coming year, the department plans to expand the Sobriety Treatment Assisted Recovery (STAR) Program in partnership with Solutions and DHS to connect participants with community partners and post-release resources. Another 2027 project will be completing the planned 911 and audio-recording hardware and software upgrades.

Corporation Counsel Mary Anne Mueller said her department’s goals for 2027 include retaining current employees and cross-training employees.

The budget’s across-the-board 3% salary increase will help with the retention, she said.

Mueller said her attorneys need to obtain their licensure by attending classes and seminars and she expressed concern the department’s registration tuition was decreased from the \$4,620 she requested to \$4,360.

City ordinance will limit access to hemp-derived cannabinoids

By Jonathan Richie
OSHKOSH HERALD

Anyone wanting to buy hemp-derived products in Oshkosh will now have to be 21 years of age.

The new ordinance passed last week as health officials have warned of the dangers of youth being exposed to the intoxicating products. In states where marijuana is legal for recreational purposes, such as Minnesota, Illinois and Michigan, the legal age for possession is 21.

Ashlee Rahmlow of Winnebago County Public Health and Breakwater, a youth substance use coalition in Oshkosh, told the Oshkosh Common Council during its Sept. 22 meeting how important this change will be for youth in the area.

She said that limiting youth availability to intoxicating hemp-derived cannabinoid products is important for community safety.

“We know from public health research that limiting access at the point of sale is one of the most effective ways to prevent youth use,” Rahmlow said. “So to focus on retailers is a really important step.”

She added the county health department supports this measure.

“We truly appreciate your work in getting us here,” Rahmlow said.

Council member Jacob Amos also noted the potential side effects of young people using this product and specifically how it affects the pre-frontal cortex of a developing brain.

Deputy Mayor Karl Buelow said he met with the Breakwater group about this issue and fully supported the measure.

The ordinance does not define what the penalty for retailers would be, but it does outline the fines for adults and juveniles violating the ordinance.

Buelow amended the ordinance to include a \$100 fine for retailers that violate

“I know that’s not much but having back that \$260 would help us make sure our attorneys are getting the training they need to retain their licenses,” she said.

The corporation counsel department looks to create more revenue in 2027 by increasing the hourly fees it charges when inmates at the Wisconsin Resource Center use its staff. The hourly attorney fee is rising to \$350 per hour, up from \$300 and the paralegal hourly fee is rising to \$150, up from \$120.

District Attorney Eric Sparr said his department is seeking to change some positions in 2027 to better meet its needs. He wants to add two full-time administrative associate IV positions and eliminate one full-time administrative II position, one full-time administrative III position and add one full-time victim witness supervisor and eliminate one full-time victim witness program coordinator.

The department is requesting a vehicle with squad equipment for \$43,620 that the office uses to serve subpoenas and transport witnesses. It would replace a 2011 vehicle.

The Judiciary & Public Service Committee will next meet at 4 p.m. Oct. 5 in the Rick Meyer Community Room at the Sheriff’s Department. They will then vote on making changes to the budget at that time. Those changes will be forwarded to the Winnebago County Board of Supervisors where they will be voted on in late October as part of the budget deliberations.

the ordinance.

“My reason for making this is to make it very clear that the retailers are going to get penalized more than any individual,” he said.

The fines for adults are \$75 and the fine for a juvenile is \$50. There are court costs associated with these fines and the retailer fines.

“The forfeiture structure is intended to promote compliance and accountability, rather than generate revenue,” an unsigned memo to the council states. “The ordinance includes a fiscal penalty for violations; however, its primary purpose is compliance, deterrence, and improved public safety rather than revenue generation. Revenue from forfeitures cannot be reliably estimated and will depend on enforcement activity and compliance.”

In Oshkosh these products are available at a number of retail locations. The popular products include Delta-8, which is sometimes called weed lite or diet weed, and THCA, which is one of over 100 cannabinoids in cannabis. THCA is the precursor to THC, meaning that when it is burnt, THCA turns into THC and creates the intoxicating effects.

These products have been sold in Oshkosh for over a year in smoke shops and gas stations.

The ordinance states, “Intoxicating hemp-derived cannabinoids shall not be sold within 500 feet of a hospital, church, or youth serving organization,” then lists possible examples.

Council member Alec Lefebber stated that language was too broad and that there are businesses that are already operating that this language could affect. He called for the language to be taken out and the council approved.

The amended ordinance passed with no opposing votes.

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Weapon found

FROM PAGE 1

The SRO was able to identify the student and went with school staff to the student’s classroom to investigate.

“The student was escorted to a safe location to question him about a weapon,” Smith said.

The 16-year-old student denied having a weapon at that time, but the SRO searched the backpack and located the handgun with an extended magazine.

Smith said the student was taken into custody and was later transferred to Fond du Lac Secure Detention.

“Currently under a charge of possession of a firearm on school grounds, but we will be reviewing this case with the district attorney’s office,” Smith said.



Davis

The incident caused officials to place the school on lockdown. Over 40 police officers arrived on the scene and Smith Avenue was shut down. As news of the incident spread on social media, concerned parents started to gather outside.

Some of the parents were able to communicate with students inside the building who were safe but wanted to know what was going on.

The school went into a hold around 9:30 a.m. and a full lockdown at 10:02 a.m. The building remained on lockdown as police officers swept the school for weapons and other safety concerns. Around 11:20 a.m. students were able to leave their classrooms, according to Smith, and all stu-

dents were out of the building just before 1 p.m.

As part of the school’s reunification plan, all students went with their classes onto buses and were taken to Oshkosh West High School. OASD Superintendent Bryan Davis explained this was part of the district’s safety plan.

“When we get these types of situations, we want to make sure that safety is our priority and out of an abundance of caution we executed that plan,” Davis said.

The plan was developed by the district’s emergency preparedness collaborative operations (EPCOT) team.

“We’ve been practicing (the plan) on an annual basis,” Davis said. “Just actually had a practice about a month ago. Again, flawless execution by the team today.”

Students were not allowed to visit their lockers or their cars as all students were led from the classroom onto buses and dropped off at West to be picked up by their parents or authorized emergency contact.

OPD public affairs officer Kate Mann provided a short statement as students were exiting North and getting onto buses to go to West.

“We received information that another student, a 17-year-old student at Oshkosh North High School, may also be in possession of a weapon,” Mann said. “Officers searched the school and the school was evacuated. Officer did not locate the 17-year-old student, nor did it locate any other weapon.”

No one was injured related to the incident. The 17-year-old student was located, and police no longer believe he was linked to the incident.

The incident remains under investigation.

Davis thanked the officers for their work during the lockdown and said the district



Oshkosh Herald

An Oshkosh Police officer talks with a bus driver Sept. 23 as officials prepared to evacuate students from Oshkosh North High School after a student was arrested for having a handgun at the school.

remains strong in keeping its students safe.

“Having a weapon at school is completely unacceptable and will not be tolerated,” Davis said. “Every child deserves a safe place to learn. Today was a concerning and distressing experience for our students, staff and families. From the very beginning of the incident our focus was on students first, prioritizing their physical safety in the moment and their emotional wellbeing moving forward.”

Davis said during a press conference on Sept. 23 that classes were set to resume on Thursday at North with counselors and other support for students and staff available.

However, hours after that statement, the district decided to cancel classes at North on Thursday to have counseling services available at the school, as well as provide

time for students to pick up materials they had left behind.

Students were back in class on Monday. Classes were already set to not be in session Friday for a scheduled professional development day.

To show support for the school community as classes resumed Monday, a group of parents were organizing an effort to provide healthy snacks, drinks and a smile for students to start homecoming week off on a positive note.

The welcome back was a collaborative effort among parents and teachers throughout the school.

Staff will be provided a drink on Thursday as a way to thank them for their efforts. Organizers wanted to show the community works together when there’s a need.

Motorcyclist killed in single-vehicle crash

Oshkosh Herald

A 25-year-old woman was killed last week in a motorcycle crash in Oshkosh.

The Oshkosh Police Department was investigating the Sept. 23 single-vehicle crash involving a motorcycle. The Oshkosh Fire Department transported the motorcyclist to a local hospital, where police said on Sept. 24 she was pronounced deceased.

The Oshkosh Police Department Crash Investigation Team and Criminal Investigation Division were on-scene investigat-

ing the incident that occurred at Jackson Street and Hobbs Avenue.

Jackson Street from Murdock Avenue to Stanley Avenue was closed for several hours. Police did not release further information about the incident.

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Oshkosh Herald

WINNECONNE NEWS

Neenah News

Oshkosh Library advances plan for building's future

Oshkosh Herald

Responding to priorities identified during its 2025 strategic planning process, Oshkosh Public Library is launching a building development initiative to ensure its facility continues to support community needs for years to come.

Throughout the strategic planning process, community members identified the library building, including its condition, functionality and ability to support evolving services, as a priority for future investment. The initiative reflects the library's strategic vision, The Library in Your Life, and its commitment to remaining responsive to feedback.

The library has selected Engberg Anderson Architects, a nationally recognized firm with extensive experience designing



Eschete

and renovating public libraries, to lead the development of a comprehensive, multi-phase facilities plan.

Working with library staff and community members, the firm will evaluate the building's current condition, identify opportunities for improvement and develop recommendations to guide future investments.

The library is also establishing a Building Development Work Group. The group will meet from October 2026 through February 2027 to review information gathered throughout the planning process and help shape recommendations.

"Libraries today serve many more purposes than they did when this building was designed and renovated," library director Darryl Eschete said. "We're providing access to technology, supporting students and families, creating opportunities for lifelong learning and serving as a gathering place for the community. As expectations continue to evolve, it's important

that we take a thoughtful look at how our facility can best support those needs now and in the future. This process will help us create a roadmap informed by both professional expertise and community input."

The library will host a series of focus groups in the coming weeks to gather additional feedback before concepts and recommendations are developed for the work group's review. Information about participation opportunities, including

dates and locations, will be announced separately.

"The library belongs to the community," Eschete said. "The more voices we hear during this process, the better positioned we'll be to create a plan that reflects community needs, priorities and aspirations for the future."

For more information, visit oshkoshlibrary.org/building-development-initiative.

Support journalism

FROM PAGE 1

ter Karen is no longer the person keeping them going.

"We essentially gave everything we built to the community," Karen told me. "I no longer am the owner of these newspapers. The community is the owner of these newspapers."

Now the community has a decision to make. Winnebago Media Group is looking for what we're calling the Founding 5,000: 5,000 community members whose annual \$50 contributions, combined with current advertising revenue, can create a sustainable foundation for nonprofit local journalism.

If you're already a member, you're already one of the Founding 5,000. If you're not, I'm going to spend the next several weeks trying to convince you to join us.

But before I ask for your \$50 again, I think you should know what you're helping preserve.

Karen never set out to become a newspaper publisher. Her background was primarily in advertising, and after her position with Gannett was eliminated in 2014, she did consulting work and tried to figure out what came next. She kept hearing people ask the same question: Where's the local news?

Karen had seen a different model while living in Arizona: a free weekly newspaper intensely focused on the communities it served. She thought Oshkosh needed something similar. So in 2017, at a time when practically everyone was talking about the death of newspapers, Karen decided to start one.

People thought she was crazy.

"Who would start a newspaper when newspapers are dead?" she remembers people asking. Even printers wouldn't return her calls for quotes because, she said, they thought she was "a crazy person."

That didn't stop her. Karen even set a date for the first issue before she had an editor.

"I greatly underestimated what it would take to get up and running," she said.

Eventually, someone connected her with veteran journalist/editor Dan Roherty. The two met for hours at a cafe in Neenah and talked about the newspaper Karen wanted to create. Afterward, Karen waited to hear whether Dan wanted to join her.

When she didn't hear from him for a week or two, she finally emailed him: Are you in?

"Oh, yeah, yeah," he told her. "I'm in."

Dan started Dec. 1, 2017. About six weeks later, the first Oshkosh Herald went to press. It was 12 pages.

Karen handled the business side. Dan served as both editor and reporter. Julie Vandenberg completed the team as the office manager, and they relied on freelancers to help cover the community.

The Oshkosh Herald wouldn't have a full-time reporter for its first three years, but the Oshkosh Herald team brought home second place in General Excellence from Wisconsin Community Papers Association the first and second year they published, and first place for the state in General Excellence in 2022 after a two-year pause during the pandemic.

"Dan performed miracles," Karen told me. Then she put it even more plainly: "The Oshkosh Herald lives because of Dan Roherty."

Almost nine years later, the newspaper that so many people thought would never work is still showing up in Oshkosh mailboxes every week. Over the next several weeks, I'm going to take you behind that newspaper.

You'll meet some of the people who report the stories, cover the meetings, photograph the games, edit the copy and get the paper into your mailbox. You'll also meet some of the people who choose to contribute \$50 a year even though they can receive the newspaper for free.

I want them to tell you why. I also want to show you what "free" actually costs and what this community stands to lose if local journalism isn't sustainable.

Almost nine years ago, Karen Schneider asked Dan Roherty a simple question: "Are you in?"

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Grace Lim is a journalist, educator, founder of Humans of Oshkosh and owner of Grace Lim Creative. She believes local journalism and community storytelling help people feel seen, informed and connected.

Former pitcher discusses baseball's segregated past

Oshkosh Herald

Before Jackie Robinson broke Major League Baseball's color barrier in 1947, Black players were barred from the major leagues and instead competed in the Negro Leagues, where some of the sport's greatest talent made its mark.

Former Chicago American Giants pitcher Dennis Biddle will bring that history to life during a free presentation from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Thursday in the lower level at Oshkosh Public Library. Biddle will share firsthand stories from his career and discuss the experiences of Black baseball players during the eras of segregation and integration.

The presentation, "After Jackie: Breaking Barriers," is being held in conjunction with the library's hosting of the traveling exhibition "After Jackie: Breaking Barriers – 25 Years of Tribute; 60 Stories Untold."

Biddle made his professional baseball debut with the Chicago American Giants in 1953 at age 17. He is among the few surviving former Negro League players able to share firsthand accounts of that era.

Often known as "the man who beat the

man who beat the man," Biddle has dedicated much of his life to preserving and sharing the history of Negro League baseball.

During his presentation, he will share stories from on and off the field and discuss the challenges Black players faced as baseball moved from segregation toward integration.

For attendees, the program offers an opportunity to look beyond the statistics and historic milestones and hear from someone who experienced the era firsthand. Biddle will discuss the perseverance and talent of Negro League players, as well as their contributions to baseball and the broader history of the United States.

In 1996, Biddle co-founded Yesterday's Negro League Baseball Players Foundation, LLC where he continues to serve as president. He travels throughout the country speaking at schools, libraries and community organizations to help preserve the stories and contributions of Negro League players for future generations.

The program is free and open to the public.

Fox Valley Technical College to hold open house

Oshkosh Herald

All Fox Valley Technical College campuses, including the Oshkosh Riverside Campus at 150 N. Campbell Road, will be holding fall open house events.

The open house from 3 to 6 p.m. Oct. 6 will be an opportunity to tour classrooms and labs on the campus, speak with staff

and current students and explore career paths and flexible learning options. The college offers more than 200 programs.

A student panel will provide information about college life, financial aid and program offerings.

Prospective students who attend the open house can apply for free. For more information, go to bit.ly/3HGrGp0.

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Photo by Michael Cooney

Science on display

Rocks and minerals filled the Sunnyview Expo Center on Saturday and Sunday as the Oshkosh Earth Science Club held its 54th annual Gem & Mineral Show. Vendors brought fossils, polished stones, jewelry and equipment, while club members displayed and sold pieces from their own collections. Members of the UW-Oshkosh Geology Club explored the displays and were drawn to large crystals from SS Rocks of Oshkosh.

Benefit show highlights 40 seasons of style

Oshkosh Herald

The Oshkosh Area Women’s Association’s Benefit Style Show will be marking its 40th anniversary this year.

The show will be taking place Oct. 27 at the Oshkosh Convention Center. This year’s event theme is “40 Seasons of Style” and will showcase fashion from a lineup of nine local boutiques.

The emcees for the evening of fashion are Tricia Morris, Miss Oshkosh & Miss Wisconsin 1990, and Ryan Rasmussen, executive director of the Oshkosh Area Community Pantry. Doors open at 4:30 p.m. with a cash bar, followed by dinner at 6 p.m. and the style show at 7 p.m.

Guests will enjoy a silent auction, door prizes and raffles while supporting various causes. This year’s proceeds will benefit

Oshkosh Area Community Band, Sons of American Legion A.L.P. Stuffed Pups, The Teachers’ Closet, Winnebago County Sheriff’s K-9 Program and Miss Oshkosh Competition.

Tickets are \$50 (non-refundable) and include dinner and entry to the style show.

The Chocolate Raffle will showcase a Ruby Necklace donated by Reimer’s Jewelers in honor of the 40th annual benefit.

Individual tickets can be purchased at Oshkosh locations, Piggly Wiggly, 525 E. Murdock Ave., West Pointe Bank, 1750 Witzel Ave. and reserved seats or tables for up to 8 are available by contacting Jaye Roeming at 920-233-5712. Tickets are also available online at oshkoshwomen.com for \$52.

Ticket sales will end on Oct. 20.

First Tuesday concert on Oct. 6 features Irish harpist

Oshkosh Herald

First Tuesday at First Congregational opens its 2026-27 season on Oct. 6 with harpist Jeff Pockat performing on his Irish Harp and diving into its history.

The public is invited for music at noon, followed by homemade soups, salad, dessert, coffee and four kinds of fresh home-

made bread. The suggested donation is \$11 per person. The church is located at 137 Algoma Boulevard.

Noted Oshkosh architect William Waters created an acoustic for music when he designed First Congregational Church. From 1912 to the 1960s it served as Oshkosh’s first meeting hall for music and civic events. That tradition continues.

Calendar of events

Wednesday, Sept. 30

Sawdust Nights - Night Market, 5 p.m., Oshkosh Arena

Thursday, Oct. 1

Shadows of Oshkosh: A Haunted Walking Tour, 5 p.m., Morgan House, 234 Church Ave.

Friday, Oct. 2

Remarkable Inc. Talent Takeover, 5 p.m., Oshkosh Convention Center
Janet Planet Concert, 5:30 p.m., Menominee Park
Morgan House Tour, 6 p.m., 234 Church Ave.

The Crown Jewels – A Tribute to Queen, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh

Saturday, Oct. 3

Oshkosh Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Walk for Life, 9 a.m., South Park
Oshkosh Silent Book Club Fall Book Crawl, 11 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Oshkosh Gallery Walk, 6 p.m., Downtown Oshkosh
The Lovin’ Spoonful, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh
UWO Titan Bistro, 7 p.m., UWO Music Hall

Sunday, Oct. 4

Town of Algoma Fire Department Pancake Breakfast, 7:30 a.m., Town of Algoma Town Hall, 15 N. Oakwood Road

Tuesday, Oct. 6

Time of Your Life Senior Expo, 9 a.m.,

Oshkosh Convention Center

First Tuesday Concert featuring Harpist Jeff Pockat, noon, First Congregational Church, 137 Algoma Boulevard

Wednesday, Oct. 7

Shadows of Oshkosh: A Haunted Walking Tour, 5 p.m., Morgan House, 234 Church Ave.

Thursday, Oct. 8

I’m with the Banned: A Banned Books Week Event, 7 p.m., Time Community Theater

Friday, Oct. 9

52nd Street – Music of Billy Joel, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh
Sawdust City Fright Fest Friday Double Feature, 7 p.m., Time Community Theater

Saturday, Oct. 10

Oshkosh Farmers Market, 8 a.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Boos and Brews Seltzer and Cider Stroll, 1 p.m., Downtown Oshkosh
Winnebago County Historical Society Pints of the Past, 6 p.m., Morgan House, 234 Church Ave.
Fox Valley Comedy Nite, 7 p.m., Can Can Boutique and Bar
Mariachi San Jose, 7 p.m., The Grand at UW-Oshkosh

Sunday, Oct. 11

Oshkosh Harvest Craft and Vendor Show, 10 a.m., Oshkosh Convention Center

Tuesday, Oct. 13

Shadows of Oshkosh: A Haunted Walking Tour, 5 p.m., Morgan House, 234 Church Ave.

Wednesday, Oct. 14

Take Back the Night, 5 p.m., UWO Culver Family Welcome Center

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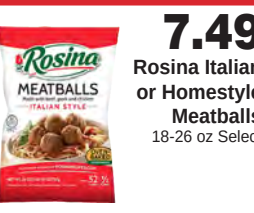
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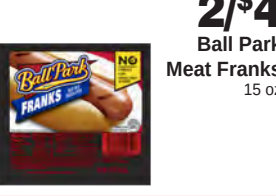
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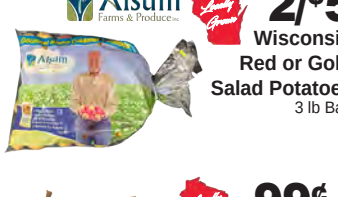
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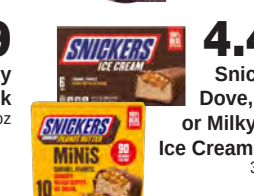
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OSHKOSH ONLY DEALS

State Assembly District 54 candidates on Oshkosh, legislature

Oshkosh Herald

Oshkosh voters are headed to the polls to vote on Nov. 3 for the federal, state and county races.

This candidate questionnaire highlight the Wisconsin State Assembly District 54 race that will see incumbent Lori Palmeri, D-Oshkosh, face challenger Tim Paterson, R-Oshkosh, in a rematch of the 2024 race.

The Oshkosh Herald sent the same questions to each candidate. Some responses have been edited for style and clarity.

Lori Palmeri

Age: 59
Education: BA Urban and Regional Studies – UW-Oshkosh, Masters in Urban Planning – UW-Milwaukee
Experience: Six years Oshkosh Common Council and two terms as mayor. I have been part of many community boards and commissions and neighborhood civic groups with thousands of hours of volunteering.

Why are you running for this office?
I am running for the 54th Assembly District to represent the people in this district and their needs for a cost of living that provides a quality of life beyond just survival. Representing this community means working on solutions at the state level that will help us thrive as a community.

What is the biggest issue facing District 54 and what will you do to address the issue?

The biggest issue in the district is the economic impact(s) we are all facing on paydays: limited resources.

What can we afford and what will we dedicate toward emergency savings? The emergency is here, now.

These greater economic forces roll down to whether there are living wages and worker protections and kids and families public education funding, while seniors and every homeowner face the property tax tangle. Wisconsin is heavily reliant on ever increasing property taxes. Some states have dealt with this differently.

Do you believe the state legislature should fund the municipal services program at 100% instead of the current 44%? Should the state legislature reimburse public schools for special education funds at the percentage amount the legislature approved?

I will continue to advocate for making our communities whole on shared revenue and the municipal services program and funding public education in a common sense manner.

Special education funding and transportation costs are not going down and make up a significant portion of the public school budget. The legislature approved special education at sum certain (a flat amount) but should have been sum sufficient for costs to continue.

We must honor budgets as moral documents to get the fair share back in the 54th as we also include affordable housing, transportation infrastructure, health/mental health access and clean water with responsible stewardship of resources. I have been authoring and co-authoring bills to make these very things

possible. I will fight for public hearings on bills that matter to the people of the district.

Do you support legislation at the state level that would protect citizens from AI deepfake images or videos?

With regard to legislation at the state level that would protect citizens from AI deepfake images or videos, when I was on the Speaker’s Task Force for AI in the prior session, I advocated for protecting all folks from deep fake and AI generated content.

The majority leaders in the legislature ended up putting protections in only for political candidates and it should have been for all Wisconsinites.

Tim Paterson

Age: 60
Education: Undergrad Degree, BA-Business, Military Education ILE - Graduate School Equivalent
Experience: Winnebago County Board - second term, County Veterans Service Commission, Aviation Committee, Solid Waste Management Board, 33 years military experience.

Why are you running for this office?
I am running for the State Assembly because I feel that my voice is not being heard by my current state representative.

In truth I have been approached by many people who feel that they have concerns and issues that are not being addressed. I want to assure that people understand that they are heard and respected and that I will take action when issues come up.

What is the biggest issue facing District 54 and what will you do to address the issue?

Taxes as they relate to wasteful spending. I do not support raising the state income tax, especially now, while we are sitting on a \$3 billion surplus, and a \$2.2 billion Rainy Day Fund.

Wisconsin families already pay enough. Before we ask taxpayers for more, we should identify waste, duplication and fraud and stop paying for that. Savings from this review should go toward lowering the property tax burden, which we have the eighth highest in the nation.

Tax policy should be simple and predictable. Do not increase the state income taxes, look for opportunities to lower the property tax rates and prove that every tax dollar spent is necessary. We must be able to show where the money is going, what it is being used for without continually asking more of working families.

Do you believe the state legislature should fund the municipal services program at 100% instead of the current 44%?

This pertains to Wisconsin Statute

70.119 where service costs associated with state buildings and facilities that are not covered by the state are charged to the local communities in the form of property taxes.

I am reluctant to agree with 100% of these expenses because I do not know what the total cost would be to cover the entire state. Milwaukee and Madison have an endless list of facilities that this would pertain to. But I would certainly agree that the percentage should be higher than it is, especially when you consider just how much there is in the current state surplus.

This question only scratches the surface of a much larger issue called “Unfunded Mandates” where county and municipal services are required are not fully funded. This is why we need a review of our state spending to assure that funding is going where it is most needed.

Should the state legislature reimburse public schools for special education funds at the percentage amount the legislature approved?

First, I am very disappointed that the budget surplus bill did not get passed this past spring.

It is my understanding that embedded in this bill would have been enough money to cover the special education funding shortfalls. I still believe that this bill needs to be the first item on the agenda for the new session.

Once that is complete, I would agree that we need to take a look at two items with regard to special education funding. Governor Evers proposed a higher rate back in 2022, but I am also intrigued by and would like to learn more about the Wisconsin Educational Association Council’s proposal from 2021.

Once the actual financial requirement is made available, I have no doubt that a possible increase might be required. But with careful consideration I do believe that a reasonable, cost-effective solution is possible.

Do you support legislation at the state level that would protect citizens from AI deepfake images or videos?

Yes, I would support legislation at the state level to protect Wisconsin citizens from AI deepfake images or videos.

I am deeply concerned at the enormity of internet abuses that are happening today. Using the internet should be an enjoyable opportunity to look up and share information for everyone.

However, there are many out there who will use their computer skills to deny access to your computer on the internet. They will create scams to steal your money, your credit card and other financial information as well.

Finally they will use their capabilities to embarrass, intimidate, threaten and blackmail individuals using deepfake images. I am also concerned that as AI capabilities increase and improve that there will be even greater abuses of it. We need to get out ahead of this.

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Behnke living up to tough-guy name for Knights

By Tim Froberg
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

When you're named after Russell Crowe's fearless character in the movie "Gladiator," people expect you to be tough.

Maximus Behnke is all of that.

The rugged Lourdes Academy two-way starter is one of the top football players in the Oshkosh area.

Behnke is the Knights' defensive leader: a ballhawking middle linebacker with a nose for the football. Behnke is well known and highly regarded in the Trailways Conference after landing first-team all-conference honors in 2025 as a linebacker, finishing with a team-high 106 tackles (58 solo), 11 tackles for loss and two sacks.

Behnke's contributions aren't restricted to the defensive side of the ball. He received second-team all-conference honors as an offensive guard last season, but is playing fullback this fall and thriving at the new position.

Behnke is a fourth-year varsity starter who immediately landed a starting role at middle linebacker his freshman year. Behnke has been part of the Knights' varsity football program since his elementary school days when he served as a water and ball boy.

"Maximus has been with our football program since the fifth grade," said Lourdes coach Kevin Wopat. "He's a hard-working, high IQ football player who has been paramount to our success the last the past two-plus years."

Maximus - the youngest of three boys raised by Nick and Jennifer Behnke - has followed in the footsteps of two older brothers who were also football standouts at Lourdes. His oldest brother, Brett, was a Knights' offensive and defensive lineman, while Anthony played wide receiver and defensive back.

"My brothers are very competitive and I'm very competitive, too," said Maximus. "So we were always competing at everything. My oldest brother, Brett, was one of the main reasons why I got into the weight room. I looked up to him. He was a pretty strong guy, but I wanted to be better than him so I started lifting when I was pretty young, around the eighth grade. To me, getting stronger is one of the most important things you can do as a football player."

Strength isn't a problem for the 5-foot-11, 185-pound Behnke and neither is



Lourdes Academy senior Maximus Behnke is a four-year varsity player for the Knights who has made the move to the running back position this season.

toughness.

"Maximus is the classic youngest boy in his family who also happens to be the toughest," said Wopat. "He got to watch and play with his brothers. He's been an incredible part of our team's success. I'm looking forward to him finishing his senior year strong."

That is a likely scenario, especially on defense. Behnke is an instinctive all-over-the-field linebacker who is a sure tackler with a knack for anticipating plays. He was credited with a team-high 33 tackles,

including five for loss, in the Knights' first four games.

"I've been playing linebacker in this defense for awhile," Behnke said. "All the snaps I've had since I've been a freshman have really helped because, honestly, this is a hard position to really learn. I just try to be where I'm coached to be. You need good instincts to be a linebacker. That's what I rely on because when you make a read, you don't have a lot of time to think about it."

Behnke's favorite NFL linebacker is

Senior Spotlight

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Green Bay's explosive outside backer Edgerrin Cooper.

"He (Cooper) is such as physical, aggressive player, and he's a really good pass rusher, too," said Behnke. "He makes a ton of plays."

So does Behnke...and not always on the defensive side of the ball. He is enjoying the position switch to fullback this fall after playing offensive guard the first three years of his varsity football career. Behnke is mainly a blocking back, providing pass protection and helping blast open holes for Knights' playmaking quarterback Brady Bauer.

However, Behnke has also been getting some touches and has been productive. In Lourdes' first four games, Behnke had generated 117 rushing yards and scored two touchdowns, while averaging an impressive 6.9 yards per carry.

"Oh yeah, that first touchdown was pretty awesome," said Behnke. "It felt great. It's something I always wanted to do. I understand that my main job is to be a blocker. Playing offensive line all these years has made me, I think, a great blocker. But I usually touch the ball three to five times a game, maybe a little bit more depending on our opponent. I always tell myself, 'Hold onto the ball. Hold onto the ball.'"

"It's been a lot of fun. I love it. When the coaches told me during the offseason they were thinking about playing me at running back, I was excited. But honestly, I just wanted to do what was right for the team."

As for his intriguing first name, Behnke has gone by "Max" in the past, but has decided to go forward with his full formal version of Maximus. And yes, the name was inspired by the main character in "Gladiator."

"My parents really liked the movie and the name Maximus," said Behnke. "That's how I got the name. A lot of my teachers would call me Maximus and after awhile I thought, 'You know what, Maximus is a super-cool name. It's a cooler name than Max and I love where the name comes

SEE **Senior Spotlight** ON PAGE 19

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Warriors overpower Knights in Trailways East showdown

By Steve Clark
OSHKOSH HERALD

The best way to describe the difference in going up 2-0 in a volleyball match as opposed to being tied at 1-1 can be done with one word.

Huge.

So, when Valley Christian was able to knock out the last three points of the second to take the 2-0 lead on rival Lourdes Academy last Thursday night, it wasn't hard to see what that did for the Warriors.

"I thought we did a really good job in the second set being able to close it out," said Valley Christian sophomore Laila Gostas-Sims. "It was so important to go up 2-0 because we have a quicker chance to take it to the third and take it home right away. If we went 1-1, it would have been a tougher fight."

Backed by the clutch second-set win, Valley Christian was able to rack up a sweep of the Knights in a Trailways East showdown, winning 25-15, 25-22, 25-19, in front of a large crowd at The Castle.

"Honestly yeah it feels good," Gostas-Sims said. "They are the crosstown rivals and for us to come into their house and take the win in three sets feels really good."

Lourdes Academy head coach Rachel Laehn believes that if the Knights could have found a way to pull out the second set and even the match, the end result may have been different.

"I think it would have changed everything," Laehn said. "We did bring a lot of energy to the third set but I think they would have been more excited and more driven and that would have given us a chance to win in four or five (sets) for sure."

The Knights had a couple of three-point leads early in the second set but the teams were neck-and-neck for most of the set.

An ace by Grace Martin gave Lourdes Academy a 13-11 lead midway through the set but the Warriors responded with the next two points, tying the score on a Mady Busch block.

The two teams were tied six more times in the set before a tip from Gostas-Sims and a Knights' hitting error gave the Warriors a 21-19 edge. But a block from Adhieu Liabwill helped the Knights tie the score again, before the teams exchanged points to make it 22-22.

A Lourdes Academy hitting error netted Valley Christian a sideout before the Warriors' Brielle Birr came up with back-to-back kills – the second on a Knights' overpass – to secure the second-set victory.

"Pressure is a privilege and it gets me pumped up and I do better like that," Birr



Oshkosh Herald

Above: Valley Christian's Laila Gostas-Sims goes up for a spike against a pair of Lourdes Academy blockers in the second set of last Thursday's Trailways East match.

At right: Valley Christian's Bea Schmidt spikes one over the net for a point against Lourdes Academy last Thursday.

said. "It's always nice to beat Lourdes. This is a really big win for us."

Despite leading 2-0, Valley Christian head coach Lizzy Potratz wanted to make sure her team didn't relax entering the third set and be able to finish the match off.

"We did some things better that second set but we did some things worse than in that first set so it was reminding them what is our game and what do we do well," Potratz said. "I just told them going into that third set to do what have you guys done that has made you guys good this year and I thought they did a good job responding to that."

The Knights scored the first three points of the third set but the Warriors came back with a flourish.

Valley Christian responded with three straight points, tying the score on back-to-back aces from Busch, and then scored five straight points on Jael Picker's serve to take an 8-4 advantage.



Birr and Gostas-Sims each had two kills as the Warriors maintained its advantage, offsetting two kills from the Knights Kenadie Fronek and a block from Noami Liabwill. A Lydia Hardy ace boosted the Warriors' lead to 14-8 before Gostas-Sims broke the game open, serving up a stretch of seven straight points.

Gostas-Sims had a pair of aces in the run, Hardy had a dump set for a point and Lily Ochowicz capped the run with a kill that gave the Warriors a 21-9 lead.

"Laila's a competitor and she wants to win. She's one of the strongest competitors we have had come into this program and honestly she's better the bigger the games are," Potratz said. "It wasn't her best game this year but I thought she did things well in certain moments. The competitive nature she has, I love that about her and that she doesn't shy away in the big moments."

Lourdes Academy didn't go away quietly, though.

Reagan Buttke had a pair of aces in a run of five straight points for Lourdes Academy, while a block from Adhieu Liabwill and a Warrior hitting error brought the Knights to within 22-16.

After Valley Christian scored two more

points, Lourdes Academy answered back with three – including a Fronek kill – to get as close as 24-19 before the Warriors were able to net the final point.

"It was a really up and down game for us. We just have to play our game better," Potratz said. "All of these hitters are young so there are a lot of fundamentals that we are training these girls with. ... We want to take care of these games now, but if we can get it to come together by the end of the season that would be awesome."

Gostas-Sims led the Warriors with 11 kills but didn't rack up the attempts she normally does.

Birr added 10 kills, while Busch, Ochowicz and Bea Schmidt each finished with three.

"It's not frustrating at all," Gostas-Sims said about the lower number of swings. "I love seeing my teammates succeed. Brielle stepped up and did really well and I'm really thankful that I have teammates who can step up and play really well."

Busch and Hardy each finished with three aces for the Warriors, while Hardy totaled 22 assists in the match. Hardy and Gostas-Sims each had 11 digs, while Addy

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Prep roundup

FOOTBALL

Oshkosh West stuns Kimberly

Drew Abitz threw for two touchdowns in a relief role and the Wildcats beat the Papermakers for the first time in more than 20 years in a 21-11 victory at Papermaker Stadium last Friday night.

The last time an Oshkosh West team beat Kimberly was in 2005 when the Wildcats pulled out a 37-7 win. Kimberly beat Oshkosh West 44-0 last season and had posted shutout wins in the last two meetings.

Abitz took over at quarterback for an injured Carter Kufel and went 3-of-4 passing for 57 yards, throwing 24-yard touchdowns to both Tatum Newell and Henry Weis.

Owen Heim, who led the Wildcats with 79 yards rushing on 20 carries, added a 1-yard touchdown run.

The Wildcats, who hadn't scored in their previous three games, led 14-3 at halftime and extended the lead to 21-3 in the fourth quarter. Kimberly scored late in the final period but could not get any closer than the final margin.

Oshkosh West will celebrate Homecoming this Friday while playing its final home game of the regular season against Appleton East.

Valley Christian tops another ranked foe

The Warriors beat a top-10 team for the third time this season, holding on for a 28-22 road win against fifth-ranked Suring last Friday night.

It was the first loss of the season for the Eagles, while the fourth-ranked Warriors improved to 6-0 on the year.

Valley Christian jumped out to a 13-0 lead at halftime and led the rest of the way against Suring.

Sam Gloudemans rushed for 141 yards on 15 carries to lead the Valley Christian offense. Ian Kramert added 52 yards on the ground, including a 15-yard touchdown run.

Mason Everts ran for 76 yards and two scores, while also connecting with Cole Highfill for a 25-yard touchdown pass in the win. Everts finished with 59 yards passing, while Highfill caught three passes for 44 yards.

Defensively, Gloudemans led the way with 14 tackles, followed by 12 each from Everts and Noah Ekholm. Jay Parrish finished with 10 tackles and an interception.

Valley Christian will celebrate its Homecoming next Friday by hosting Green Bay NEW Lutheran at Neenah Middle School.

Knights roll past winless Dodgeand

Brady Bauer threw for three touchdowns and Lourdes Academy rolled to a 47-0 victory over winless Dodgeand last week.

Bauer finished 9-of-11 for 138 yards and



Oshkosh West No. 1 singles player Aubrey Eppecht hits a backhand return during a dual meet against Oshkosh North last week.

the three touchdowns, two of which went to Harlan Kuehn, while Michael Santiago hauled in the other.

Maximus Behnke rushed for a team-high 71 yards and had a pair of touchdown runs, while Ian Simmons and Jacob Thelen also had touchdown runs in the game for the Knights.

The Knights will travel to Deerfield on Friday.

Spartans fall to top-ranked Tritons

Highly-touted Kingston Allen rushed for 295 yards and six touchdowns as Green Bay Notre Dame topped Oshkosh North 49-0 last Friday.

No other information was available from the game.

The Spartans will host Sheboygan South on Friday.

TENNIS

Doubles sweep leads Wildcats past Spartans

Oshkosh West won all three doubles matches to earn a 5-2 win over Oshkosh North in a Fox Valley Association dual meet last week.

Megan Jorgenson and Madelyn Marino posted a 6-1, 6-1 win at No. 1 doubles for West, while Kinsey Koepsell and Natalie Backus at No. 2 doubles and Auden Bongers and Aubree Marino earned the win at No. 3 doubles.

Aubrey Eppecht at No. 1 singles and Riley Lecker at No. 2 singles earned wins for the Wildcats.

Posting the victories for Oshkosh North were Claire Queulin at No. 3 singles and Madison Ventura at No. 4 singles.

Lourdes Academy can't get past Ledgers

The Knights posted wins at the top flight in both singles and doubles but dropped a dual meet to St. Mary's Springs, 5-2, last week.

with a 121.

The Spartans had a pair of individuals compete at the meet with Sammie Leib and Ashling Lynch each carding rounds of 110.

Wildcats win Oshkosh Invitational

Oshkosh West fended off Lourdes Academy and Oshkosh North to win the Oshkosh Invitational at Westhaven Golf Course last week.

The Wildcats finished with a team score of 223 to finish four shots ahead of the Knights. Oshkosh North was third with a score of 235.

Lourdes Academy's Marlie Kieckhafer earned medalist honors at the meet shooting a round of 51, three shots better than Sammie Leib of Oshkosh North and Keeley Toman and Mia Drexler of West.

Also scoring for West were Delaney Anderson with a 57, while Alexis Peruzzi and Lauren Klinger each finished with a 58.

For the Knights, Stella Marschall added a 57, while Millie Swanson and Reagan Buttke scored a 59 and 60, respectively.

Joining Leib for North were Sophia Fabiano with a 57, Ashling Lynch with a 61 and Becca Kolodzik with a 63.

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL

Wildcats take second at Monona Grove Invite

Oshkosh West lost a pair of close matches to Watertown and took second overall at the Monona Grove Invitational on Saturday.

SEE **Prep roundup** ON PAGE 18



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Prep roundup

FROM PAGE 17

The Wildcats went 2-1 in pool play with their victories coming in straight sets over Ripon and in three sets over Sun Prairie East. Oshkosh West then beat Cambridge in three sets in the semifinal to earn a rematch with Watertown Luther Prep but came up short.

Emma Liebergen and Noelle Prickett each had 25 kills to lead West in the tournament, while Kinslee Nelson finished with 24.

Assist leaders for the Wildcats were Brooklyn Rowe with 53 and Lucy Jolin with 30, while Halle Stern paced the team with 30 digs and Liebergen added 28.

Addison Benesh led the team with 11.5 blocks and Olivia Xiong added 10 aces.

Last Thursday, the Wildcats rallied from a 2-1 deficit to knock off Kaukauna, 25-19, 16-25, 17-25, 25-19, 15-13 in a Fox Valley Association match.

Liebergen paced the Wildcats with 12 kills, followed by Nelson with nine and Emjay McConnell with seven.

Liebergen also led the team with three aces, along with Rowe. Rowe also finished with 18 assists with Jolin adding 17.

Benesh paced the team with eight blocks, while Stern had 18 digs, followed by Liebergen with 16 and Payton Dorn with 15.

Knights finish 3-1 at Westfield Invitational

Lourdes Academy won a pair of matches over Coulee Region Christian and split a pair of matches against Markesan at the Westfield Invitational on Saturday.

Naomi Liabwill had 29 kills and Sarah Hafemeister added 19 for the Knights, while Katelyn Potratz led the team with 33 digs and Grace Martin finished with 50 assists.

Stats for one of the matches against Markesan were not available.

Valley Christian fares well at tourney

The Warriors won four of five matches at the Algoma Tournament on Saturday.

Valley Christian's lone loss was to Ashwaubenon, while the Warriors recorded a pair of wins over Crivitz as well as victories over Algoma and Bonduel.

Laila Gostas-Sims and Brielle Birr each finished with 37 kills in the tournament to lead the Warriors, while Mady Busch had 23 and Lily Ochowicz finished with 22.

Addy Lehman led the team with 46 digs, followed by Gostas-Sims with 42 and Jael Picker with 36.

Lydia Hardy registered 110 assists in the five matches.

BOYS VOLLEYBALL

North/West collects first win in program history

The Oshkosh North/West co-op boys volleyball team bounced back from a second-set loss to beat St. Lawrence Seminary 25-14, 24-26, 25-18, 25-16 on Saturday.

Arthur King finished with 10 kills to lead the Spartans, while Skyler Vang finished with eight.

Abel Lo led the team with four aces with King and Isaac Vang each with three.

Lo also led the team with 21 digs, with King finishing with 17. Calvin Vang added

25 assists and 13 digs in the win.

CROSS COUNTRY

Moore, Spanbauer lead Knights' runners

Annie Moore finished 22nd in the girls race and Henry Spanbauer was 19th in the boys race to lead Lourdes Academy as it hosted an invitational on Saturday.

Moore helped the girls finish ninth overall in the team standings, edging out Pulaski by two points for the spot.

Ana Schneidewend came in 39th place for the Knights, while Khloe Bunton was 57th, Zoe Heinzen was 79th and Tessia Mroczkowski was 111th.

Following Spanbauer for the boys were Zach Foster in 91st place, Nolan Piechowski in 96th place, Connor Salm in 111th place and Kody Neitzel in 127th place.

The boys finished 16th overall among the 23 teams.

West girls, boys both sixth at Manitowoc

Both the Oshkosh West girls and boys teams earned sixth-place finishes at the Manitowoc Invitational on Saturday.

The girls had its top three runners finish about 20 seconds apart to lead the Wildcats. Abby Terch led the trio in 109th place with Coraline Strebelinski taking 14th and Heidi Wara coming in 17th. Ellie Trebiatewski was 55th and Mila Crowe took 65th for the Wildcats.

The boys were led by Dominic Moore's fifth-place finish with Arjen Karns grabbing 19th place and Will Schiek coming in 22nd. Krypten Turner in 65th place and Garrett Lawatsch in 88th also scored for the Wildcats.

North's Weber, Clark post high finishes

Oshkosh North's Jay Weber was second in the boys race, while Adri Clark was third in the girls race to lead the Spartans at the Winneconne Invitational last week.

Weber was joined in the top of the boys race by Mason Gumz in fifth and Reid Anderson in eighth as the Spartans finished fourth as a team.

Campbell Harrison in 37th place and Weston Gumz in 44th place also scored for the North boys.

Behind Clark, Chloe Niemczyk added a 22nd place finish, and Allis Cummings was 28th on the day to round out the Spartan runners.

Valley Christian's Mya Moran also posted a top-five finish at the meet, placing fourth overall. Dede Miller was the only other Warrior runner to run and placed 78th.

Zachary Werner was the top finisher for the Valley Christian boys, placing 39th. Joshua Sandahl and Andrew Sandahl were the only other runners for the Warriors and placed 82nd and 83rd, respectively.

SOCCER

Oshkosh West picks up a pair of wins

The Wildcats earned a pair of 1-0 wins last week, beating Hartford on Thursday and Kaukauna on Tuesday.

Gael Bolanos tallied the goal in the win over Hartford with Brady Ott picking up the assist.

It was Ott scoring the goal with Bolanos getting the assist in the win over Kaukauna.

Jacob Allen had four saves in the two matches combined as the Wildcats improved to 5-1-4 overall and 3-1-2 in the conference.

SWIMMING

Oshkosh West's Yonke posts win at invite

Rose Yonke scored a win in the 100-yard freestyle for Oshkosh West at the Neenah Invitational on Saturday.

Yonke edged out two other swimmers by less than four-tenths of a second to earn the win. She also finished fifth in the 50-yard freestyle as the Wildcats placed seventh among the nine teams.

Molly Dudzinski added an eighth place in the 50-yard freestyle, while Rylee Copernoll was ninth in the 100-yard backstroke for West.

The Wildcats best finish in a relay was a fifth place in the 200-yard medley relay.

Oshkosh North/Lourdes Academy, which finished eighth in the team standings got a top-10 finish from Teya Zinth in the 100-yard freestyle as she placed seventh.

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Gehri’s battle

FROM PAGE 1

started to be able to digest what happened to him and learn about his situation.

Doctors said there was a tumor that measured 2 cm by 2 cm in his brain and that he would need to have surgery that week to remove it.

“At some point I woke up and there was some clarity. I was talking to the doctors and they said I had a brain tumor and we have to get it out. I kind of remember that,” Gehri said. “There was a lot of blurriness there for like a day and a half. I probably lost 24 hours, 30 hours, just being in and out.”

For Gehri, it was certainly a shock.

“I had a great summer. No issues. No headaches. Nothing. The first symptom I had was the seizure in the training room on the second day of school,” Gehri said. “They think it grew to that size in about five weeks, based on its size and how these things work. I’m not the first guy to have this so they kind of know.

“There is no cause. It’s just a randomized group of brain cells that decided to mutate and grow crazy.”

Less than a week after his surgery, Gehri was at the Winneconne High School football game and watched the Wolves knock off rival Fox Valley Lutheran.

Following the game, he spoke on the football field to a group of about 75 students – including athletes from sports other than football – to provide an update about his situation.

He also attended the Oshkosh West football game on Sept. 18 – a game played in a steady downpour – and was back in Winneconne last Friday and again met with athletes on the field after the game.

As much as Gehri wanted to keep the athletes he cared for informed of his situation, he also had another purpose and message he wanted to share.

“We all have to face adversity. Some



Photo by Doug Sasse

Dan Gehri suffered a seizure while at Oshkosh West High School on the second day of school and it was determined that he had an aggressive cancerous brain tumor.

adversities are smaller, mine is big but at some point in our lives we are going to face adversity and we have to choose how we are going to respond,” said Gehri, who will also be speaking at Oshkosh West during W-hour on Oct. 7. “I can choose to sulk and pout and whine or I can choose to move forward. Right now, I’m choosing to move forward.”

Gehri is facing chemotherapy and radiation treatment that will be starting in October.

He said that he will have radiation treatments five days a week for six weeks and chemotherapy – which will be administered orally – every day for six weeks before dialing things back. At that point, his treatments will be six days in a row and then 20 days off for a six-month period.

“I’m on a low-dose steroid for anti-inflammatory stuff so my 60-year-old joints feel great,” Gehri said. “This tumor and

cancer stuff doesn’t seem real yet because I feel great. I feel great, but I know that is going to change.

“(When I start treatments) that’s when reality is going to set it. My doctor says it’s not going to be awful, but it will be impactful. I’m trying to get everything done what I need to get done in the next 10 days and then we can focus on getting better.”

Although Gehri will be undergoing chemotherapy and radiation, he knows that he is facing a losing battle.

He equated what his treatments will accomplish to pulling a weed out of a garden. Although it’s easy to remove the bulk of the weed, there are always remnants left behind that will continue to grow and return.

“The radiation and chemo are designed to slow those roots from returning but it’s not going to (take them away completely),” Gehri said. “They aren’t going to solve this problem. They are just kicking it down the road.”

Gehri will be undergoing treatments in Oshkosh but will also be working with medical personnel in Madison at the University of Wisconsin medical center.

After reconnecting with former Oshkosh West boys basketball coach Lance Randall – who is currently on staff with the Badgers’ men’s basketball program. Randall connected Gehri with Wisconsin basketball coach Greg Gard, whose father passed away from the same cancer that is affecting Gehri.

Even though Gard and Gehri have never met, the Badgers’ coach has helped paved the way for the treatment in Madison to happen.

“I know I have a great team,” Gehri said. “Oshkosh group and Madison group will work together and coordinate the best plan for me. I’m going to get the best care.”

Gehri said he was originally given about 18 months but with the treatments he said he could have three or four years.

“I need a cure in two years. I need some kid somewhere to figure it out in two years if I have a chance,” Gehri said. “I haven’t

said ‘Why me?’ yet. What good would it do? I can’t go back. Game’s over and I can’t change the score. All I can do is move forward. Maybe one day I’ll wonder, but now it’s what I can do to get better.”

Gehri is attacking his time left with a plan which starts with making sure his family is provided for while also enjoying time with them.

He said he is planning his 20-day off stints of treatment around holidays and breaks to take vacations with his family.

His youngest daughter, Brenna – a former standout athlete at Oshkosh West – is a member of the UW-Stevens Point women’s basketball team and he plans to become a Pointer “Super Fan,” attending games whenever his health allows it. He is planning to travel between Christmas and New Years when Stevens Point plays in a tournament in Las Vegas.

He also wants to make sure he gets outside when he can – and will continue to walk his dog and “be the old guy shuffling around the neighborhood,” he said – and find the joy in whatever he can.

That includes being around the high school athletes he has spent his career working with.

And whatever joy the athletes can take from seeing him up and around, he will take even more from being around the gyms and fields at Winneconne and Oshkosh West.

“For me, to be able to go and sit in the stands or stand on the sidelines and watch them compete and succeed and overcome adversity is going to be something I feel will be very, very important for me. It will help my spirit, uplift me keep me positive,” Gehri said. “I’m OK not taping another ankle but I can still be there and high-fiving and fist-bumping kids. My goal is to get to as many West and Winneconne games I can. That’s going to be helping, that’s going to be lifting me up and filling my cup.

“The support and outpouring and love I’m gotten from Winneconne and Oshkosh West. That part has been overwhelming.”

Senior Spotlight

FROM PAGE 15

from. Everyone was calling me Maximus, so I’ve gone with it.”

Behnke’s football days won’t be over at the end of the Lourdes’ season. He wants to play college football and has received interest from various Division 3 schools. He’s a high honors student at Lourdes, who carries a 3.7 grade point average.

“I’m mainly looking WIAC (Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference) schools and also St. Norbert,” Behnke said.

“I’m excited about continuing my football career and getting the chance to develop a little more and be a part of a team.”

Until then, Behnke’s focus is on providing leadership and big plays on both sides of the ball for a talented Knights’ team that has the potential to go deep into the post-season.

“Defensively, I think we have one of the top defenses in our division,” Behnke said. “Offensively, we just need to hang onto the ball and do what we’re coached to do. And we need to keep playing unselfishly. When we win, we win as a team. It’s never just one player.



Oshkosh Herald

Lourdes Academy’s Naomi Liabwill tips a ball past a Valley Chroistian blocker in the first set last Thursday.

Volleyball

FROM PAGE 15

Lehman added 10.

The Knights were led by nine kills from Fronek and three aces from Martin. Martin also led the team with 13 assists and nine digs, while Fronek chipped in eight digs and Katelyn Potratz added six.

Lourdes Academy had won seven straight matches entering the showdown

and eight of its last nine. Laehn believes that the loss to the Warriors will only spur the Knights on to more success.

“I know they are a little bummed about (the loss) but this is a team where a loss gives them a bigger drive and the next game they usually come out on fire,” Laehn said. “We are a very young team. They have improved every day and put in a lot of work. This team is one of the most determined teams I’ve had here and that makes us excited for the future as well.”

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Obituaries

Randy Freeman

Randy Freeman left us on September 25th, 2026, surrounded by the people who loved him the most.



Randy was born on October 29, 1955, to the late Orin Freeman and Olive “Ollie” (Merkey) Freeman. He was born and raised on a farm, and that way of life stayed with him throughout his entire life.

Randy worked at Oshkosh Truck for more than 37 years before retiring. Retirement, however, never really meant slowing down for Randy. When planting or harvest season came around, you could often find him helping in the fields—planting, ripping fields, or taking crops off whenever someone needed an extra hand.

And farming certainly wasn’t the only place Randy showed up to help. On most

days he would be at the FoxHaus to stop and check to make sure things were running as they should and get his cup of Diet Dew. He was an essential part of day-to-day operations. Aside from being a friend that so many needed; he would cut steaks for steak night, do general maintenance and whatever else needed to be done. Randy was simply someone you could count on.

He loved riding motorcycles and made many trips to Sturgis over the years, along with fall rides up north and his Thursday rides with his buddies. He also enjoyed camping with his girlfriend, Dawn Bratten, and their friends.

But more than anything, Randy loved his family.

His children, Nicole Karen (Toby) Bos and Preston Lee (Deanna) Freeman, could always count on him stopping by. You usually knew he had arrived when you heard, “Anyone home?” or, not long afterward, “Can you help me order this part?”

When there was work to be done, Ran-

dy showed up. When someone needed help, Randy showed up. That was simply who he was.

As much as he loved his children, there was something especially special about the way Randy’s face lit up around his grandchildren: Brayden James (Catherine Raye) Litton, Dalton Lee Freeman, Piper Lynn Freeman, and Preslie Jean Freeman. They were truly his pride and joy.

You could count on Grandpa Randy showing up for their events—although every now and then he needed a reminder of exactly what time he was supposed to be there. He was their taxi driver, motorcycle-riding buddy, helper, and, most importantly, someone they knew they could talk to about anything. He was patient, kind, and always there when they needed him or not.

Randy also leaves behind his girlfriend, Dawn Bratten, and his loyal companion, Monkey—the cat who apparently never got the memo that she was supposed to act like a cat. Monkey rode on the tractor with Randy and would even go for walks with him down to the pond. The two of them shared their own special routine and companionship.

Randy is survived by his daughter, Nicole Karen (Toby) Bos; his son, Preston Lee (Deanna) Freeman; his grandchildren, Brayden James (Catherine Raye) Litton, Dalton Lee Freeman, Piper Lynn Freeman, and Preslie Jean Freeman; his girlfriend, Dawn Bratten; his siblings; along with extended family, relatives, and many friends who will miss him dearly.

In addition to his parents, Orin and Ollie Freeman, Randy was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Sally Jean Freeman, along with other relatives and friends who went before him.

To most people, he was Randy—the man just down the road. The guy with the laugh that could make other people laugh right along with him. The man who somehow made “gooder” a real word, and before long had the rest of us using it too.

He was steady and strong, but also kind and gentle. He didn’t need to make a big deal out of helping people. He simply showed up.

As difficult as it is to imagine this world without Randy in it, we find comfort in believing that when he arrived in Heaven, he wasn’t alone for even a moment. His soulmate, Sally, was there waiting for him, along with his parents, relatives, and friends who had gone before him.

We can only imagine the hugs, the stories, the laughter, and the reunion that took place.

We’d like to think Heaven got a little louder, a little brighter, and maybe even a little “gooder” when Randy arrived.

Randy’s family would like to extend a heartfelt thank-you to the Omro’s first responder, Southern Winnebago EMS, and Mercy Medical Center. We would also like to thank the doctors, nurses, and entire care team at Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center-Cardiovascular ICU Team. The exceptional care they gave Randy, along with the kindness, compassion, and support they showed his family, meant more than words can express. During some of the hardest days our family has ever faced, his team cared not only for Randy, but for all of us. We will never forget how amazing they were or how much their compassion meant to our family.

Visitation will be held on Sunday, October 4, 2026, at Mueller Funeral Home in Winneconne from 10am to 1pm.

Following the visitation, family and friends are invited to continue celebrating Randy’s life at the Fox Haus Bar & Grill in Omro from 2pm to 5pm. Please come share a story, a laugh, and the memories that made Randy the man so many of us knew and loved.

No reason to get dressed up, come in your best Randy attire, sleeveless shirt and hats are welcome.



Jamison Getchel, Logan Wendt and Carter Wendt. She also has many dear nieces and nephews, along with great nieces and nephews, and their families.

She was preceded in death by her husband Bob, her parents; seven brothers: John, Raymond (Yvonne), Victor (Virginia), Joseph (Jacqueline), Jerome (Lorraine), William (Shirley), Robert (Delores), and three sisters: Eleanor (Kenneth) Rasmussen, Rosemary (Clarence) Krause, Dolores (Kenneth) Helmuth and one great grand daughter, Byrnlee Hope Getchel. She was also preceded in death by Bob’s sister and brother, Virginia (Chester) Hansen and Howard (Lucy) Getchel.

Visitation will be held at St. Jude Parish (St. Vincent de Paul Church) at 1225 Oregon Street in Oshkosh on Friday, October 2, 9:00-10:45am with the Mass of Christian Burial to follow at 11:00am. Internment will be at Riverside Catholic Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers a memorial fund is being established in Helen’s name. She especially wanted donations to support St. Jude Parish (St. Vincent de Paul Church) or to Father Carr’s Place 2B.

Special thanks to Steve and Shelly Klinger Family for all their support, to Chris and John (deceased) Nolte for all the Friday fish fries and old fashions, and to MaryLou Boehm for all of her wonderful meals.



Irene Derus

Irene Derus passed away peacefully on September 23, 2026 at the age of 89.



She was born in Oshkosh on October 6, 1936 to the late Hubert and Mary Derus. Irene attended and graduated from Oshkosh High School before attending Iowa State and Marquette University. Irene taught forensic and dramatics briefly and had opportunity to work in Washington D.C. in 1969 for the Intelisat Program, which governed satellite protocol. After which she went to work for Henry Kissinger as his personal Secretary. Through that position she was involved in Paris Peace Accords, in 1972, in reference to the Vietnam War. She and Dr. Kissinger had a good and close relationship with he and his family. She remained working in the White House through the end of the Reagan administration. Through this, she had the chance to meet all of the Presidents and their families and was especially fond of Ronald Reagan, who she spoke with every day. Irene also worked on Reagan’s campaigns for both elections. And remained a member of the Ronald Reagan alumni association.

Afterwords she worked for Secretary Richard Allen and then later for Richard Allen’s company, until she ended her work in Washington in 1997. In 1998 she returned home to Oshkosh to live and became involved in Sacred Heart / St. Jude Parish, through which she volunteered in the rectory, for breakfast and dinners, for their EAA visitors for many years; which she enjoyed very much and also at their location on the EAA grounds, as well as taking visitors to the grounds. She was honored in 2006 by the Oshkosh High School as an exceptional alumni.

In recent years, she lived at Evergreen Community where she enjoyed being involved in the choir and enjoyed the companionship of her friends and other residents.

Irene was preceded in death by her sisters; Patricia, Sister Lousianna and brother; Edward.

Survivors include nephew; Joe and cousin Mary Kay.

Funeral Services will be held at the Evergreen Retirement Community Chapel on Friday October 2, 2026 at 11:00 AM. A time for visitation will be held from 9:00 until the time



his entire life earned him yet another name. Coach Lenz. He committed 17 years to Omro High School and the boys basketball program as the freshman coach. He was an integral member of the varsity staff under Spencer Rolph bringing Omro their first WIAA boys basketball state championship in school history in 1997.

Old Lou had a heart of gold and truly cared about the community as he touched the lives of many. His commitment to excellence and teaching youth was passed onto his children further reaching his grandchildren. The highlight of his life was attending all 7 of his grandchildren’s sporting events with his wife Alana.

“Dad, grandpa, brother, uncle, cousin, husband, coach and friend”

You will be missed dearly...

A memorial service will be held at Zion Lutheran Church, 5355 Co Rd K, Oshkosh, WI, on Friday, October 2, 2026. Visitation will be held from 9am to 12pm and services to immediately follow.

He will be buried at Omro Junction Cemetery following services.



Steven Dean Lenz

Steven Dean Lenz passed away at home on September 22, 2026 in Omro, WI.



Steve or Steven are names that were rarely used by friends, family and almost all that knew him. He was crowned with the name “Louie” by close friends dating back to his school days.

Louie was born in Oshkosh, WI on May 29, 1951 to parents Theodore and Evelyn (Bixby) Lenz.

He is survived by his wife, Alana Lenz; children, Kayla Lenz (Marc Roberts) and Eric Lenz; grandchildren, Erica Lenz, Ehren Lenz, Elaina Lenz, Karter Thomas, Karsen Thomas, Hunter Ingels and Parker Ingels; sister, Joyce (James) Thomas; niece, Janet (Jay) Treleven; and best friend Mark (Wendy) Krings.

Preceding him in death were his parents, Theodore and Evelyn; daughter, Krista Lenz; and brother, Richard (Judy) Lenz; niece, Julie (Tom) Palmer; and nephew, Mike Lenz.

Louie’s passion for sports throughout

Obituaries

Lucille Gladys Hebert

Lucille “Lu” Gladys Hebert March 7, 1933 – September 22, 2026



come.

Lu was born in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, on March 7, 1933, and later moved to Oshkosh with her family, where she attended and graduated from high school. She spent many years working at EVCO Plastics before retiring in 1990.

While Lu took pride in her many years of hard work, her greatest accomplishment was the family she loved so dearly.

Lucille “Lu” Gladys Hebert, 93, passed away on September 22, 2026, leaving behind a family who loved her deeply and countless memories that will be treasured for generations to

She was the proud matriarch of five generations and cherished every one of them. Family was at the heart of Lu’s life, and there was always room for one more visit, one more story, and—of course—one more game of cards.

Lu loved nothing more than having her children and grandchildren stop by. She was always ready to join in a game, and she especially enjoyed the opportunity to win. Her competitive spirit, quick wit, and playful nature brought plenty of laughter to family gatherings.

Kindhearted, loving, and generous with her time, Lu had a way of making people feel welcome and cared for. She treasured the simple moments spent together and leaves behind a lifetime of memories that will be held close by those who knew and loved her.

Lu is survived by her siblings, Ken Thill, David (Kathy) Thill, Don (Sandy) Thill,

and Bea Ruedinger; her children, Sue (Keith) Reinke, Kathy (Ron) Rumlow, David (Judy) Hebert, and Kim (Frank) St. John; 10 grandchildren; 14 great-grandchildren; and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her parents, Arnold and Marie (nee Klein) Thill.

Lu’s family will forever remember her for her loving heart, her devotion to family, her sense of humor, and the joy she brought to so many lives. Her greatest legacy is the family she leaves behind and the love that will continue through the generations.

Although Lu is no longer sitting at the family table, her place will always be there.

She lives on in the stories we tell, the laughter we share, the traditions we carry forward, and most of all, in the generations of family she loved so well.

Visitation will be held at 10:00 a.m. on Thursday, October 1, 2026, followed by a funeral service at 11:00 a.m. at Fiss & Bills-Poklasny Funeral Home, 865 S. Westhaven Drive, Oshkosh, WI 54904. Private family burial will follow the service.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Lu’s name to St. Jude the Apostle Church.



Mary Helen Jones

Mary Helen Jones, 86, passed away on September 20, 2026, in Oshkosh, WI. She



was born on December 7, 1939, in Racine, WI to parents, Joseph Edward and Alma Veronica (Goebel) Cumicek.

Mary married the love of her life, Jack Jones, on October 14, 1961. She worked as

a Registered Nurse, as a visiting nurse in Kenosha, WI until her retirement. Mary and Jack spent the majority of their retirement years in Sun City, AZ. She enjoyed traveling, golfing, painting, crocheting, playing cards and reading.

She is survived by her children, Jennifer (Daniel) Williams, Julie (Todd) Riebau, Jill (Peter) Schmit, Matthew (Mary)

Jones and Michael Jones; grandchildren, Samual Riebau, Hannah (Jared) Staeger, Nicholas Wielgosz, Hallie Jones, Isabel Jones, Owen Jones, Noah Schmit, Michael Jones and Ella Jones; and great-grandchild, Frederick Staeger; she is further survived by many beloved friends.

Preceding her in death was her husband, Jack Owen Jones; parents, Alma and Joseph Cumicek; and sisters, Margaret Cumicek and Jeanne Beckett.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Susan B. Koman Foundation in her memory.

Special thanks to Dr. Patricia Morales, Aurora Medical Center, Aurora Hospice, and all of the administrative and care staff at Aspire; all treated her with kindness, dignity and respect.



Donald D. Noffke

With heavy hearts, we announce the passing of Donald D. Noffke on September



21, 2026 at the age of 66 after his courageous battle with liver cancer.

Donald was born in Oshkosh, WI on February 3, 1960 to Henry Noffke and Dory Kuble (Noffke). He

went on to graduate from Lourdes High and later earned his degree from St. Norbert in De Pere, WI. He worked in the lumber industry in Colorado, California and eventually moved back to Oshkosh to work with his family.

Donald was an avid fisherman, hunter and outdoorsman. He enjoyed being on the lakes and hunting with his friends. Donald touched the lives of everyone who had the honor of knowing him. His self-

lessness, warmth and generous spirit will be remembered forever. He leaves behind a legacy of strength and compassion that lives on in all of us.

Donald is preceded in death by his father, Henry Noffke, mother, Dory Kuble (Noffke), nephew, Ben Noffke.

Donald is survived by his mother Marion Noffke; Sister; Kate Noffke, Brothers; Steve, Greg and Chuck Noffke. Amongst his several nieces and nephews.

The celebration of life will be at Fiss & Bills, 865 S Westhaven Dr., Oshkosh, WI. Saturday, October 3, 2026, 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm, service at 2:00 pm.

Fiss & Bills-Poklasny Funeral Home
865 S. Westhaven Dr.
Oshkosh, WI 54904
(920) 379-9737



Kevin Wesley Ransbottom

Kevin Wesley Ransbottom, age 61, of Oshkosh passed away on Wednesday, September 23, 2026.



Kevin was born in Milwaukee on March 7, 1965 the son of Wesley and Charlotte (Laurich) Ransbottom. Kevin served his Country in the U.S. Army Reserve and

was a commercial truck driver for many years.

Kevin is survived by his mother, Charlotte Busch of Milwaukee. Three children, Kelli D. (Bryan) Ransbottom of Rochester, NY, James K. (Sheila) Ransbottom of Oshkosh and Sarah A. Ransbottom of Oshkosh. Life partner, Lisa Cook of Kewas-

kum. Siblings, Gary, Steve (Kelly), Candie (Jay) and Darcy (Ray). Grandchildren, Logan, Levi, Chloe and Serena also mother of his children, Debbie Ransbottom.

He was preceded in death by his father and stepfather, Dennis Busch.

Memorial services will be held on Sunday, October 4, 2026 at 12 pm at Fiss & Bills Funeral Home at 865 S. Westhaven Drive. Oshkosh, WI 54904. Visitation will be held on Sunday from 10 am until the time of service.

Fiss & Bills - Poklasny Funeral Homes
865 S Westhaven Dr.
Oshkosh, WI 54904
(920)-235-1170



Helen E. Voss

Helen E. Voss, age 91, of Oshkosh, WI, passed away on September 22, 2026, at Bethel Home.



Helen was born on June 21, 1935, in Oshkosh, to the late Ernest and Edna (Eckstein) Zimdars. She graduated from Oshkosh High School. Helen married Kenneth Voss on June 21,

1956.

Helen is survived by her daughter, Stacie (Tom Denow) Voss; son, Steven (Lisa) Voss; grandchildren, Brooke Mongan, Margaret Voss, Katherine Voss, and Alison Voss; sisters, Janice Schwertfeger and Julie Gruse; as well as nieces and nephews. The family would also like to thank Helen’s niece, Sue Bushman, for her care and support over the years; the staff at Bethel Home for the care she received; and Nurse Dale for his compassion and friendship.

She is preceded in death by her parents and husband; brother-in-law James Schwertfeger; sister-in-law Nancy Voss; sister-in-law Trina Voss; and sister-in-law Dorothy Voss.

Helen cherished time spent with family, telling stories and relishing the opportunity to hear or share a good joke. Her granddaughters meant the world to her and they will always hold dear the time spent with grandma.

Helen loved a good rummage sale and found many treasures around town. She would often hit the circuit early on a Friday or Saturday, then put the word out when she found great deals or a particularly impressive selection, so that others could share in the bounty.

Helen was well known at the local library and bookmobile through the years, spending countless hours browsing the stacks for something to read and using the computers to learn more about a new place or event that caught her attention.

She and Ken would often jump in their van, trolls perched on the dashboard, crank up the soundtrack from Chicago

and hit the road. Whether driving to a Chinese restaurant in Milwaukee or heading to Fountain City to see the latest work by their favorite woodcarver Leo Smith, they were always up for an adventure. Often their granddaughters were lucky enough to accompany them on these road trips.

Helen loved traveling and saw many areas of the country - sometimes with friends and later with Ken and the kids. There were numerous trips to San Francisco and other vacations from coast to coast. Stories about her trip to New York as a young woman inspired a sense of adventure and independence in her oldest granddaughter, Brooke.

Closer to home she loved going up north to the family cabin in Conover, WI with the Wiechman family. She and Ken raised their children to appreciate the outdoors and they

spent many hours walking through the woods, picking blueberries and watching for bears at the local dump after a “bath” in the lake.

Helen enjoyed jazz music and her taste in movies was surprising to some, with Dirty Dancing and the musical Chicago at the top of her list. A good cook, Helen was known for her scalloped potatoes and ham and her famous deviled eggs. Chinese food was a favorite, whether dining at a local restaurant or firing up the wok at home.

Helen was artistic. She enjoyed painting and crafts and spent many an afternoon with her “painting ladies” - making art or just socializing over lunch. She and Ken blended their artistic talents - Ken creating beautiful carvings that Helen painted.

Truly a woman for all seasons, Helen came into the world on the first day of summer and left it on the first day of fall.

A memorial service for Helen will be held on Saturday, October 3, 2026, at St. John’s Lutheran Church, 808 N. Main St., Oshkosh, beginning at noon. A time of visitation will begin at 11 a.m. and continue until the start of the service.



appear on Fiss & Bills-Poklasny Funeral Homes.

Fiss & Bills - Poklasny Funeral Homes
865 S Westhaven Dr.
Oshkosh, WI 54904
(920)-235-1170



Scott D. Allen

Scott D. Allen, age 59, of Omro passed away unexpectedly on Sunday afternoon September 27, 2026 at his residence. Memorial services will be held on Friday, October 2, 2026 at 12 pm at Lord of the Lakes Church at 6090 Harbour S Drive. Winneconne, WI 54986. Visitation will be held at the church from 10 am until 12 pm on Friday. A complete obituary will

To advertise in the Oshkosh Herald, call 920-385-4512.

Obituaries

Corinne Faye Leichtfuss
Corinne Faye Leichtfuss, age 91, of Oshkosh, passed away peacefully on September 18, 2026. In her final days, she was surrounded by the love and comfort of her family. Corinne was born on March 6, 1935, to the late Armin and Elsa (Zingler) Zobel. Corinne dedicated much of her professional life to serving Winnebago County before retiring. She was a lifelong member of Grace Lutheran Church, where her faith was an important part of her life. She treasured the many Saturday evenings she spent serving as a deacon alongside her grandson. Corinne enjoyed being a member of Grace Circle and singing in the church



choir. She generously gave her time to Grace Lutheran School, assisting with the school lunch program and reading to the children. Outside of church, she enjoyed volunteering at the Senior Center, playing BINGO and taking countless bus trips. She stayed active by attending aqua aerobics at the YMCA and had a lifelong love of cribbage. In her later years, Corinne's colorful spirit continued to shine as she took on the role of "Granny" to her great-grandchildren. She will always be remembered for her vibrant style, sparkly jewelry, and signature red lipstick. During her time at Lakepoint Villa, she formed close bonds with the staff and her fellow residents, who quickly became her second family. She especially loved calling and playing BINGO and was always happy to join in the fun. Much to her own

surprise, Corinne also discovered a love for puzzles and crafting. Never one to sit idle for too long, she was always looking for ways to lend a hand and happily helped with chores around the facility. Those who knew Corinne knew she was almost always running a little late. It was simply part of who she was. Even during her three weeks in the hospital, Corinne continued to move through life on her own timetable, just as she always had. In true Corinne fashion, she was a little poky right to the very end. Corinne is lovingly survived by her son, Jeffrey (Julie) Leichtfuss; grandchildren, Jason Leichtfuss, Jennifer Krueger, Jamie (Cullen) Raasch, Jessica (Christopher) Lee; great-grandchildren, Kaden and Jaxson Krueger, Ethan (Lindsey Straveler), Ava and Charlotte Raasch, and Ella and Hudson Lee; brother, Norman (Yvonne) Zobel; and countless nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, Corinne was preceded in death by her siblings, Geraldine and Paul Zobel. Corinne's family would like to extend their heartfelt gratitude to the doctors, nurses, caregivers and staff at Lakepoint Villa and Aurora Medical Center for the extraordinary care, kindness and compassion they showed Corinne and her family. A celebration of Corinne's life will be held at Konrad-Behlman Funeral Home-Westside, 100 Lake Pointe Dr. Oshkosh, WI 54904 on Thursday, October 1, 2026, from 1:00 p.m. until 3:00 p.m. In honor of Corinne and her colorful spirit, please join us in wearing bright, sparkly attire as we celebrate her beautiful, well-lived life.

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Obituaries

Patricia Rose Abitz

Patricia Rose Abitz, Oshkosh, died peacefully on Thursday, Sept. 17, 2026, at home. She was 93 years old. She was born Jan. 26, 1933, in Oshkosh, a daughter of the late Alois and Elizabeth (Stadler) Horejs.

On Oct. 18, 1952, she married Neil Franklin Abitz at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Oshkosh. He survives.

Mrs. Abitz graduated from Oshkosh High School in 1952. Following marriage, she and her husband raised a family in Oshkosh.

She was employed for nearly two de-

CADES at the Miles Kimball Company of Oshkosh. She was active with the Cub Scouts, for whom she served as a Den Mother, and enjoyed needlework, gardening, listening to music and spending time with her family. She will be remembered for her uncommon generosity of spirit.

She was a member of St. Jude the Apostle Catholic Parish of Oshkosh. Survivors, in addition to her husband, include two daughters, Gail (the late Henry) Beck, Menominee Falls, and Eileen McCarty, Oshkosh; three sons, Paul (Doreen) Abitz, Appleton, Larry Abitz, Fox Crossing, and Jerry Abitz, Milwaukee, seven grandchildren, Amanda and Erin Beck, Krystal, Brandi and Brad McCarty, Paul Berger, Zachary Clarke and four great grandchildren. Also a sister Jean (William) Maurtiz, a sister-in-law, Carol Hore-

js. along with several nieces and nephews.

In addition to her parents, she was preceded in death by a daughter, Joan (Pete) Clarke, four brothers, George (Dorothy), Robert (Lois), Roger (Mary), and David (Carol) Horejs, three sisters, Florence (Harold) Toshner, Lorraine (Norman) Schneider and Elizabeth (Robert) Hasse.

A memorial service celebrating her life will be held on Friday, October 9, 2026 at 4:00 pm in the Fiss & Bills-Poklasny Funeral Home, 865 S. Westhaven Drive in

Oshkosh. A time of visitation will be held at the funeral home on Friday from 2:00 pm until the time of service. Burial will be in Sacred Heart Cemetery.

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HUGE GARAGE SALE! 1805 Marquette Avenue, Oshkosh. Oct. 1 through Oct. 3. Thursday/ Friday 8am-4pm, Saturday 8am-2pm. Lots of bike reflectors, sprockets, bike parts, bicycle tubes, kidstand, vintage wooden blocks, lots of key chains, marbles, vintage crocks/ jugs, Lincoln train buildings, cast iron items. New mailbox, vintage utensils, vintage tins, tools, lots of hardware, outdoor decorations, vintage colored kids' chairs, lots of bobble-heads, vintage motor vehicle books, lots of advertising coffee cups, vintage metal trucks, vintage Schwinn bikes, collectible McDonald toys, automotive books, new steel service cart, shop-vac and TONS MORE!

Miscellaneous

Reimer Jewelers has a Full-Service Watchmaker on Staff. 11 Waugoo Avenue, Oshkosh

Wanted: local wood duck decoys. Carved by Oshkosh area carvers, also duck hunting wood ammo boxes (920-235-4717)

Legal Notice

STATE OF WISCONSIN
CIRCUIT COURT
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
NOTICE SETTING TIME TO

HEAR APPLICATION AND
DEADLINE FOR FILING
CLAIMS
(INFORMAL ADMINISTRATION)
CASE NO. 26PR240

IN THE MATTER OF THE
ESTATE OF
Kathleen M. Slattery

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE

1. An application for informal administration was filed.
2. The decedent, with date of birth 07/18/1943 and date of death 08/01/2026 was domiciled in Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 823 Leeward Ct., Oshkosh, WI 54901.
3. The application will be heard at the Winnebago County Courthouse, 415 Jackson St., Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Room Join Zoom Meeting <https://wicourts.zoom.us/j/88686786577> Meeting ID: 886 8678 6577 One tap mobile +1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago), before Sara Henke, Probate Registrar, on October 27, 2026 at 11:15 a.m.. You do not need to appear unless you object. The application may be granted if there is no objection.
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent's estate is December 22, 2026.
5. A claim may be filed at the Winnebago County Courthouse, 415 Jackson St., Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Room 242.
6. This publication is notice to any persons whose names or address are unknown.

If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call 920-236-4833 prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

DATE SIGNED: September 14, 2026
Electronically signed by Sara Henke, Register in Probate, Probate Registrar
Form completed by: Attorney Philip J. Miller
Address
Husch Blackwell LLP
511 N. Broadway, Suite 1100, Milwaukee, WI 53202-5502

Telephone Number (414) 978-5422
Bar Number 1000612

Runs: September 23, 2026, September 30, 2026 and October 7, 2026.

WNAXLP

STATE OF WISCONSIN,
CIRCUIT COURT
WINNEBAGO COUNTY
IN THE MATTER OF THE
NAME CHANGE OF:
Lucille Margalene Strauss
By (Petitioner) Lucille Margalene Strauss

Notice of Name Change
Hearing
Case No. 2026CV000929

NOTICE IS GIVEN:
A Petition was filed asking to change the name of the person listed above:
From:
First – Lucille
Middle – Margalene
Last – Strauss
To:
First – Lucille
Middle – Margalene
Last – Strauss-Mockerheide
Birth Certificate:
First – Lucille
Middle – Margalene
Last – Strauss

This Petition will be heard in the Circuit Court of Winnebago County, State of Wisconsin:
Judge's Name: Michael S. Gibbs
Place: 415 Jackson Street, Room 211, Oshkosh, WI 54901
Date: October 21, 2026
Time: 3:30 p.m.

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

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

BY THE COURT:
DATE SIGNED: September 17, 2026
Winnebago County Circuit Court Judge, Branch 4

Runs: September 23, 2026, September 30, 2026 and October 7, 2026.

WNAXLP

James Stephen Pettit

It is with heavy hearts that we announce the passing of James Stephen Pettit on September 24, 2026, at the age of 91. He was, quite simply, "THE KINDEST MAN ON EARTH."

Jim was born on April 14, 1935, to Ruth and Earnest Pettit and was raised in Oshkosh, WI, where he lived his entire life. On October 27, 1956, he married Charlotte. Char was the one sister brave enough to approach Jim while he was at the house selling a car to Char's brother, Jim. There is also a story Jim told his family about drag racing another man who was sweet on Char. The winner of the race won the right to date Char. Guess who won? I promised not to put that in here, so don't tell her.

Jim started his working career at his brother-in-law Stub's Garage, followed by a short stint at Leach Company, but the majority of his working life—more than 30 years—was spent at Oshkosh Truck Corporation as a laborer. As a second job, he worked as a body man for Parkway Garage and Harrison Motors.

Jim enjoyed camping with friends and family. He also spent many years polka dancing with Char and the many friends they met at Westward Ho. His main hobby was working on cars, including the 1936 Chevy pickup that is still in the works. He purchased nearly all of his daily-driver cars as wrecks and then brought them back to life.

His children fondly remember the many Sunday car trips they took together, better known as "The Jim Pettit Route" If you ever told Jim about an upcoming trip, you could count on him suggesting at least one "must-see" spot you needed to stop at.

Donald E. Hass

Donald E. Hass, age 84, passed away on Monday, September 21, 2026 at Aurora Baycare Medical Center. He was born to the late Harold and Thersia (Arendt) Hass on March 10, 1942 in Nekoosa, WI. He married Bonnie Rennert on September 15, 1962.

Donald worked at Mercury Marine for 38 years. He enjoyed fishing, hunting, woodworking, and watching Packer games.

Donald is survived by his wife, Bonnie, his children Leigh, Linette and Aaron

There was apparently no such thing as taking the direct route.

Jim loved to tell stories and enjoyed going out to eat, where he almost always ran into someone he knew. And if he didn't know them when he walked in, there was a pretty good chance he would by the time he left.

Jim is survived by his loving wife of 70 years, Charlotte; their daughter, Julie (Roy) Koch of Ripon, WI; son, Chris (Becky) Pettit of Omro; son-in-law, Bob Hart; granddaughter, Danielle (Robert); and great-granddaughter, Faith Marie Will of Oshkosh. He is further survived by his brothers, Walter, Thomas and Dale (Peggy); sister, Carol Harnitz; and sister-in-law, Ruth Pettit.

He was preceded in death by his parents; his beloved children, Connie Sue, Dawn and Larry; his cherished granddaughter, Melissa Hart; his sisters, Dorothy (Larry) Pfaffenroth and Lois (Otto "Stub") Manthe; and his brothers, Ernie (Patricia) Pettit & John Pettit; and in laws Gene Harnitz, Shirley Pettit & Kathy Pettit. Also preceding him were many nieces and nephews who left us too soon to mention.

The visitation for Jim will be held Saturday, October 3, 2026, at Konrad-Behlman Funeral Home Westside, 100 Lake Point Drive, Oshkosh, WI, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., with a prayer blessing at 12:00 p.m. Burial on Monday, October 5, at Noon, at Lake View Memorial Park, Oshkosh.

Jim's family would like to express their gratitude for the kindness shown to Jim by the aides, nurses and doctors at Aurora Medical Center, Parkview Health Center, Bella Vista and Moments Hospice. He gives you all one last "fist bump."

KONRAD-BEHLMAN
FUNERAL HOMES

(Barb), his grandchildren, Sarah (Hunter) and Adric, 5 great-grandchildren: Michael, Milah, Brayden, Bryn and Lena; and his brother Carl (Marilynn). He is also survived by his nieces and nephews.

In addition to his parents, Donald was preceded in death by his brothers Lawrence, Leon, James and Clifford, his sisters Mary and Jean.

A memorial service for Donald will be held at Konrad-Behlman Funeral Homes-West (100 Lake Pointe Dr) on Friday, October 2, 2026, at 6PM. A visitation will be held from 4:30PM until the time of services

KONRAD-BEHLMAN
FUNERAL HOMES



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THE AWARD-WINNING PRINT & ONLINE FAMILY FEATURE



RENNING LEWIS & LACY

ASK A RHINOCEROS

Q: How did you get your name?

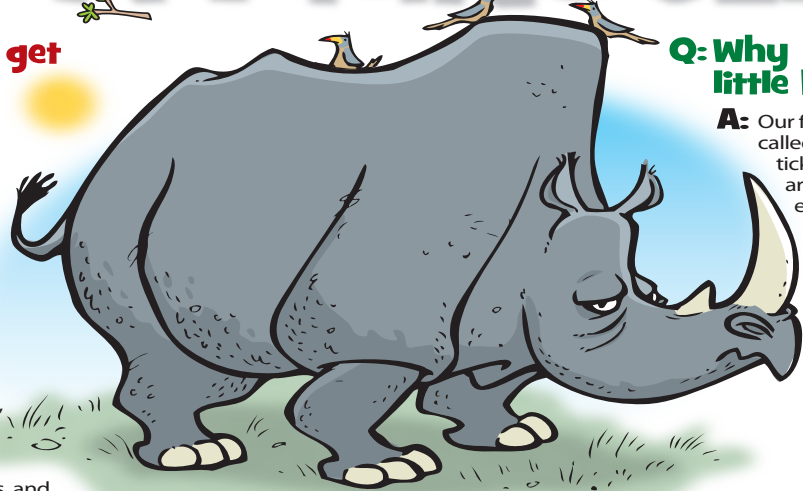
A: We get our name from our most famous body part — our horns. The word *rhinoceros* comes from the Greek *rhino* (nose) and *ceros* (horn).

Q: Why are all those little birds on you?

A: Our fine feathered friends are called **oxpeckers**. They eat ticks and bugs crawling around our skin, ears and eyes. Such a relief!

Q: Why do you roll around in mud?

A: Our skin may look tough, but it's actually very sensitive. We can suffer from sunburn. And insects like to bite us, and that really **bugs** us. So, we cover our skin in mud for protection. Plus, that cool mud feels so good on hot days!



Q: Sometimes you charge into trees and boulders. Why?

A: Because our eyesight is not very good, we've been seen charging at boulders or trees that we mistake for attackers. This gave us a reputation for having a bad temper, but we don't really!

Q: What do rhinos eat?

A: We use our horns to dig up roots and break branches, not for fighting. We are

Q: How big are baby rhinos?

A: Rhinos give birth to one calf at a time, which weighs over 100 pounds!



Q: What's with your ears?

A: While our eyesight is poor, we have excellent hearing! Our ears can move independent of each other. When one is tilted forward, the other can be directed backward. Or both may perk straight up when we hear an interesting sound.

Q: Do you have two horns?

A: There are five kinds of rhinos: black, white, Sumatran, Javan, and Indian. Javan and Indian rhinos have only one horn. Sumatran, black and white rhinos have two.

Count the Noses

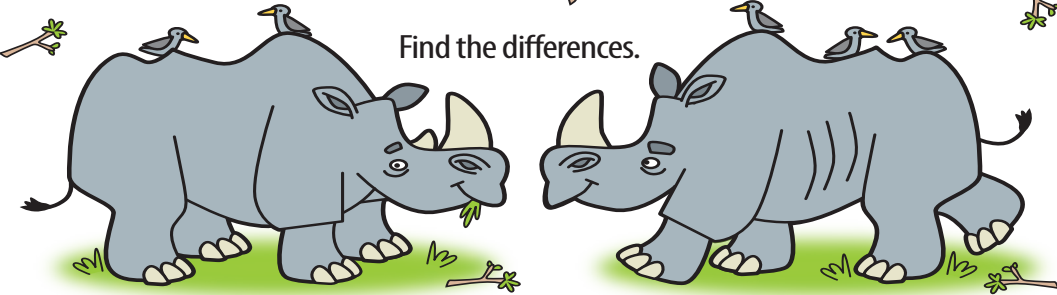
Look through today's newspaper and count all the noses you can see. Group the noses into groups such as "people noses" and "animal noses." Can you come up with other groups of noses?

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

Use the Rhino Secret Code!

■ = B	■ = H	■ = O	■ = S
■ = E	■ = I	■ = R	■ = V

Find the differences.



Extra! Extra! Count the Noses

Look through today's newspaper and count all the noses you can see. Group the noses into groups such as "people noses" and "animal noses." Can you come up with other groups of noses?

Standards Link: Research: Use the newspaper to locate information.

Rhinos love to munch branches. How many can you find?

Kid Scoop® Puzzler

You've heard of a pride of lions and a herd of cattle. But some groups of animals have really funny names. Do the math to discover the answers.



A _____ of sharks.

17 + 2 + 5



A _____ of lobsters.

15 + 5 + 2



A _____ of crows.

12 + 6 + 2



A _____ of rhinos.

7 + 7 + 7



An _____ of frogs.

12 + 9 + 2

22 = RISK 23 = ARMY 21 = CRASH 24 = SHIVER 20 = MURDER

Standards Link: Math: Addition. Follow simple written directions.

Double Double Word Search

Find the words by looking up, down, backwards, forwards and diagonally. Then look for them in this week's *Kid Scoop* stories and activities.

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

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



Kid Scoop Together:

Replace the Missing Words

PAINTINGS LONG ANCESTORS

HUNTING MAMMAL

EXISTED MILLION CHANCE SHAGGY

Rhinos have been around for a very _____ time. Some scientists say they have been around for more than 50 _____ years!

Early rhinos had thick, _____ coats. Pictures of rhinos have been found in 30,000-year-old cave _____.

One of the rhino _____, called the *paraceratherium*, was 25 feet (7.6 meters) long and 18 feet (5.5 meters) high at the shoulder. It is regarded as the largest land _____ ever known.

Over the years, close to 100 rhinoceros species _____. Today, only five species continue the line: two native to Africa and three native to Asia. And due to over hunting, three of those five species of rhinoceros are now Critically Endangered. That means they have a 50% _____ of becoming extinct.

The main reason they are endangered is illegal _____. Some people think rhino horns can cure illnesses, but there is no evidence of that.

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Write On!



A Rhino I Know

Imagine that a friendly young rhino follows you home. What happens next?

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