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Court system adapts to virus rules

Wheels of justice slow but continue to turn

By Miles Maguire
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

In October of last year, 10 paternity cases were resolved in Winnebago County Circuit Court. This year the number fell 70 percent to just three resolutions, according to a review of court records on the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access website.

By contrast, felony cases continued to be disposed of this year at almost the

same rate as they were in October 2019, before COVID came to town. This October, 69 serious criminal matters came to a conclusion, compared with 71 in the same month in 2019.

These statistics provide a window into how the local court system is holding up under the pressures of the pandemic and all of the uncertainties it has created. Priorities are being set, cases are being handled and adjustments are being made.

"We're doing our best to get the cases heard and heard in a fair manner and trying to keep people safe at the same time," said Judge Barbara Hart Key, who pre-



Key

sides over the county's Branch III and also serves as the chief judge for the 4th Judicial District.

Interviews with local lawyers support this view, that the court system is working about as well as can be expected. But that

doesn't mean there aren't some complications.

SEE **Proceedings** ON PAGE 18



Photo by Michael Cooney

Holiday visions

The annual Oshkosh Celebration of Lights at Menominee Park kicked off Friday. Santa will be in his workshop there until Christmas Eve. General admission for the event, which runs until Jan. 2, is \$10 per carload with \$1 off for a nonperishable food donation. Free admission is available on community nights.

Prison COVID-19 cases bring calls for changes

By Joseph Schulz
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

The Oshkosh Correctional Institution (OSCI) recently passed a grim milestone, becoming the Wisconsin prison with the most COVID-19 cases since March as criminal justice reform advocates plead with the state to change procedures.

The prison had 950 total confirmed cases of coronavirus with 31 active cases as of Nov. 25, according to the Wisconsin Department of Corrections. Less than a week earlier, however, the DOC dashboard showed OSCI as having 248 active COVID-19 cases on Nov. 20.

The recent outbreak at OSCI was not the prison's first, according to the Wisconsin State Journal.

In fact, the prison had an outbreak of

341 active cases Oct. 5, dipped below 100 cases and then rose to 288 active cases by Oct. 19. By the end of October OSCI only had 39 active COVID-19 cases, according to the State Journal.

In a Nov. 25 Facebook post, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office said it found four COVID-19 cases among inmates on Nov. 13, and follow-up testing that day had revealed 27 additional cases.

Since March, the sheriff's office says it has been isolating all new arrivals by requiring them to quarantine for two-weeks, while also enforcing masks for inmates and staff, restricting access to the facility and stockpiling supplies.

"Similar to the community at large, most affected inmates are either asymp-



Submitted photo

Faith-based advocacy group Esther has spent weeks outside the governor's mansion in Madison advocating that Gov. Tony Evers take action to deal with the COVID-19 situation in prisons.

SEE **Inmate cases** ON PAGE 17



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www.oshkoshherald.com.

City voters show contrast with county

Canvass shows majority supported Democrats

By Sophia Voight
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Winnebago County Clerk Susan Ertmer and City Clerk Pam Ubrig said that more than 32,000 votes canvassed in Oshkosh were secured in the general election with choices for president, congressional representative, state legislators, local officials and to make a long-term commitment to school district made.

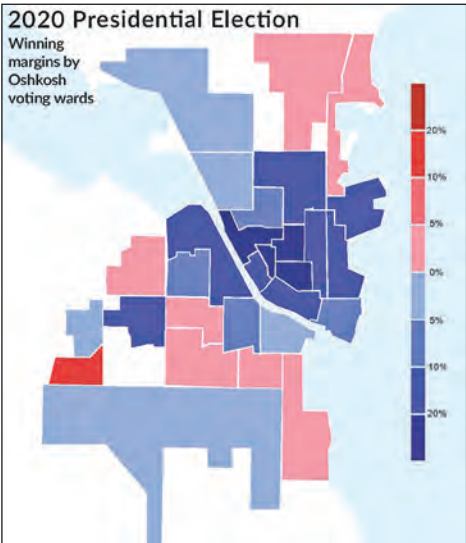
“Everything went well with the canvass,” Ertmer said. A federally required routine audit began Nov. 23 in Oshkosh in wards 12 and 23A.

While Republicans won almost every race on the ballot, Oshkosh constituents voted Democratic on all contested races apart from one.

A majority of Oshkosh voting wards leaned heavily blue in the presidential race, giving Joe Biden more than a 10 percent winning advantage in some districts.

Biden defeated President Donald Trump in the city by more than 2,700 votes, as opposed to Winnebago County where Trump won around 53 percent of the votes.

Few Oshkosh wards leaned heavily in favor of Trump in this general election; in most, Trump flipped the district by a little



Graphic by Sophia Voight

More than 30,000 in Oshkosh voted in the presidential election. The map represents voting patterns by voting wards. Darker sections represent a wider margin of victory in each ward for either President Trump or Joe Biden.

more than 1 percent.

Oshkosh's most populated voting districts situated around the university leaned heavily toward Biden, giving him more than a 20 percent winning margin in four districts.

The Oshkosh Area School District's first referendum question, which continued \$7.95 million in operating funds from a previously approved referendum, received 57 percent approval, while the second question that introduced a \$117 million bill to modernize the school district received 56 percent approval.

Student transportation initiative praised

Common Council member Lynnsey Erickson, who represents the council at city transit meetings, said the joint initiative to provide transportation to students throughout the city has been beneficial in this difficult school year, where students are revolving among in-person, hybrid and at-home learning models.

Council members said they will con-

The rural, urban divide between Oshkosh's vote and the rest of the county is matched on local and state elections as well.

Republican incumbent Glenn Grothman won re-election to his fourth term as House representative for Wisconsin's 6th congressional district, but former state Sen. Democrat Jessica King beat out the incumbent by more than 3,000 votes in Oshkosh, sealing in Oshkosh's Democratic preference for the general election.

State Sen. Dan Feyen won his second term for Wisconsin's 18th District, beating out UW Oshkosh alumnus Aaron Wojciechowski while taking about 600 fewer votes in the city than his challenger.

Democratic incumbent Gordon Hintz won his eighth consecutive term as state Assembly representative for the 54th District. Hintz overcame a political newcomer, Republican Donnie Herman, with around 54 percent of the vote.

Winnebago County District Attorney Christian Gossett ran unopposed as a Republican, winning his fourth consecutive term. Ertmer, who has served as county clerk since 1998, also ran uncontested, as did Republican Mary Krueger for her sixth re-election as county treasurer.

Register of deeds was the only race where a Republican won the most city votes this year. Incumbent Natalie Strohmeier beat political newcomer, independent Seth Reid, with just over 55 percent of the Oshkosh vote, and by a larger margin on the county level, getting 62 percent.

sider extending partnership conversations for the initiative to work into a third year, saying this year has been too scattered to gather data results, which would show whether the initiative was worthwhile.

“Despite the school district going virtual after two weeks, the Transit Advisory Board had student ridership in September was at 2,428. Despite the school year, it was still utilized. I think it makes sense to extend it for a third year,” Erickson said.

Mayor Lori Palmeri said she is in support of the partnership. “The city is proud to be a partner with the OASD and private donors to facilitate removal of transportation barriers for students,” she said.

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Multibuilding housing project gets council OK

By Tom Ekvall
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

The Common Council unanimously approved plans that will enable development of 172 units of multifamily housing in the 4200 block of State 91.

The development will include 14 apartment buildings of which 60 will be one-bedroom, 72 will be two-bedroom

and 40 will be three-bedroom units; rents will range from \$800 to \$1,300 per month. Developer S.C. Swiderski worked with the City Planning Department staff on proposed designs.

Council Member Mike Ford said the proposed development has been a challenging site and commended all parties for working together on the details to pro-

duce the general development plan and a specific implementation plans.

In other action, City Manager Mark Rohloff noted that the building inspections section of the Department of Community Development is now approving 90 percent of permits on a first-time visit as compared with 35 percent when Rohloff started as city manager. He credited the efforts of

John Zarate as chief building official in making changes to expedite the process.

Information technology manager Tony Neumann presented the council an update on improvements and new features added to the city's website this year. He said a major improvement was development of refined search features for individuals looking for information about services. The new feature provides a more comprehensive report about a particular service or activity of city government.

City budget clarifications

In a Nov. 18 story about the city's 2021 budget approval, it should have stated that the estimated increase in the city's assessed valuation of about 0.95 percent will increase the tax rate by 22 cents to \$11.1223.

Items from the amendment option list that were not approved as reported included additional fire department and police officer positions, overtime reduction, and pay adjustments for human resources. Also not adopted were recommendations for an additional tuition assistance fund and a down payment assistance program for homebuyers.



Photo by Michael Cooney

In for long run

A group starts their run at the Menominee Nation Arena for the Festival Foods Turkey Trot: Home Edition on Thanksgiving Day. Participants took either a 5-mile run or 2-mile walk from their own destination and could bring along their dogs to join them. The Turkey Trot benefits the Boys & Girls Club and YMCA in communities that Festival serves. In the past 12 years, the event has donated more than \$2,920,000. Oshkosh race director Molly Yatso Butz said, "The team was thrilled that so many people statewide still registered for the Turkey Trot, despite it being a home edition."

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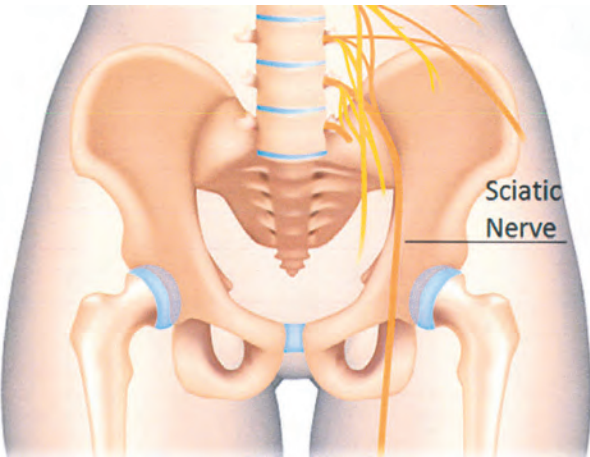
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Oshkosh Food Co-op finds its general manager

After a six-month nationwide search, the Oshkosh Food Co-op has hired Jeffrey Thouron as general manager of the new member-owned grocery store.

“I’m excited to join the Oshkosh Food Co-op community. I believe that food co-ops are essential to local food autonomy, consumer choice and ethical supply chains, and am proud to be part of that



Thouron

movement,” Thouron said in a statement.

“My family looks forward to joining the Oshkosh community and joining the force for good, and for good food.”

Thouron and his family will relocate to Oshkosh from Rapid City, S.D., where he worked as general manager for the Breadroot Natural Foods Co-op for the past seven years.

“We knew from our market research that that food co-op management experience



Rendering from Oshkosh Food Co-op

The Oshkosh Food Co-op will open next year in the Brio Building now under construction at Jackson Street and Pearl Avenue.

is important, that the market is tight, and the stakes are high. We are thrilled to have

found Jeffrey, whose experience and passion make him the right person to get our store off the ground,” said Melissa Weyland, board member and hiring team lead.

The Food Co-op will have a 6,800-square-foot grocery store situated on the first floor of the Brio Building, currently under construction at Jackson Street and Pearl Avenue. The store’s build-out is scheduled to begin in April, with a targeted store opening date in late summer or early fall.

The co-op will offer organic and conventional products, with an emphasis on locally grown and produced goods. Future hiring opportunities will be announced next spring at www.oshkoshfoodcoop.com.



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Advocate seeks common life with rare disease

Oshkosh native hopes for better FOP awareness

By Kaitlyn Scoville
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Imagine growing a second skeleton inside your own body. Imagine painful flare-ups when new bone is forming within you. Imagine having this happen since you were 5 years old.

That's exactly what Oshkosh native Jasmin Floyd has been going through. She was diagnosed with fibrodysplasia ossificans progressive (FOP) in January 1999.

She and her family moved from Oshkosh to Connecticut in July 1998 due to her father accepting a new job. They didn't know anybody in Connecticut or even in the rest of New England.

Jasmin, now 27, was beginning kindergarten that same year. One fall morning, she mentioned a stiff neck on the way to school. But she and her parents shrugged it off, thinking it was just stiff from having slept wrong the night before.

However, Jasmin's neck was abnormally tilted when she left school the same day. So her parents started looking for the reason why, which led to consultations with four different doctors before a final diagnosis.

"One thought it was torticollis, they thought it was Lyme disease, they thought it was ankylosing spondylitis," Jasmin's mother, RoJeanne Doege, said. "I just know that it was very unsettling that we went to the doctors and they just didn't know. It left us feeling kind of lost."



Submitted photo
Jasmin Floyd is shown with her mother, RoJeanne Doege, in 2017.

Jasmin's parents were left asking questions like, "What's wrong with our daughter?" "Why is she having a stiff neck?" and "Why does she have these bumps on her back?"

A rheumatologist in Hartford, Connecticut finally diagnosed her with FOP, or "stone man syndrome."

According to the International FOP Association (IFOPA), the disease is "one of the rarest, most disabling genetic conditions known to medicine. It causes bone to form in muscles, tendons, ligaments and other connective tissues. Bridges of extra bone develop across joints, progressively restricting movement and forming a second skeleton that imprisons the body

in bone."

Jasmin is one of less than 300 people in the United States with FOP, and one of about 800 in the world. It is said to affect one in 2 million individuals worldwide.

"It was very emotionally gripping for her dad and I," Doege said. "There was a lot of fear, a lot of scared thoughts about the future and what was happening. It was a very dark time for our family."

But they tried to keep Jasmin's life as normal as possible.

"We did whatever we could, but there was always in the back of our mind what the future may hold for her. There was grieving for what her future may not hold. But that's been changed because she's really come into her own – she has this disease, but it hasn't defined who she is."

In fourth or fifth grade, according to Jasmin, her teachers wouldn't allow her to participate in some activities in class or during recess.

"As I got older, I was more isolated and I think that's when I realized the difference and started to understand that I had to be cautious," Jasmin said. "Every year, my mom and I would talk to my classmates. Even at age 8, I was able to say what it was doing (to my body)."

Though there is no official treatment, Jasmin takes the steroid pill prednisone to help with flare-ups.

Jasmin described flare-ups as "a certain type of sharp pain," and throbbing. Her most recent flare-up was in her arm, and she could tell that it felt different after the pain subsided.

Jasmin also explained that flare-ups are sporadic; they can come at any time and at any rate.

"It might be more active when you're young and then it might take a break, or it could be very mild," she said. "The most

flare ups I've had was last year and that was the most life-altering. Before then, there were a few flare ups, but nothing major."

That life-altering flare-up happened in February 2019, when Jasmin started experiencing pains in her right thigh.

"Throughout that first month, it was gradually getting more and more swollen," she said. "It wasn't until April that it started to affect my breathing, because the pain had moved into my lower back on the right side, because that muscle is all connected to your upper leg."

She was brought to the hospital on April 13, 2019, for three weeks, trying different medicines to stabilize the pain.

"I had never had anything that major before, so that was all new for us," Jasmin said.

After getting discharged from the hospital, Jasmin went to a skilled nursing facility for 17 months because the apartment they were living in wasn't adaptable for increased physical limitations.

Jasmin has been back at home in a new apartment since Oct. 14.

"I ultimately lost pretty much all of the mobility in my leg joints," she said. "My hips, knees and ankles I can't bend either; I can't straighten them fully. Since I've been home, I now have caregivers that come in every day, which is quite a bit different than how my life was two years ago."

Today, Jasmin is an unofficial spokesperson and ambassador for FOP through her blog and her writing. Sharing her story and raising awareness to help people with FOP gives others with it someone to look up to, someone to relate to.

She also actively participates with the IFOPA and has taken part in panel discussions and other events in previous years.

SEE **FOP awareness** ON PAGE 7



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FOP awareness

FROM PAGE 6

“They know that I’m very willing to do anything I can to raise awareness, and they are also very supportive of my writing; they’ve shared some of my things too,” Jasmin said.

Additionally, Jasmin is part of a close-knit community of people who have been diagnosed with FOP. Though they may not have all met before, they all know of each other.

“I know it can help other people, which really makes me feel even more empowered,” she said.

The largest part of her advocacy work for FOP is through her writing. She has a blog and several other social media accounts where she shares her story with people worldwide.

“I think there’s always the hope that someone will stumble upon it, and that will help someone else get diagnosed, which I know that’s happened to several people,” Jasmin said. “The only reason certain parents were able to find a diagnosis was because they saw maybe a video or an article or something, and then they approached their doctor with it and then got the diagnosis earlier than they would have.”

In 2006, scientists found the faulty gene that was causing FOP to happen. However, there is still no treatment or cure for it.

Middle school gets jazz music grant

The Madison Jazz Society awarded grants totaling \$4,479 from its School Grant Fund to music programs in Wisconsin schools to help students learn about and perform jazz. Grant requests were received from only nine schools as

“I would want (a treatment) that is realistic for me,” Jasmin said. “I would want it to be something that I felt very confident about and that I could commit to. And hopefully even if I weren’t able to gain my mobility back, it would be incredible just to have that peace of mind I don’t have to fear anything getting worse.

“I used to be mad at my body, that it hates me,” she added. “Now, I’m able to turn it around and appreciate my body for the abilities I still do have. I have learned that it’s a waste of energy to really be mad at something like FOP that you just in no way can control. It’s better to try to surrender as much as possible.”

Jasmin hopes that one day people will realize that just because she functions differently than able-bodied individuals, she is still human.

“I feel like a lot of people that aren’t affected by anything medically, they have a different perspective that’s not always as hopeful or positive. I just would hope that they’re able to read my writing and it would help them in some way that would affect them,” she said.

“I would hope for people that they’re able to look at someone with any type of physical difference and really get to know them, not have that assumption that people seem to create in their head that, ‘Oh, I don’t know what to say, so I’m not going to say anything.’ It just means so much when they don’t allow that to put a wall between us.”

some have suspended their music and arts programs.

Among the recipients was Webster Stanley Middle School music director Nathaniel Miller, who was awarded \$450 to help purchase jazz books for the band.



Photo by Michael Cooney

Ringing tradition

David Sennholz of the Oshkosh Rotary Club mans the Salvation Army bell-ringing station at the northside Pick ‘n Save. He is one of the many Oshkosh Rotarians and community members who staff the kettles that are placed around the city each year. “I have been bell ringing for more than 25 years. I remember ringing at the Park Plaza mall when it was open. I ring the bell for two reasons: You meet so many wonderful people who drop money in the kettle, reminds me of the goodness of people, and a it’s very worthy cause that is on the front line of taking care of the needy in the community.”

Community class registration open at FVTC

Community registration is open for spring classes at Fox Valley Technical College.

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Winter Farmers Market keeps retail spirits up

By Joseph Schulz
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

The Oshkosh Convention Center Ballroom fills with vendors selling fresh fruit, baked goods, crafts and a host of other wares Saturday mornings.

The Oshkosh Winter Farmers Market continues to provide vendors from all over the region a space to make a living, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic has required the market to make some adjustments in order to keep both shoppers and sellers safe, Market Manager Michelle Schmid-Schultz said.

This includes requiring attendees to wear masks, limiting capacity to 50 percent and enforcing other social distancing procedures provided by the Wisconsin Department of Health Services.

The market is also “regulating people at the door” and placing hand sanitizer dispensers at each booth in efforts to control social distancing and make it as safe as possible, Schmid-Schultz said.

Although the market continues doing business, it is not the same experience for vendors and shoppers as before.

“I don’t think there’s going to be a normal for a while,” Schmid-Schultz said. “I won’t even say it’s normal, but it’s just nice to have someplace else to go.”

There were several reasons for keeping the market open—the main one being supporting the market’s many vendors, who are all small business owners in their own right, Schmid-Schultz said.

Many of the vendors are proponents of sustainable agricultural practices and the market provides a “needed place to sell their goods,” she said.

“A lot of the vendors are doing this not



Photo by Joseph Schulz

Shoppers peruse vendors’ products at the Oshkosh Convention Center on a recent Saturday.

because it’s fun, but because they depend on the income,” the market manager said.

One of those vendors is Mike Stadler, who began selling jelly at the Oshkosh Farmers Market about a year. He has a simple answer as to why he decided to continue selling at the market amid a pandemic.

“I gotta eat,” Stadler said.

The farmers market “is a necessity” for him; it is where he finds most of his customers, and helps build word-of-mouth advertising for his Creekside Farms brand. He believes farmers markets play an important role in building fledgling businesses.

“I’ve been going to different markets and selling my products for about 20 years; I’ve built a pretty good customer base,” he said.

Aside from serving the vendors, the market helps provide a sense of normalcy for the community, Schmid-Schultz said.

“People are just grateful that we’re here and that’s why you see the positive vibe,” she said. “The vendors are happy to have a place to sell, and the people coming here are happy to be able to connect with their favorite vendors.”

The market has seen an estimated 50 percent dip in both vendors and attendees, which Schmid-Schultz attributed to both the restrictions designed to limit the spread of coronavirus and the general uncertainty of being out in public.

“We’re not the Oshkosh Farmers Market we were last year,” she said. “I’m grateful that we’re still open, but it does sadden me that we aren’t what we were last year.”

For vendors like Terry Schmoldt of Fremont, who has been selling produce and baked goods at the market for the last decade, just having the market open at all has been a blessing.

The market provides, “a good place

for people to get fresh, local produce,” Schmoldt said.

He grows all of his own tomatoes, pumpkins, peppers, pickles and cucumbers. While Schmoldt doesn’t call his produce “true organic,” he describes it as “sustainably grown.”

“We treat the soil like a living organism,” Schmoldt said.

When many area farmers markets were temporarily closed due to COVID-19 in March, Schmoldt was able to donate much of his produce, avoiding waste. This generous act unfortunately caused a financial hit.

“It impacts the bottom line,” he said. “The summer market was a help, but I was really surprised by the amount of people not taking (the pandemic) seriously.”

Attendees have been asked to take the pandemic seriously when strolling the convention center, noticing the winter market’s mask mandate and other social distancing guidelines.

With the guidelines in place, Schmoldt feels safe interacting with customers and educating them about sustainability, which is his favorite part.

“People have distanced themselves so much from the farm and where their food comes from, so it’s fun talking to them about how it’s grown,” he said.

At the end of the day, keeping the market open and giving the vendors a place to sell their products, amid a time of uncertainty, is enough incentive to continue persevering throughout the pandemic, Schmid-Schultz said.

“I love the market, so I’m just elated that we can be here and that we aren’t shut down,” she said. “The people that come here do welcome us because they see what we offer the community.”



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Admissions counselors adapt ‘visits’

By Laurie Schlosser
UW OSHKOSH TODAY

Visiting dozens of high schools each semester had been a way of life for admissions counselors at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh until coronavirus hit.

“When the pandemic hit, we knew we had to pivot and start thinking out of the box on how to handle high school visits virtually,” said UW Oshkosh admissions counselor Andrew Kopitzke. “It was a combined effort between admissions and information technology—specifically Brandon Heise and Angie Buelow. They’ve been a huge help.”

In normal years, counselors drove to high schools to do their in-person visits. This year, they’ve pivoted to virtual visits and presentations.

Kopitzke said telecommunications enabled Collaborate Ultra meetings are going well. Students have the opportunity to ask questions and interact. Students are provided a copy of UW Oshkosh’s new viewbook.

Paul Gedlinske, director of admissions, noted in-person visit options are still offered, but availability is limited as the university tries to keep visitors, staff and student employees as safe as possible.

“The virtual visit options gives our prospective students the opportunity to see what UW Oshkosh has to offer them without having to come to campus,” he said.

Mackenzie Swanson, college and career coordinator at La Follette High School in Madison, works to ensure that all students have a plan beyond high school. La Follette is operating in a virtual format and is hosting only virtual college visits.

“Students are comfortable with this (virtual advising), as it is how they are accessing school,” Swanson said. “Families are also pleased we are continuing visits while in virtual learning.”

Swanson said many students are continuing plans for next year, though spending more time coming up with a backup plan.

UWO admissions has developed an online landing page with its virtual options. Among them are one-on-one meetings with prospective students and their parents on various platforms. The meetings sometimes include a professor who provides insights into a specific degree program.

Gedlinske said he is thankful to be working with a staff that adjusted quickly to a virtual format.

“Our counselors are constantly looking for ways to improve virtual options,” he said. “I feel for these students who are having to start this exciting journey virtually, rather than in person, but we are striving to provide them as many opportunities as we can.”

Prospective students may submit unofficial high school transcripts; ACT/SAT scores are optional.

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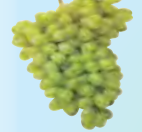
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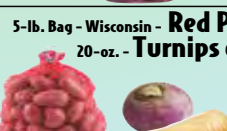
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Education alumna gives tools to avoid burnout

Author helps teachers stay mentally sharp

By Shane Nyman
UW OSHKOSH TODAY

In the years since finishing her undergraduate degree at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, Mandy Froehlich worked to position herself to best help educators.

A 2007 elementary education graduate, she spent the better part of a decade teaching in Fox Valley schools and working toward two master's degrees—one in educational administration from Cardinal Stritch University and another in information and communication technology from UW-Stout.

From there she worked in various roles in schools, including a technology integrator with the Oshkosh school district and as an innovation and technology director in Ripon. She turned her attention to consulting and writing books a little more than a year ago—not long before the coronavirus pandemic first exploded overseas.

What she couldn't have seen coming was how much her expertise would line up with the events of 2020.

"I've joked quite a bit about how I was almost professionally bred for pandemics because my professional area has been in technology and my professional interest has been in mental health," she said. "It kind of runs the gamut encompassing everything for the pandemic."

Froehlich, an alumna and an adjunct instructor at UW Oshkosh for about the past six years, continues to consult with schools across North America, mostly around matters of technology. She has



Submitted photo

Mandy Froehlich has published four books since 2018 focused on mental health topics for educators.

also published four books since 2018 focused on educator mental health, a topic of increased importance as the COVID-19 continues to cause chaos in education.

"I've been talking about educator mental health for four years. It's not just a pandemic problem," she said. "This has been an issue the whole time, it's just the pandemic has made it a little more highlighted."

Her books include "The Fire Within: Lessons from Defeat That Have Inspired a Passion for Learning" and "Divergent EDU: Challenging Assumptions and Limitations to Create a Culture of Innovation," both released in 2018. Then this year came "Reignite the Flames: Finding Our Passion and Purpose for Learning Among the Embers" in May, and its quasi-companion piece "The Educators Matchbook:

A Weekly Guide to Reigniting Your Love of Teaching, Building Resilience, and Fighting Burnout and Disengagement," published last month.

There are a lot of fire metaphors there—plus a hint of dystopian young adult novel imagery and wordplay. ("A Hunger Games vibe can very much describe education some days," she said with a laugh.) The reason is Froehlich herself felt like her passion for teaching was, at least for a time, extinguished in those early years.

"I actually became a burned-out teacher and that's why I left the classroom," she said. "That's why I talk about a lot of the things I do. It's because I went through it."

She went on to learn about what leads to situations like hers. She researched why teachers become disengaged and figured out strategies for educators to use to avoid it. One finding was many people want to become teachers because, quite simply, they want to have a positive impact on the world and help people. It's like a moral obligation. Then some enter the workforce and find there are all sorts of barriers emerge and over time it wears them down.

"Disengagement is really not about what you do, it's about how much you love what you do," she said. "You can have teachers who are doing all the things teachers do and still be disengaged."

Worn down teachers also then struggle with innovation. Instead of innovating, they're just focused on getting through each day. It's a rut that can definitely be run into during a school year like this one.

"In the pandemic what's happening is teachers feel like they teach best in front of students," she said. "When they're there

to make those personal connections and take those first-graders' hugs and get on their knees and look a student in the eye and have that connection with them. Right now they can't do that so that is stopping that feeling that they're doing the best they possibly can, which challenges their moral obligation to create better circumstances—and that causes the disengagement."

Froehlich said she's done writing books—but said that before after releasing two back in 2018, so it may just be a matter of waiting for the right inspiration. From here she plans to continue her consulting work, occasional writing on mandy-froehlich.com, carrying on with speaking engagements and co-hosting the podcast Teachers' Aid on the Bam! Radio network.

She's also teaching a graduate-level educational leadership course called Technology, Culture and Learning at UW Oshkosh this semester—doing her part to keep the flames of young educators burning bright.

Martin Luther Church will share its live nativity

Martin Luther Church at 1526 Algoma Blvd. will recreate the first Christmas in the town of Bethlehem in its 11th annual live nativity scene beginning Saturday.

More than 100 volunteers helped with the free presentation from 4 to 7 p.m. Visitors enter the drive-through on Algoma Boulevard and a candlelit path will guide them.



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Oshkosh Corp.

Oshkosh Corp.'s new headquarters has earned a leading human health and well-being award.

Oshkosh Corp.'s HQ cited for healthy design

Oshkosh Corp.'s new 191,000 square-foot, four-story global headquarters has become the first project in Wisconsin to obtain a perfect three-star Fitwel rating for healthy design and construction, Miron Construction Co. and Oshkosh Corp. announced.

Operated by the Center for Active Design (CfAD), Fitwel is the world's leading certification system for human health and well-being strategies through analysis of more than 5,600 peer-reviewed academic studies.

By integrating Fitwel design, construction and operational strategies into its global headquarters, Oshkosh Corp. obtained a score of 127 points out of 144 for its office that is designed for 650 employ-

ees.

"Not only is Oshkosh Corporation's headquarters the highest-scoring Fitwel-certified project in Wisconsin, it is the highest-scoring certified building in the Midwest," said Joanna Frank, president and CEO of CfAD. "This milestone clearly demonstrates the company's ongoing commitment to ensure the health and well-being of its employees."

Components of the building include an innovation studio, conference center, fitness and healthy lifestyle center, recharge spaces, outdoor patios and garden spaces, walking trails and a dining area. The facility was completed in September 2019, designed by Performa Inc. and built by Miron.



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Nominations for local spring elections begin

Oshkosh Herald

Residents who will be seeking seats on the Oshkosh Common Council and Oshkosh Area School District Board of Education in spring elections were able to begin circulating nomination papers this week.

Four Common Council positions are up for election, including those held by Mayor Lori Palmeri and members Debra Allison-Aasby, Jake Krause and Bob Poeschl.

Three positions are up for election to the Board of Education that are currently held by Jim Evans, Allison Garner and Kelly Olmsted.

Potential candidates need to go to the Wisconsin Election Commission's website for the necessary forms and secure enough signatures to get on the April 6 ballot.

Nomination papers must be returned by Jan. 4. Should there need to be a primary election, it would be held Feb. 16.

Council nomination papers are to be returned to the clerk's office at City Hall.

Board of Education nomination papers are to be returned to the district administration office at 215 S. Eagle St.

The League of Women Voters of Winnebago County will continue to provide election, voting and candidate information as it determines how to plan for holding candidate forums for any contested races.

Information provided by the candidates will be made available at VOTE411.org, where people can find out which races will be on their ballot, who is running, and whatever information the candidates have provided.

"We ask the candidates to respond to questions, which they do in writing and is posted directly to the website," League president Margy Davey said, adding that it gives voters an idea of the candidates' issues and commitment to transparency.

Davey said informational videos could be shared with groups that now have limited access due to the pandemic.

Other election information will be found on LWV WinnebagoCounty's FaceBook page.

October jobless rates rise in region

Oshkosh Herald

Oshkosh's unemployment rate rose to 4.1 percent in October, an increase of 0.6 percent from September and compared with a 2.8 percent jobless rate a year ago.

The Department of Workforce Development released the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates of unemployment and employment statistics last Wednesday for Wisconsin metropolitan areas, major cities and counties.

The Oshkosh-Neenah and Racine areas shared the largest unemployment rate increase in the state of 0.5 percent from the previous month for metro statistical

areas. Employment numbers for the Oshkosh-Neenah area rose between September and October by 300 to 93,300, compared with 97,300 a year ago.

Jobless rates increased in all of Wisconsin's 12 metro areas last month, and non-seasonally adjusted data for Wisconsin shows unemployment decreased in three of the 34 largest cities.

Unemployment rates declined in eight of the state's 72 counties, the largest by 0.6 percent in Douglas. Winnebago County's rate rose to 4 percent in October, up from 3.5 percent in September and 2.6 percent in October 2019.



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Inmate cases

FROM PAGE 1

automatic or experiencing mild COVID-19 symptoms,” the Sheriff’s Office said. “All positive inmates remain housed within the Winnebago County Jail, and we are monitoring their welfare. Subsequent testing has already been coordinated.”

However, if correctional facilities do not work to reduce populations to increase space for social distancing, advocates fear that for many inmates, their time in prison could turn into a life sentence due to the pandemic.

“Frankly, we may see very high mortality rates in prisons,” said William Van Lopik, a community organizer for Esther-Fox Valley, a faith-based advocacy group that supports criminal justice reform. “Out in society, you’re encouraged to call your doctor or go and get tested, but in prison that doesn’t happen; you may have to be in a really bad situation to be hospitalized.”

Van Lopik attributed the outbreaks in Wisconsin prisons to many being over capacity, meaning there is no room to maintain social distance. Because prisons have stopped in-person visitations, he says the outbreaks must be originating with the guards.

His organization is advocating for the “compassionate release” of inmates, which would allow prisoners nearing the end of their sentence or those with underlying health conditions to be released early to increase social distance.

OSCI’s design capacity is about 1,494 inmates, but the prison’s population was roughly 1,970 in June, according to the prison’s 2020 annual report. Of those inmates, 22 percent have less than a year left of their sentence and 18 percent have only



Submitted photo

Esther members have been holding sit-ins outside the governor’s mansion to draw attention to the COVID-19 situation in state prisons.

one year left, per an OSCI fact sheet.

“We’re not talking about releasing everyone, but the terminally ill, those who are almost at the end of their sentence and people in on technical violations,” Van Lopik said. “It would be a tragedy if someone dies who’s months away from being released.”

To better deliver that message, organizers from Esther have spent the last five weeks holding sit-ins at the governor’s mansion in Madison, advocating that Gov. Tony Evers take action to deal with the COVID-19 situation in Wisconsin’s prisons.

“We’ve been sitting out there for the last five weeks and he knows we’re there, but we haven’t heard a word,” Van Lopik said. “We’re going to keep sitting there until there’s some sort of acknowledgement that there’s a problem in our prison system

with COVID.”

Even after the pandemic, Van Lopik says the problem of overcrowding in Wisconsin’s prisons isn’t going away until the system of mass incarceration is reformed.

Many of the people filling Wisconsin’s prisons and jails “are not hardened criminals” and are in for nonviolent offenses, he added.

“We have to come up with better ways, more creative ways of dealing with those issues than putting people in jail because it fractures the family structure,” he said. “It especially harms people with a lack of resources.”

Although Winnebago County does have a drug court program and is establishing a mental health diversion program, Van Lopik believes more needs to be done to ensure justice is doled out fairly.

“There’s a huge racial discrepancy in

Wisconsin prisons too,” he said. “We are one of the worst in the country as far as the racial discrepancy of our prison population as compared to our general population.”

Van Lopik said Esther will continue assembling outside of the governor’s mansion until it sees some kind of change.

Drug disposal bags available at market

Breakwater: A Community Together is asking residents of Oshkosh and Winnebago County area to check their homes and safely dispose of any unwanted or unused medications they may find.

The recently renamed Winnebago County Drug & Alcohol Coalition is making Detera pouches, or drug disposal bags, available at no cost. The bags safely allow deactivation of medications at home.

Oshkosh Farmers Market is partnering with Breakwater and will have drug disposal bags available at its booth during the Dec. 5 and Dec. 12 markets. The Dec. 12 and 19 markets include the holiday bazaar with market hours from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Oshkosh Convention Center.

COVID-19 and the associated pandemic response has led to an increased risk of substance use, drug overdoses and overdose deaths nationally and locally. Providers may be prescribing new medications to help treat conditions, changing current prescriptions, or prescribing a larger quantity of medications so individuals do not have to leave their homes to retrieve refills. This leads to an increased amount of medications prone to misuse or potentially addictive available within homes.

The Detera pouches are torn open to place the medications inside, fill with water as directed, seal and toss in a trash can.



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Proceedings

FROM PAGE 1

“Civil jury trials are pushed way the hell out,” said Paul Swanson, a former president of the state bar association who is a partner at Steinhilber Swanson LLP. This is a particular problem for plaintiffs, and their lawyers, because they have the best opportunity for a settlement just before a trial begins.

“Think of all those car-accident lawyers – they have no cash flow anymore,” he said. “Defense attorneys do not settle except on the eve of trial.”

He said “people are taking advantage of the situation” but “there’s no way around it. It’s nobody’s fault.”

The high-ceilinged hearing rooms of the county courthouse are the scene of

official legal proceedings. Using Zoom or other telecommunication services, judges have been able to keep cases moving during the pandemic, some of which can be watched on YouTube.

But lawyers say that much of their courthouse work is done outside the courtrooms, in impromptu meetings with clients or when defense attorneys meet with prosecutors before court.

“As far as criminal law goes, a lot of things are resolved in the hallways,” said Scott Ceman, a former state prosecutor who is now in private practice.

These informal conversations have been curtailed as the courthouse has moved through different operational phases that have limited access to the building.

“Normally you go from courtroom to courtroom to courtroom,” Ceman said.

But now, with most hearings held remotely and clients who may be in custody in different locations, he finds it challenging to cover multiple appearances on the same day while addressing last-minute issues or concerns a client may have.

District Attorney Christian Gossett said some structural changes that have taken place in recent years have helped criminal defense lawyers and their clients manage the situation.

For example, the number of jury trials has fallen dramatically, he said, in part because his office has looked for other ways to address crime.

“Winnebago County is a national leader in alternative and diversion programs,” he said. “Our criminal case filings dropped from about 6,000 in 2007-2008 to about 4,000 today.”

Defendants “are diverted out of the criminal justice system and provided other services” to deal with addiction and mental health issues, he said.

His office has also worked to reduce the number of prisoners awaiting trial in jail. One method is to replace cash bonds with signature bonds and conditions so that lower-risk defendants do not have to enter custody and set off quarantine requirements.

But he acknowledged that the wheels of justice are turning more slowly.

“When you look at how long it takes for a case to go all the way through from start to finish, it’s going to look like we all sat around and did nothing in 2020,”

he said. “And I think everyone is actually working harder in 2020. There’s just so many extra steps, so many extra considerations.”

Especially compared to the experience in other counties, “I think we are generally getting through it as well as we can,” Gossett said.

While Zoom has been used successfully to conduct hearings and trials, it works better in some circumstances than in others.

“When it comes down to trial,” Ceman said, “there’s a good amount of art that goes into how you cross-examine someone in presenting the case.”

He wonders how well the court system will do in getting at the truth if a witness is testifying behind a face mask or on the other side of a plexiglass screen.

“It’s the theater aspect that is being diminished now,” he said. Successful questioning can involve “getting in people’s faces, walking up to the jury, putting your hands out, pounding your point, standing next to a witness, pointing at them.”

These are not superficial concerns but rather part of what the late U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia called the “crucible of cross-examination,” Ceman said.

“When you can do that in person, that’s where evidence is tested,” he added. “The sooner we can return to that will be in everyone’s best interest.”

Miles Maguire is editor of the Oshkosh Examiner (www.oshkoshexaminer.com).

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Photo by Michael Cooney

Fueling families

About 800 meals were prepared and distributed from Father Carr’s campus Thursday by drive thru or delivery to residents at various retirement residences in Oshkosh. The annual Thanksgiving event required advance reservations with donations from individuals, families and local businesses. A total of 120 turkeys were prepared. Sister Angela, who works at the Father Carr women’s shelter, is credited with preparing 68 of the turkeys herself. The volunteer team serve about 200 cars an hour and by noon everyone was served and on their way.

Good Samaritan Fund gets matching gift

The Oshkosh Area Community Foundation announced that the JEK Foundation has presented a \$75,000 gift match toward the Good Samaritan Fund. The community impact fund helps the foundation support the most pressing needs in the community, including the Tri-County

Dental Bus, Oshkosh Food Co-Op and other nonprofit organizations impacted by the pandemic. All donations made at www.oshkoshareacf.org through Jan. 21 will count toward the match. For more information, call 920-426-3993.

Grand artists, friends offer online holiday show

The Grand Oshkosh will present a free holiday special via livestream at 7 p.m. Sunday. ExtravaGRANDza will be two hours of family-friendly Christmas music and some variety-style acts. Each act will feature a prerecorded performance from the studios or living rooms of artists and friends of The Grand. There will be special appearances by Jeff Daniels and The Four Phantoms. “ExtravaGRANDza is our way of thanking the community for keeping us going in 2020,” said Joseph Ferlo, Grand direc-

tor. “Our hope is that the holiday special will bring joy from The Grand stage and the artists homes, to yours. I encourage anyone to try our livestream for this free program, to see that our platform is high-quality and easy to navigate.” Patrons should register at bit.ly/ExtravaGRANDza. A link and instructions will arrive via email before the online event. Staff will be available to answer questions about the livestream at 920-267-7554.

Food, toy drive in drive-thru format

The Oshkosh Fire Department, Oshkosh Police Fire Equipment and their families launched The Oshkosh Food and Toy Drive for its 22nd year. The drive has collected more than 35,000 pounds of food, 21,000 toys and nearly \$20,000 in monetary donations over the last decade. The new toys and food are given the local Salvation Army for distribution. The money is used to fund the drive and other events throughout the year. Funds are also collected to support the Gary Kassube Scholarship, which awards two area students pursuing a career in firefighting. This year’s pandemic has caused the Fire Department to change how they collect donations. This year, a drive-thru format will be used in the parking lot west of Station 15 on Ceape Street. Supporters can drive through between 5:30 and 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Monday and Dec. 9, and also bring donations to any fire station that will have a blue bin outside

until Dec. 9. Ninth- and 10th-graders of the Communities at Oshkosh North program are creating awareness posts on social media platforms. A 2018 United Way study found that four out of every 10 households in Oshkosh struggle to meet their basic needs.



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Experienced North looks to turn it around

By Tim Froberg
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

It's illegal to make U-turns on streets and highways. However, it's perfectly acceptable to do them on the basketball court.

That's what Oshkosh North will attempt to pull off this season.

The Spartans are trying to turn things around after finishing 1-23 overall and 0-18 in Fox Valley Association girls' basketball play. The free fall came just a year after coach Jayme Engen's team went a rock-solid 15-8 overall and 11-7 in FVA play.

Inexperience was a major problem for a youthful Spartans team that had to rebuild after graduating several seniors. But with five returning athletes who played in last year's rotation, North won't be nearly as green and should be a competitive squad.

"We were definitely a young team and it's important that we build off last year and the experience we gained," said Engen, starting his fourth season as North coach. "I thought we were playing our best basketball at the end of the year.

"We need our kids to stay together and build that chemistry and confidence. We're doing some new things offensively to keep things fresh and we're just looking to get a fresh start this year."

The Spartans graduated last year's leading scorer, Emma Leib, but return three starters: senior guards Bailey Boelter (6.2 points, 4.6 rebounds per game) and Meghan Gruse (6.1 ppg, 1.9 assists per game), and sophomore forward Mallory Ott (4.2 ppg, 7.8 rpg).

"Bailey (Boelter) is a hard-nosed kid



Photo by Andy Ratchman

Hope Burns, shown last season against Dodgeland, is one of the seniors leading Lourdes.

that leads by example," said Engen, "She and Meghan (Gruse) are good senior leaders. Mallory (Ott) is a great rebounder and another tough-nosed kid who should take a big step forward with a year's experience under her belt."

Sophomore Gabby Kempf (2.3 ppg, 2.3 rpg) and 6-foot-3 junior Payton Uptagraft (1.7 rpg) also contributed off the bench and are projected for larger roles.

"Gabby is a really good athlete and we

expect her to take a big step, too," Engen said. "It was Payton's first year of playing basketball, so she had to build some confidence, but she's getting better every day."

Freshman point guard Ava Hanson is the top newcomer and is expected to make an immediate contribution.

"Ava is very quick and has a good basketball IQ," he said. "She's played a lot of basketball and should make a positive impact."

Engen said that depth is a major concern. "Our numbers are lower than we'd like,

but we have a really big group of eighth graders that will enter our program next year," Engen said.

McNulty leads Wildcats

Oshkosh West was a senior-driven team last season and returns just one starter from a competitive squad that went 10-13 overall and a seventh-place 7-11 in the FVA.

That one returning starter, though, is a good one: 6-foot-2 senior wing/post player Kiersten McNulty, an all-conference honorable mention selection who averaged 11.3 points and 6.8 rebounds per game.

"We lack game experience at the varsity level after graduating six seniors that played substantial minutes the past two seasons," said West coach Kenisha Phillips. "The lack of an off-season made things difficult to get the girls ready. It may take a little longer for them to adjust to additional responsibilities and the level of play."

The Wildcats return four additional seniors — wing guard Brianna Davis, point guard Reese Lang, 5-foot-11 wing/post player Mia Schlotthauer and wing guard McKenna Lloyd — and juniors Meredith Posanski, Lauren Best and Sabrina Pickert.

All seven contributed off the bench last season, with Davis and Lang receiving the most minutes. Sophomore Maddi Choiniski is a top newcomer.

"We have fighters," Phillips said. "This team is going to work hard and never give up. We need to stay healthy."

Phillips sees Appleton East, Kaukauna and Hortonville as the top contenders for the league title.

"This conference is always strong," she said. "Each night is a fight."

SEE **Basketball** ON PAGE 21



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Lourdes girls basketball loses two games

Oshkosh Herald

The Lourdes girls basketball team lost its first two games of the season, losing 43-32 to Winneconne last Tuesday at home before falling to Columbus Catholic 52-33 in the Cranberry Classic held at Assumption High School on Friday.

In Tuesday's loss, Lourdes only trailed by three points after the first half but was outscored 24-16 in the second.

Basketball

FROM PAGE 20

Knights veterans return

Lourdes returns four starters and is projected as a contender for the Trailways East title after finishing 10-16 overall and 6-6 in the league.

Hope Burns, a 5-6 senior who averaged a team-high 13.1 ppg along with 4.3 rebounds and 1.6 assists, leads the strong returning group which includes 5-11 senior Paige Droessler (7.4 ppg, 6.7 rpg) and sophomores Addy Hafemeister (6.6 ppg, 5.8 rpg, 2.4 apg) and Molly Moore (5.5 ppg, 4.9 rpg).

Burns was a first-team selection on the Trailways East squad, while Droessler received honorable mention. Burns scored a team-high 11 points in the Knights' 43-32 nonconference loss to Winneconne in the Nov. 24 season opener.

Three players who played in last year's rotation — senior post player Nora Sammons, junior forward Madison Peerenboom and sophomore guard Mary Husman — are also back.

Newcomers expected to make contributions are junior post player Camille Clark, sophomore forward Amelia Lindahl and

Hope Burns led the way with 11 points, four rebounds and two assists while Paige Droessler had seven points and seven rebounds.

In the loss to Columbus Catholic, Molly Moore had 10 points while Droessler and Hope Burns added six a piece.

Lourdes trailed by eight at the half but Columbus outscored the Knights by 11 to pull away.

freshman guard Charlie Mullen.

"We bring back a wealth of experience, however, we're still a young team," said Lourdes coach Quinn Heintz. "Our strength should be our athleticism and our half-court defense. When we're able to get our defense set, we are very tough on that end."

Rebounding and general consistency are Heintz's biggest concerns.

"We need to continue to get better and more consistent each day," he said. "If we can take care of the ball and rebound each game, we should give ourselves an opportunity. Our goal is to compete for a conference championship."

Lourdes is expected to battle Oakfield, Dodgeand and Hustisford for the league title.

"With the way it will be decided this year, you need to be at your best early in the season," Heintz said.

Masks for everyone

It's not a typical start to the season for area teams due to the coronavirus pandemic. Most teams started practice Nov. 16 with protective procedures in place.

"We started practicing with different procedures, things like masks at all times and keeping teams separated," Phillips said. "But our team is willing to do whatever it has to do to be able to play."

Holiday shoppers urged to find their gifts locally

The new "Love Oshkosh" campaign is inviting holiday shoppers to be part of the #LoveOshkosh \$100 Challenge to spend at local shops, destinations, hotels and restaurants and upload the receipts at StaySafeLoveLocal.com to earn a free Oshkosh beanie.

"We launched the #LoveOshkosh \$100 Challenge as a way to encourage safe behaviors and promote our local businesses this holiday shopping season," said Amy Albright, executive director of the Oshkosh Convention & Visitors Bureau. "We want to highlight all the great places to shop locally here in Oshkosh, as well as feature unique gift ideas to inspire shoppers."

Shoppers can combine purchases made through Christmas Eve from any Oshkosh shop, restaurant or destination. According to online marketplace Fundra, for every \$100 spent at a locally owned business, \$68 stays in the com-

munity.

"It's tempting to shop online from national retailers right now because you can do it from home," Albright said.

"But, we have so many amazing holiday gifts right here in our backyard. And, when we shop online or in-person at local merchants, restaurants, destinations and hotels, we help ensure our community remains strong, even through this crisis."

Participating businesses adhere to safety guidelines, such as social distancing and mask wearing.

Many places now have additional safety measures such as online ordering, reservations, curbside pickup and sanitization stations.

The campaign will share videos highlighting businesses on the Love Oshkosh Facebook page and Stay Safe Love Local website to inspire gift ideas. For details, visit www.StaySafeLoveLocal.com.

Light shows collaborate to help NAMI

Four family-created holiday light shows will be collaborating for a two-night event Dec. 11 and 12 to raise funds and awareness for the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) Oshkosh.

Light shows include Brody's Christmas Lights for Charity, 1874 Westbreeze Drive, Oshkosh; Christmas SpecStackular, 335 Sunnybrook Drive, Oshkosh; Sunnybrook Light Show, 1510 Maricopa Drive, Oshkosh; and Fisher Light Show, 524 Maple Ridge Road, Berlin.

NAMI Oshkosh has experienced a four-

fold increase in demand for their services compared with last year while losing its main fundraiser, the NAMI SK for Mental Health and Suicide Awareness.

In addition to collecting donations at the light shows and promoting direct donations, the Collaboration of Lights will be partnering with area businesses, including Manila Resto and Red Robin in Oshkosh, on special offers.

For more information go to namioshosh.com or the Collaboration of Lights Facebook page.



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North/Lourdes returns top individual performers

By Tim Froberg
HERALD CONTRIBUTOR

Quantity is a bit of a problem for the Oshkosh North/Lourdes boys' swimming and diving team.

Quality isn't.

The ONL squad has just 11 swimmers on its roster — nine fewer than last season — but returns a handful of strong individual performers led by sophomore Owen Konop and juniors Chase Pecore, Pierce Pecore and Trey Pecore.

"Honestly, I'm looking for individual growth and individual growth will lead to team growth," said coach Jacob Landgraf. "We lost quite a few seniors and our team roster shrunk a bit. Last year, we had great depth on our roster which allowed me to use everyone in events where they were the strongest.

"I look forward to building on successes from last season and working on individual improvement."

ONL is coming from a solid season in which it went 5-2 in dual meet action, beating Oshkosh West for the first time in several years. ONL was third overall in the Fox Valley Association at 3-2 and placed sixth in Division 1 sectional competition with 186 points.

Konop had an impressive freshman season and was selected as the team's MVP. He is a versatile swimmer who excels in the sprints and could be a top threat in the 50 and 100 freestyles. Konop received all-conference honorable mention in the 100 free following a third-place finish at the FVA meet.

"I can put Owen in just about any event," said Landgraf. "He's coming off an outstanding season and is a good sprinter. He has been with OSHY (swim club) for quite a few years, so he came into our program with a lot of experience. He has a great attitude. He loves to have fun but knows how to get down to business. It's nice for a coach to have a swimmer like that who is willing to do so many events."

Expect Chase Pecore, Trey Pecore and Pierce Pecore to generate considerable points. Chase received second-team all-conference in the 500 free after a second-place finish at the FVA meet. He also placed seventh in 500 and 12th in the 200 free at sectionals. Trey landed all-conference honorable mention in the 500 free (third at the FVA meet) and was fifth in the event and eighth in the 200 IM at sectionals. Pierce was fifth in the 200 IM at the FVA meet, while placing sixth in the 500 free and ninth in the 200 IM at sectionals.

The Pecore brothers also swam three legs of a seventh-place 400 free relay at sectionals, and Trey was part of a fifth-place 500 relay.

"All three love distance events," said Landgraf. "Chase and Trey love to compete against each other, especially in the 500 free. All three of them round out our relays along with Owen (Konop)."

ONL is expected to open the season Dec. 8 at Fond du Lac.

"My goal for this team is to enjoy the time we have together, have some fun and work on our individual goals," Landgraf said. "We've made a few adjustments to avoid contact between swimmers in the pool and we'll do everything we can to keep our athletes safe."

Strong senior group leads West team

Successful teams are often powered by senior-driven groups, and Oshkosh West hopes that experience will pay off for a seasoned squad.

"We return a really strong senior class," said West coach Kelly Wayne. "Most of them have scored points for us the past three years and it's their final year, so we're pretty excited about this group. This senior class has worked so hard. I just want it to be a special year for them."

The Wildcats placed fourth at the FVA meet, fifth overall in the league and eighth at sectionals.

Sam Blaskowski leads the competitive contingent of seniors. Blaskowski finished second at the FVA meet in the 50 free and took 10th at sectionals where he was part of a fifth-place 200 freestyle relay team. He has come close to qualifying for the state meet in each of the past three seasons only to fall short each time. Blaskowski is a hungry swimmer looking for a breakout season.

"Sam's been so close," said Wayne. "Last year I believe he came within one-hundredth of a second of qualifying in the 50 free. He came pretty close in a relay, too.

"Sam's a little unique in that he's not someone who swims year-round. He's just a really good multi-sport athlete, who plays soccer and competes in track. He puts in a lot of work during the offseason and that athleticism and work ethic really helps him in the pool. I'm excited to see what he'll do this season."

Other skilled and experienced West seniors are Eric Bal (100 breaststroke), Aaron Draxler (freestyle events and 100 breaststroke) and Ethan Wruck (freestyle). Sophomore Connor Yakes is also back after generating points in the distance freestyle and backstroke events.

Bal placed sixth at the FVA meet in the 100 breaststroke and joined Blaskowski on a fourth-place 200 medley team. Bal, Blaskowski and Wruck were also part of a fifth-place 200 free relay at the conference meet.

Yakes placed sixth at the FVA in the 100 back, while Draxler took 13th in the 200 free at sectionals.

The Wildcats also return a couple of competitive divers, juniors Tiernan Depiesse and Carter Roloff.

"We're heavy in upperclassmen and with that comes experience and the knowledge of previous goals," Wayne said. "They know what they want to do, so we have to work hard to get it done."

West opens the season Dec. 8 at Appleton West/Kimberly. Neenah is considered the team to beat in the seven-team FVA. The Rockets have won five of the last six championships and piled up a whopping 617 points at last year's FVA meet.

"I'm hoping we have a safe and COVID-free season," Wayne said. "I think everyone is just eager to get back into the pool and find some normalcy again. I want the boys to reach their individual goals while also having fun and working together toward team goals. I want them to have a memorable goal and reach some of the goals we've been talking about for four years."

No site yet for state meet

The WIAA state swimming and diving championships have been scheduled for Feb. 5-6, but a site has yet to be determined after the University of Wisconsin-Madison announced it would not host state championships due to the pandemic.

The Division 2 state meet will be Feb. 5 with Division 1 to follow on Feb. 6.

Sectional action in Division 1 will be Jan. 29-30. North/Lourdes will compete at River Falls, while Oshkosh West will swim at Stevens Point.

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Obituaries

Phyllis Rose Leach

Phyllis Rose Leach died Saturday with her family by her side. She was 89. The cause of death was Alzheimer’s disease. Phyllis was born May 23, 1931, in Appleton, Wis., to Frank and Tharcilla (Borneman) Liethen. She had one older brother, Frank, who she nicknamed “Sonny,” two younger brothers, Bill and Jack, and one younger sister, Mary Meier. She was a committed nurse at Mercy Medical Center in Oshkosh. The hospital was an important part of her life: After her shifts, Phyllis would walk down the street to Charlie’s Glass Bar for a hamburger. It was there she met David C. Leach, who she married on August 6, 1955. They had two



sons, Frederick and David. Helping others was Phyllis’s calling. She continued to serve Mercy Medical Center as a board member and in 1980 received the nursing school’s “Nurse of the Year” award. She also was president and board member for the Visiting Nurse Association and sat on the board of visitors for the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh School of Nursing. As part of that appointment, Phyllis was proud to select and present the school’s Nightingale Award to the honored nurses. Phyllis was active in her community, and she received many awards for her contributions. She planned picnics for St. Peter’s Church, chaired the Lourdes auction, and volunteered with Relay for Life. She always said yes to requests for her time or a donation, large or small. Phyllis’s philanthropy never waned, even after her breast cancer diagnosis in 1993. Instead, she devoted energy to women

Steven C. Eichman

Steven C. Eichman passed away peacefully Saturday Nov. 21, 2020 with his family by his side. He was born September 10, 1952 in Oshkosh to Clifford and Helen (Luebke) Eichman. He graduated from Oshkosh High School in 1970 and UW-Oshkosh in 1974 with a business degree. May 19, 1979 he married Anita Juris. Steve was employed by Badger Mill Supply, IBS Conversions, Secura Insurance and retired in 2016 from Top Brands, Inc. as their Information Tech-



nology Manager. Family meant everything to Steve and he was a devoted son, husband, father and grandfather. He was quick to share his time and talents with family, Calvary Lutheran Church, where he was a charter member, Winnebago County 4-H serving as a volunteer, board member, club leader and county dog project leader. Steve’s love of nature and dogs has been passed on to his family. He loved to travel and was fortunate to visit most U.S. states including Hawaii and Alaska in addition to trips to Canada and Mexico. Car trips were his favorite with many stops at state and national parks. Steve was preceded in death by his father Clifford and his special dog Norman. He is survived by his wife Anita and daughters Alissa Eichman, Emilie (Greg) Wurzbach and grandchildren Lucy and Auggie. He is also survived by his mother Helen Eichman, twin sister Susan Eichman, brother Michael Eichman, sister-in-law Holly Eichman, and other relatives and friends. Memorials may be given to Calvary Lutheran Church and Winnebago County 4-H Foundation Fund. A memorial service will be held at a later date due to COVID-19.

Theodore L. Kempinger

Theodore “Ted” L. Kempinger, age 84, entered his Eternal Home in Heaven on Sunday, November 22, 2020 at Mercy Medical Center in Oshkosh. He was born December 30, 1935 in Oshkosh to the late Burkhard “Burt” and Eleanor (Putnam) Kempinger. Ted served his country by enlisting in the United States Army in the early 1950s. While on active duty, he was stationed in Germany and was a paratrooper.



Ted later enjoyed a very long, fulfilling career with the Oshkosh Fire Department, where he served as a Fire Fighter, Emergency Medical Technician and, later, achieved the rank of Lieutenant before retiring in 1989. Ted is survived by his wife, Valerie; three children: Todd (Leanne) Kempinger, Kelley (Armando) Cantú, Kari (Michael) Mapes; two stepchildren: Amy (Paul) Radtke, Bethany Basler; seven grandchildren: Nicole (Aaron) Saleske, Melanie (Matthew) Heintz, Jonathan (Lilli) Hansen, Macy and Carson Mapes, Rachel and Samantha Kempinger; four step-granchildren: Brandon Basler, Riess, Conner, and Alec Radtke; 8 great grandchildren; brother: Eugene (Judith) Kempinger; and sister, Helen Wachholz. He was further preceded in death by his brothers, Ronald and David Kempinger. Due to the current pandemic, services have been postponed.

Timothy P. Klug

Timothy P. Klug, age 82, passed away peacefully at home on Monday, November 23, 2020. He was born on September 20, 1938 to the late Frank and Emma Klug. Timothy was united in marriage to Barbara Hintz on February 27, 1965. He worked for the HW Theis Plumbing Company and was a first responder volunteer for the town of Algoma for over 10 years. Timothy was a veteran of the United States Marine Corps. Timothy is survived by wife, Barbara, and two sons, Craig and Paul (Kimberly) Klug. At this time, no formal services will be held.



around the world who shared her disease. Phyllis traveled to Vietnam with the International Breast Cancer Research Foundation and her oncologist, Dr. Richard Love, several times. On these trips, she would teach recovery exercises and show the women there that there is life and hope after a diagnosis. She was recognized for her humanitarian work and support of breast cancer research with an honorary doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh. It was one of her proudest moments in her lifetime of aid. Phyllis valued learning and traveling, especially after her husband’s death from cancer in 1992. She never said no to an adventure, including mushing sled dogs in Alaska, whitewater rafting down the Colorado River, taking cooking classes in Italy and France, a safari in Africa with her son, and a voyage on a Russian ice cutter. Phyllis was also known for her love of entertaining. Her events were always memorable, whether it was an attic tea party for her granddaughters or a sweeping Fourth of July picnic for the entire block. Always in attendance were her two loyal golden retrievers, who she loved dearly. She not only was an extraordinary hostess, but also an enthusiastic guest. At the EAA’s Christmas in the Air party, she’d

give away dozens and dozens of cookies. It didn’t take her long to become known as “the Cookie Lady” at the yearly event. Phyllis is survived by her sons, Frederick and David; sister Mary; daughters-in-law Teresa Leach and Susan Leach; brother-in-law Dave Meier; sisters-in-law Myrna Liethen and Bonnie Liethen; granddaughters Kirstin Siegler (Jon Siegler), Holly Leach (Eric Zwick), and Kelsey Miller (Mason Miller); great-grandchildren Scarlett Miller, Emmy Siegler, and Duke Miller; and many nieces and nephews. A private funeral will be held. Keeping with her spirit as a hostess, a public celebration of life will be held at a later date. Memorials have been established at The Women’s Fund at the Oshkosh Community Foundation and the Evergreen Foundation Inc. The family offers a special thank you to the staff at Evergreen Retirement Community and Generations Home Care and Hospice, who helped Phyllis through the final stage of her life. We’ll never forget the comfort and kindness you brought both Phyllis and our family.



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