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At left, two meeting attendees are silhouetted while talking in the upstairs meeting room at the Fitchburg Serenity Club.

Below, a sign with words from the Serenity Prayer hangs on the blue wall above the kitchen in the Fitchburg Serenity Club. The key symbolizes willingness.

Photos by Samantha Christian

# Seeking serenity together

Clubhouse a safe haven for many in 12-step recovery groups

SAMANTHA CHRISTIAN  
 Unified Newspaper Group

Perched on a hill along McKee Road is a red brick building that some may recognize as the former Camp Badger School. Just over 50 years have gone by since students last occupied the classrooms there, but learning still takes place within its walls.

Since 1981, the building has been the clubhouse for the Fitchburg Serenity Club, Inc. (FSC), a nonprofit corporation that provides meeting space for autonomous 12-step groups of alcoholics, gamblers, overeaters and other troubled souls. Here, recovering addicts and their families learn from one another rather than from a teacher.

Posters of the alphabet have been replaced with the 12 steps, motivational sayings with the Serenity Prayer, and portraits of past presidents with those of Bill Wilson and Dr. Bob Smith,



## The Twelve Steps simplified

- |                          |                     |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. I can't               | 8. Become willing   |
| 2. God can               | 9. Make amends      |
| 3. Let God               | 10. Daily inventory |
| 4. Look within           | 11. Pray, meditate  |
| 5. Admit wrongs          | 12. Give it away    |
| 6. Ready self for change |                     |
| 7. Seek God's help       |                     |

Source: TheColemanInstitute.com

the founders of Alcoholics Anonymous.

The two are known more commonly as "Bill

W." and "Dr. Bob" as a way of honoring AA's tradition – upheld by other 12-step programs – of maintaining anonymity.

Each week, approximately 1,200 people attend the 80 meetings held at the FSC, said board president Mary F. Many come from the Madison area, and some travel on a daily basis from places like Sun Prairie, Monroe, Spring Green and Janesville.

What brings them together is the willingness to find peace and acceptance in their lives, one day at a time.

Especially around the holidays, many people need an escape from the stress of family get togethers, which can become a trigger for addicts. For others who may have burned those bridges, the FSC is the only place they can call home.

As with any meeting place, though, not everyone who passes through the FSC's doors decides to return.

"There's all kinds of hesitation – reasons to not come in here ... Asking for help, not

Turn to **Serenity**/Page 23

# Touched by history

Fitchburg native looks back 70 years to freezing, hellish Battle of the Bulge

SCOTT DE LARUELLE  
 Unified Newspaper Group

Imagining hell generally brings to mind chaotic images of fire, heat and indescribable suffering.

Ask Raymond Ray, and he might tell you that for him, while there was plenty of suffering, hell was a 35-below-zero night spent in a frozen Belgian forest, thick with death and desperate enemy German

soldiers. And plenty of suffering that has lasted with him to this day.

The 89-year-old Fitchburg native survived more than a week in the front lines during the Battle of the Bulge, one of the United States' most famous and most costly engagements in World War II. This week marks the 70th anniversary of the beginning of the battle, which lasted more than a month, left tens of thousands

dead and ultimately proved the end of Adolf Hitler and his Nazis' dream of a 1,000-year empire.

Ray is part of a proud family military tradition that dates back to his great-grandfather John Agan, who served with Wisconsin's famous Iron Brigade. Wounded and captured during the battle of Gettysburg, he died of starvation in 1864 at the infamous Confederate prison

in Andersonville, Ga., at the age of 28. Ray's father served in France in World War I and was left permanently disabled from injuries suffered there.

"I don't think he was right after he came back from Europe," Ray said. "He was a silent father."

As he looked back Dec. 5 on his role in the battle, Ray recalled how he wanted to become an artist before he was drafted into the Army

in 1944, straight out of high school. He has art talent in the family, as his grandmother was an accomplished painter, and one of his grandsons has taken on the ability.

But that all had to wait as he prepared to enter a war that had already taken tens of thousands of American lives. Soon, he would be fighting for his own life in

Turn to **Battle**/Page 19



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# Driving past 102

## Fitchburg woman misses life in the fast lane

KARINA GALVÁN  
Star Correspondent

Genevieve Jackson had been driving the highways and byways of rural Dane County in her family's Ford since horses and buggies still traveled the roads. She started driving back in 1923 and only stopped driving seven years ago when she was 95 because of a bad knee.

Jackson made many trips to take her mother shopping and get out of the house, simply because she loved to drive. But she made her first trip on her own to try and help her dad.

Unfortunately, she was only 11, and the trip didn't end well. She was with her father visiting her aunt's neighboring farm when he mentioned he wished he had his car. So, she thought she'd be good and go get it.

"But it ran out of gas on the way home," said her nephew Mark Jones, grinning. She was scared and hid, so her father got gas to fill it up but wouldn't drive it home.

"He said 'Well, you drove it that far, you might as well go down and get it and go on home,'" said Jones, who helps care for Jackson in her Fitchburg condo. "And she's been driving ever since."

"Anything to get outside was fun for me," she said.

Although these days she's hard of hearing, Jackson, born in northern Wales in 1912, still enjoys a conversation and tries to be as independent as she can manage to be. She owns her own condo where she lived on her own for about 20 years before arthritis in her knee forced her to become homebound.



Photos by Karina Galván

Above, 102-year-old Genevieve Jackson reads the newspaper, one of her favorite things to do now that she can no longer drive. Below, senior center receptionist Susan Hoercher looks at a picture of Jackson at age 6 with her dog, Shep, that is displayed in the senior center.

She can't stand because of the arthritis, Jones said.

"And some of old age," he added.

"Oh not at all," Jackson quickly countered.

Jackson now lives in her condo with some assistance. At first, it was just from her nephews who lived nearby. However, she now receives help from Home Instead Senior Care and Heartland Hospice.

Prior to that, Jackson liked to help out in the community by volunteering at the Fitchburg Senior Center.

"Gen," as her friends and family called her, "typed out our (monthly) newsletter on the typewriter (before I worked at the senior center)," Jill McHone, the senior center's director, told the Star.

Jackson continued doing that until McHone came on board in 1993 as the program assistant. "They had just gotten a computer, and nobody knew how to use it but me,"



McHone said with a chuckle. "So, that's when we transitioned from the typewriter to the computer."

Jackson is the last surviving member of her five siblings. She was married twice, first to Erich Keller, who died in 1961, and then to Bob Jackson, who died in the early 1980s – both wonderful people, her nephew said. She had no children.

Now that she doesn't drive, if she rides with you, Jones said, she will insist on helping you get to where you're going.

"She will give you plenty of directions on how you should drive and where you should drive and what way you should go," he said.

At the age of 102, Jackson is doing quite well for herself. She's on her own with some help coming in, has managed to stay in her condo and is doing the things she now likes to do most, read newspapers and watch her favorite golfer, Phil Mickelson.

But if there's one thing she really misses, it's the driving.



Photo by Scott De Laruelle

Amy Jordan, left, and Sarah Folkers are state-certified social workers at the Fitchburg Senior Center, drawing on nearly two decades of combined experience to provide families with a variety of services.

## Senior center social workers focus on fixes

SCOTT DE LARUELLE  
Unified Newspaper Group

Amy Jordan and Sarah Folkers both grew up in the Fitchburg area with an idea to help others some day, and for nearly a decade, they have been doing just that, even though many people might not realize it.

The two are social workers at the Fitchburg Senior Center, assisting older adults and their families in a variety of ways. Fitchburg Senior Center director Jill McHone said the social work services at the center are "one of the best kept secrets" in the community, noting there is no fee for their helping a client or case management.

"It truly is an invaluable service," she said.

Jordan grew up in Madison before working out east for 10 years as a social worker. She returned to her roots and has been at the center for the past 10 years.

"I just have that kind of personality where I like to help people," Jordan said, adding that she's seen a lot of changes in the past decade. "People are more complex, more family dynamics we have to work with the funding issues, what we have to work with, that's changed, and there's not a lot of money to help people, but piecemealing things together, we can make it work."

Every day is different for a social worker, she said, noting that she and Folkers work with around 50 people on a monthly routine, but many more than that on a day-to-day basis.

"We wear many different hats," Jordan said. "We put out fires, we take calls from police, we might talk to people in the hospital – it kind of

runs the gamut."

Folkers grew up a couple miles from the center (which was farm fields at the time), and has seen the city grow up rapidly in the past few decades. When she was in high school, for a few summers she worked as an assistant for children and adults with disabilities, and her interest in helping out soon led to a career.

"I had a couple friends in high school who had disabilities, and I always liked helping in gym class and that sort of thing," Folkers said. "My first job was working with people with disabilities as a social worker, and I found out about the opening here, and have been here for almost nine years."

Despite her time in Fitchburg, she said she's often surprised how little residents know about what services she and Jordan can offer.

"People might know there's a senior center, but they have no idea all of the things that go on here, let alone that there are two state-certified social workers on staff that can do a lot of different things for people, to keep them independent," Folkers said.

Jordan emphasized that point, as the two shared a knowing laugh over a frequent misconception about the center.

"Nobody lives here – this isn't a nursing home," she chuckled. "We go out into the community. We don't want people to go into a nursing home. It's being proactive instead of reactive. We're helping people to maintain their independence at home."

For information on the center, call 270-4291 or visit [fitchburgwi.gov](http://fitchburgwi.gov).

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# Tax bills mostly drop

**Property value increase offsets big cut from MATC**

**JIM FEROLIE**  
Star editor

The average home in the City of Fitchburg will pay about \$45 less in taxes this year than in 2013, even though many gained in value. Most homes, in fact, will see an even larger decrease.

City residents' taxes will vary by school district, as always, but those in the Verona and Oregon school districts will get the biggest cuts, with most homes getting more than \$200 back. Most homes in the Madison Metropolitan School District will see their taxes drop by about \$75.

Tax bills will be mailed late this week or early next week, and the majority of the change in residents' taxes is a result of a \$406 million influx of state money to the technical college system, something that was a major point of emphasis for legislators this year. Madison College's tax rate dropped 49 percent, reversing a trend of several years of increases after a successful 2008 referendum.

That's a drop from \$1.83 per \$1,000 of assessed value (the mill rate) to \$0.95. Other municipalities around the county felt a similar impact.

However, the \$221 that drop saved the average Fitchburg taxpayer was chipped away by some increases elsewhere. The city increased its mill rate by 11 cents, which cost the average homeowner \$72 when combined with the increase in average assessments. The county's 5-cent increase tacked on another \$30.

In addition, the city reassesses a few neighborhoods each year, and those whose turn was up this year will notice the effect of a rebounding housing market since the last time they were revalued. Condominiums in particular lost a lot of value around the time of the 2008 stock market crash, so some homeowners will likely see property tax increases.

Further complicating the tax bills is that unlike most cities and villages in Dane

County, Fitchburg has to mail out tax bills with three different rates, varying by school district.

Though the Oregon and Verona school districts both lowered their rates, it wasn't enough to offset the rise in average value, so VASD will cost the average homeowner \$32 more and OSD will cost \$19 more.

Homeowners in the Madison school district, however, will feel a sting, as the 38-cent increase in the mill rate combined with the assessment increase will cost the average homeowner \$168.

The total average bill, including the Lottery Credit and First Dollar Credit and garbage fee (which decreased \$10), is between \$5,861 and \$5,884, depending on district. Last year it was between \$5,827 and \$5,977.

The city's slight increase is despite enjoying rebounding growth overall. It brought in \$75.7 million in new construction, increasing the city's value by 3 percent, and it spent that on four new positions and raises for current employees.

The public safety positions added were a full-time fire chief, a Fitch-Rona EMS captain and a police patrol officer, but the fire chief and patrol officer won't start later next year, meaning the full funding will likely have a greater impact on the 2016 budget. The city will also add a full-time sergeant for the police department and provide a paid-on-call firefighter pay increase.

Another key element of the city's budget is a 2.5 percent increase for all staff, though for non-union employees that will be a 1 percent increase plus up to 1.5 percent more based on performance.

Tax bills are due Jan. 31, but many homeowners pay all or part of the bill before the end of the year to count it toward their 2014 taxes.

Payments postmarked by Dec. 31 will be credited as a December payment for tax purposes.

The first half of the taxes is due Jan. 31 and the rest by July 31. To see your tax information online, visit the public access portal of AccessDane at accessdane.co.wi.us.

## Tax bills

MADISON	2013	2014	+/-
Madison Metropolitan S.D.	11.71	12.09	3.2%
Dane County	3.10	3.15	1.6%
MATC	1.83	0.95	-48.4%
State of Wisconsin	0.17	0.17	1.6%
City of Fitchburg	7.84	7.95	1.4%
School tax credit	-1.77	-1.72	2.9%
<b>Total per \$1,000 of value</b>	<b>22.89</b>	<b>22.59</b>	<b>-1.3%</b>
Average home value	\$256,900	\$262,448	2.2%
Lottery credit	\$129.31	\$131.39	
First Dollar credit	\$75.93	\$77.64	
Garbage fee	\$152	\$142	
Average total with credits	\$5,827	\$5,861	

OREGON	2013	2014	+/-
Oregon School District	12.32	12.12	-1.6%
Dane County	3.10	3.15	1.6%
MATC	1.83	0.95	-48.4%
State of Wisconsin	0.17	0.17	1.6%
City of Fitchburg	7.84	7.95	1.4%
School tax credit	-1.77	-1.72	2.9%
<b>Total per \$1,000 of value</b>	<b>23.49</b>	<b>22.63</b>	<b>-3.7%</b>
Average home value	\$256,900	\$262,448	2.2%
Lottery credit	\$134.23	\$131.77	
First Dollar credit	\$78.81	\$77.86	
Garbage fee	\$152	\$142	
Average total with credits	\$5,973	\$5,871	

VERONA	2013	2014	+/-
Verona Area School District	12.33	12.18	-1.2%
Dane County	3.10	3.15	1.6%
MATC	1.83	0.95	-48.4%
State of Wisconsin	0.17	0.17	1.6%
City of Fitchburg	7.84	7.95	1.4%
School tax credit	-1.77	-1.72	2.9%
<b>Total per \$1,000 of value</b>	<b>23.50</b>	<b>22.68</b>	<b>-3.5%</b>
Average home value	\$256,900	\$262,448	2.2%
Lottery credit	\$133.72	\$132.40	
First Dollar credit	\$78.52	\$78.24	
Garbage fee	\$152	\$142	
Average total with credits	\$5,977	\$5,884	

## Former Fitchburg business owner sentenced to prison

**Peterson ordered to serve 7 years**

The former owner of the Pancake Cafe in Fitchburg was sentenced to seven years in federal prison for bank fraud and other charges earlier this month.

Christian Peterson, 45, was found guilty of eight charges in May in U.S. District Court, including bank fraud, making false statements to banks, money laundering and theft from an employee retirement fund. Money loaned for business purposes was used instead to support a gambling habit, the court ruled.

In a news release from the U.S. Department of Justice, U.S. District Court Judge Barbara B. Crabb stated that "his conduct was nothing short of appalling and that he did extensive damage to this community because of his narcissistic, selfish actions."

Peterson was the former owner of the Pancake Cafe in Fitchburg, the Country Inn & Suites hotel in Fitchburg and the Pancake Cafe in Madison. He also managed properties in Chicago and was the former owner of a company

called Maverick, Inc., which brokered poly-scrap foam for use in the manufacture of carpet cushion.

Judge Crabb found that Peterson used his business partners to get loans for purported business reasons but instead used much of the money for his own personal lifestyle.

After an eight-day trial in May, a jury found that Peterson had wired money intended as business loans to a casino in Las Vegas.

In addition to his convictions for bank fraud, money laundering and making false statements to banks, Peterson was convicted of stealing his former employees' 401(k) account funds and using the money to pay his former wife \$7,500 in alimony and to lend himself \$10,000. Due to his conviction for this crime, Peterson has been debarred by the U.S. Department of Labor from ever acting as a fiduciary for a retirement plan.

As part of her sentence, Judge Crabb also directed that Peterson pay \$816,168.57 in restitution to Greenwoods State Bank.

- Mark Ignatowski

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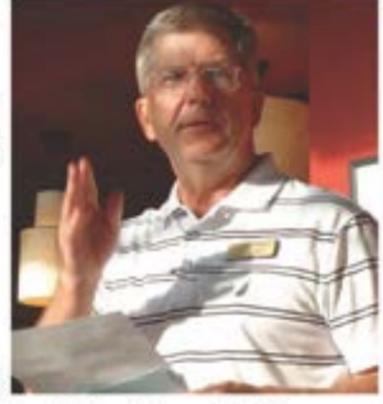
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## Letter to the editor

## Ferguson shows need for gun control

While Ferguson Police Officer Darren Wilson may have been legally vindicated, he still bears the moral capability for not having the presence of mind to defuse the situation without resorting to shooting an unarmed black man.

Michael Brown, the apparent victim, did not have to die that day, and the fact that his death is going unpunished by the selected jurors suggests that we all need to reconsider when it is appropriate and not appropriate to use

deadly force.

How many more civilians must we shoot with guns before one can finally wake up to this realization that guns don't just pick themselves up to kill people, it is the disturbed individual standing behind the trigger who kills another person.

I solely blame the NRA for distributing these weapons of mass destruction into the hands of fools.

Michael A. Walker  
Fitchburg

## Correction

The November issue of the Fitchburg Star published an incorrect date for the Children's Holiday Party at the Fitchburg Community Center.

The Star used outdated information from the Fitchburg Chamber of Commerce website. The event was held from 1-4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 7.

The Star regrets the error.

## Letters policy

Please keep submissions under 400 words. All letters should be signed and include addresses and phone numbers for verification. Anonymous letters will not be printed.

The editorial staff reserves the right not to

print any letter, including those with libelous or obscene content.

For questions on our editorial policy, call editor Jim Ferolie at 845-9559 or email [ungeditor@wcinet.com](mailto:ungeditor@wcinet.com).

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## General Manager

David J. Enstad  
[david.enstad@wcinet.com](mailto:david.enstad@wcinet.com)

## Advertising

Donna Larson (west side)  
[veronasales@wcinet.com](mailto:veronasales@wcinet.com)  
Rob Klitson (east side)  
[oregonsales@wcinet.com](mailto:oregonsales@wcinet.com)

## Classifieds

Kathy Woods  
[ungclassified@wcinet.com](mailto:ungclassified@wcinet.com)

## Circulation

Carolyn Schultz  
[ungcirculation@wcinet.com](mailto:ungcirculation@wcinet.com)

## News

Jim Ferolie  
[ungeditor@wcinet.com](mailto:ungeditor@wcinet.com)

## Sports

Jeremy Jones  
[ungsportseditor@wcinet.com](mailto:ungsportseditor@wcinet.com)

## Website

Scott Girard  
[ungreporter@wcinet.com](mailto:ungreporter@wcinet.com)

## Community News

Samantha Christian  
[communityreporter@wcinet.com](mailto:communityreporter@wcinet.com)

## Reporters

Mark Ignatowski, Anthony Iozzo,  
Scott De Laruelle, Bill Livick

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## Pharmacist's Corner

## Keep safe with proper medication storage

I can remember back in my childhood seeing advertisements from the company Johnson & Johnson, demonstrating how to clean out one's medicine cabinet and replace old materials and medicines with fresh, new bandages and the like.

It was not until years later that I understood the reason for this ad campaign; serving a bigger role in the community by teaching people the importance of cleaning their medicine cabinets. Those ads haven't been around for 30 years, but the message of throwing away old medication is still relevant today.

I see this when a patient passes away and a family member brings all of the patient's medications to the pharmacy for disposal. They frequently bring in a stockpile of expired medications and inevitably, there are always a couple that could be sold as antiques.

While it is important to throw away old medicine, storing current medicine is equally important. I have heard people talk about how they store their medicine anywhere from the kitchen cabinet to the bathroom. In our house, the top shelf of our pantry is devoted to storing our medicine.

When choosing a place to store your medicine, there are a few things you must consider. Primarily, you should pick a spot that is child-safe, either locked or unreachably high, or preferably both. Low humidity (farther away from your steam-creating sink and shower) and controlled temperature should also be priorities when choosing a place to use as a medicine storing area. This is why the top shelf of the pantry or many kitchen cabinets are excellent spots. One of my patients' biggest

concerns with prescription medication is forgetting the times and frequency with which they need to take them. For instance, this one at bedtime, that one before breakfast; you know what I'm talking about.



Schumacher

Many people store their medicine throughout their house in an effort to remind themselves to take them at the correct times. The most popular place for these medications to be stored (outside the kitchen) is one's bedside table. However, I would be cautious of a few things.

Security and safety become a major concern when medication is spread throughout the home. If you are taking any pain medication (like OxyContin), you should take steps to secure them in a container or cabinet that locks. People who abuse these drugs (possibly including your loved ones) seek them out, but using precautions will help keep you and your family safe.

Young children also present another safety concern. Oftentimes, your kitchen cabinets are the highest, most unreachable, and therefore the safest in your house, whereas medications strewn about your home pose many safety risks. Take extra care to keep children away from the areas where you keep your medication, and use child-resistant caps or packaging to further reduce the risks.

The final concern related to storing medication is changes in temperature and humidity. When choosing the proper place for a "medicine cabinet,"

you want to find a location where there is little variation in humidity or temperature. As a result, bathrooms are not ideal places for storing your medicine.

In addition to prescription medication, what about your non-prescription over-the-counter supplies? If you are anything like me, you stock your medicine cabinet so that the next time you skin your knee, catch a cold, or are suffering from a minor headache, you will be ready to treat it. Hopefully, these self-treatments are spread out over months or even years, but, oftentimes, before you know it, that bottle of aspirin is expired and the first aid ointment is a few years old. Then, in your hour of need, you're faced with the choice: using an expired medicine or going to the pharmacy to buy something new. For example aspirin can be harmful if taken after its expiration and many medicines lose their potency over time.

Isn't that a lot to think about? If you ever have questions or concerns about your medications or how they should be stored, just ask a pharmacist. So take a minute every so often to check the expiration dates on the medications you have and discard any that are expired at places like Fitchburg Hometown Pharmacy or the Fitchburg Police Department. I better get started checking mine. Our medicine cabinet is pretty well stocked since it needs to be prepared for the colds, bruises, and cuts that come with having four active kids in our family.

Thad Schumacher, owner and pharmacist at Fitchburg Hometown Pharmacy

## Legislative opinion

## Get involved with city government

To paraphrase Uncle Sam, and before him Lord Kirtchner, "Fitchburg needs you. Volunteer today!" It only takes your time, and you can be involved in making our city a better place, according to your perspective.

I'm unabashedly optimistic about our future, and I hope that you'll be a part of making our city what you think it should be.

This city has a unique history. To be a city whose entire



Stern

own way and been optimistic about our chances by betting on ourselves.

That's not to say we don't

have our challenges. Not having a single school district divides the city in a lot of ways, but also allows individuals who like Fitchburg to choose their school by where they live. We also don't have a central dining or shopping district. The legacy of the planning that happened in the 1970s and early 80s before we were a city is also a difficulty to bringing parks and amenities to some of the densest areas of our city. This city needs your ideas and passion to help get it right this time. How would you solve the problem?

Our city is one of the most diverse socio-economically, culturally, and by age in the State of Wisconsin. We are among the most educated in Dane County and have a major manufacturing employment base. We need people from all walks of life to join in.

Historically, city leaders have made it a point of pride to make not only our city, but also our region, stronger. Our staff leads many of their associations, our citizen commissioners sit on regional planning bodies, and we have one of the premier intergovernmental units in the state in Fitchburg EMS. They've become leaders by raising their hands and their voices.

Over the last four years, in a sour economy, citizen commissions have approved the investment in infrastructure to be ready for the rebound. Now our Economic Development Authority is looking at what goes in around those investments. You could be the person who helps set the tone for what the development looks like, and make our city's economy stronger.

These next years will be critical in our city's history. We're a city that just recently turned 30, and the people who first lived here when it incorporated are starting to retire and move away. That leaves space and need for a new generation of leaders in the community.

Getting involved is easy. All you have to do is call City Hall. Tell them that you're interested in something you've seen in this paper, something that you're an expert in, or something that you want to know more about, and ask how you can get involved. Chances are that there's a committee that exists that deals with that very thing. And even better, chances are that there's probably a seat that's open for it.

Patrick Stern is a City of Fitchburg alder for Dist. 2.

## Contact us

For general inquiries, call our office at 845-9559.

## Editorial

• General news, city government, business news: Jim Ferolie at [UNGeditor@wcinet.com](mailto:UNGeditor@wcinet.com); Mark Ignatowski at [ungeditorial@wcinet.com](mailto:ungeditorial@wcinet.com); Scott Girard at [ungreporter@wcinet.com](mailto:ungreporter@wcinet.com)

• Community news and happenings: Samantha Christian at [communityreporter@wcinet.com](mailto:communityreporter@wcinet.com)  
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Spring elections

# Council incumbents to run

## Nomination papers due Jan. 6

**MARK IGNATOWSKI**  
Unified Newspaper Group

With the fall election barely more than a month in the past, it might be hard to think ahead to the next election.

But those interested in running for public office in the spring election have just a few weeks to get their name on the ballot. The deadline to file a declaration of candidacy and collect signatures for office is coming up Jan. 6.

Locally, most Common Council incumbents have announced that they will be on the ballot, though Ald. Steve Arnold's seat will be open as he runs for mayor against incumbent Shawn Pfaff this spring.

City of Fitchburg Clerk Patti Anderson said Arnold had filed for non-candidacy for his alder seat.

Six alders - Dorothy Krause (D-1), Carol Poole (D-1), Patrick Stern (D-2), Jason C. Gonzalez (D-3), Dan Carpenter (D-3) and Becky Baumbach (D-4) - told the Star they would likely seek another term on the council. Ald. Richard Bloomquist (D-2) did not

### Dates to know

- Dec. 1, 2014:** Filing period opens
- Friday, Dec. 26:** Non-candidacy notification deadline
- Tuesday, Jan. 6:** Filing deadline to get name on ballot
- Feb. 17:** Primary (if necessary)
- April 7:** Spring election
- Info:** Call your local clerk or school district, or visit [gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2015/spring](http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2015/spring)

return a request for comment from the Star, but Anderson said Dec. 10 that he did pick up paperwork to run again.

Two seats are up for the Oregon School District board - Area I in the village of Oregon and Area IV, encompassing the village of Brooklyn and towns of Oregon, Montrose, Brooklyn and Union. Incumbents Steve Zach and Jeff Ramin have yet to announce whether or not they will run for re-election.

On the Verona Area School District board, Renee Zook has announced that she is running for her at-large seat. Joanne Gauthier, who serves as the "Outside Cities of Verona and Fitchburg" representative, had not returned a request for comment as of press time Wednesday.

On the Madison Metropolitan School District

board, Mary Burke plans to run again. Arlene Silveira will not run for another term. After three terms, Silveira wants to spend time doing "more hands-on volunteer activities and grassroots advocacy efforts in the area of education," she wrote in an email to the Star.

Potential candidates have until 5 p.m. Jan. 6 to file the necessary paperwork with their respective municipality or school district. A primary election will be held Feb. 17 if needed, with the general election set for April 7.

For information and forms, visit [gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2015/spring](http://gab.wi.gov/elections-voting/2015/spring)

Unified Newspaper Group reporter Scott Girard contributed to this story.

## Nine Springs agreement OK'd

The Fitchburg Common Council approved a new one-year lease agreement for Nine Springs Golf Course last month.

The agreement allows for Sam Schultz to run the golf course for the city in exchange for a \$20,000 payment, but also calls for more public use of the land. Schultz has managed the course since 1999, but only began receiving the \$20,000 per year two years ago after the course stopped making money on its own.

Earlier this year, the city debated whether to keep the golf course or turn the land into a neighborhood park in a lower income section of the city, with strong opinions coming out on both sides.

The council ultimately chose to keep the golf

course, but implored Schultz and the city's parks department to work together to hold community events that could have a similar effect a park would have.

The new agreement aims for the same.

The lease specifies the city can set up winter activities such as snowshoeing and a skating pond on the land from Nov. 16 through March 14, outside of the golfing season. The city also has the right to use the land twice per week for recreational activities during the golfing season "without substantial disruption" to golf.

The rest of the agreement outlines the rules for maintaining and operating the course.

- Scott Girard

## Sen. Erpenbach appointed to JFC

State Sen. Jon Erpenbach (D-Middleton) was appointed to serve on the Joint Committee on Finance, the state budget writing committee of the legislature. The 16-member committee is made up of 12 members of the majority party and four from the minority.

"I will work hard for the people of this state as we prepare to solve the difficult budget challenges ahead," Erpenbach said in a news release.

Erpenbach was re-elected last month to another term in the 27th Senate District, a seat he has held since 1999. The district includes portions of Columbia, Dane, Green, Iowa and Sauk counties.

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# Pfaff announces re-election bid

## Incumbent mayor wants to focus on redevelopment

**SCOTT GIRARD**  
Unified Newspaper Group

Fitchburg Mayor Shawn Pfaff announced Dec. 4 he intends to run for another four-year term to lead the city.

The announcement sets up a race against 10-year alder Steve Arnold, who last month declared his intention to run in the spring election. Election day is April 7.

Pfaff told the Star he believes the city is better off than it was four years ago, when he was first elected mayor, largely due to a strong sense of community and continued economic growth.

"Four years ago, when I was elected, Fitchburg was in the throes of one of the worst economic times like we all were," Pfaff told the Star. "I think it's a much better place today than it was because ... we worked

together."

As examples, he cited the splash pad at McKee Farms Park, which opened in 2013 as a result of a partnership with the Optimists, and the library, which opened in 2011.



Pfaff

Over the next four years, Pfaff said he would like to see the city continue its economic growth through

expansions like the North Stoner Prairie and Northeast neighborhoods.

The latter was recently rejected by a regional commission that makes recommendations on sewer expansion to the state Department of Natural Resources, but the DNR will make the ultimate decision. Pfaff said he remains confident it will be approved and called it an integral part of the city's comprehensive plan.

The Northeast plan is one

of several issues in which he and Arnold have clashed, both in style and viewpoint. Arnold has often represented a minority opinion on the Common Council throughout Pfaff's four years as mayor. The council approved the Northeast plan earlier this year, but Arnold spoke against it at the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission meeting.

Pfaff also hopes to see more development in the North Fish Hatchery corridor, which is one of the most diverse parts of the city. He called that diversity an asset, and wants to increase diversity in the city's workforce.

"We need to make sure that all parts of our city are well-represented," he said.

He said his four years in the office so far have helped to make Fitchburg a place people can identify with.

"People now feel like Fitchburg is a place," he said. "We have a lot to do, but Fitchburg is becoming a better-connected community."

# Verona Road meeting set for Dec. 18

Although construction has stopped for the winter, the Wisconsin Department of Transportation will host an open house meeting next week to discuss design and construction activities for the Verona Road reconstruction project.

The Dec. 18 meeting will focus on the stretch of road from the Beltline to Hwy. PD (McKee Road) and the

Beltline between Whitney Way and Seminole Highway. The meeting is the last quarterly open house meeting for 2014.

No formal presentation is planned for the meeting that will be held from 5:30-7:30 p.m., at the City of Fitchburg Fire Station No. 2, 5415 King James Way.

Maps and exhibits showing the proposed improvements

will be on display at the meeting. WisDOT representatives will be available to discuss the project on an individual basis.

The WisDOT has also posted a drive-through simulation of how the second stage of the project will look once it is completed in 2019. Construction on the second stage starts in 2016.

View the video online at [veronaroadproject.wi.gov](http://veronaroadproject.wi.gov).

### Fitchburg's 2015 Solid Waste Collection Calendar

Month	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
<b>JANUARY</b>							
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<b>FEBRUARY</b>							
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
<b>MARCH</b>							
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	26	27	28
	29	30	31				
<b>APRIL</b>							
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30		
<b>MAY</b>							
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
	24	H	*26	*27	*28	*29	*30
	31						
<b>JUNE</b>							
	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
	28	29	30				
<b>JULY</b>							
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	
<b>AUGUST</b>							
	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
	30	31					
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>							
	6	H	*8	*9	*10	*11	*12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
	27	28	29	30			
<b>OCTOBER</b>							
	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
	11	12	13	14	15	16	17
	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
	25	26	27	28	29	30	31
<b>NOVEMBER</b>							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
	22	23	24	25	H	*27	*28
	29	30					
<b>DECEMBER</b>							
	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
	13	14	15	16	17	18	19
	20	21	22	23	24	H	*26
	27	28	29	30	31		

**HOLIDAY TREE COLLECTION**  
January 5 - 9  
January 20 - 23  
Actual collection dates may depend on weather

**BRUSH COLLECTION**  
April 13 - 17  
April 27 - May 1  
May 11 - 15  
May 26 - 30  
June 8 - 12  
June 22 - 26  
July 13 - 17  
Aug. 3 - 7  
Aug. 24 - 28  
Sept. 14 - 18  
Sept. 28 - Oct. 2  
Oct. 12 - 16  
Oct. 26 - 30  
Nov. 16 - 20  
Actual collection dates may depend on weather

**YARDWASTE & BRUSH COLLECTION**  
April 13 - 17  
May 11 - 15  
Oct. 26 - 30  
Nov. 16 - 20  
Actual collection dates may depend on weather

**Color coding Legend:**  
YELLOW = Recycling Week  
PURPLE #'s = Holiday Tree Collection  
RED #'s = Brush Collection Only  
YELLOW with RED #'s = Recycling & Brush Collection  
BLUE #'s = Yardwaste & Brush Collection  
YELLOW with BLUE #'s = Recycling & Yardwaste & Brush Collection  
Note: Refuse collection is weekly, recycling every other week.

**EXAMPLE**

1	2	3	4	5	6	Refuse & Holiday Trees	
7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Refuse Only
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	Refuse & Recycling
21	22	23	H	*25	*26	*27	Refuse & Brush Only (w/ Wed. Holiday)
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	Refuse, Recycling & Brush
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Refuse, Yardwaste & Brush

**Holidays that affect pickup schedule (marked w/ "H")**  
Jan 1, May 25, July 4, September 7, November 20, December 25  
\*During Holiday weeks, collection is delayed 1 day after the Holiday

Place carts along driveway opening (not in street) by 6:30am on your collection day.  
Place Yardwaste, Brush, and Holiday Trees at the curb by 6:30am Monday of collection weeks.  
Reusable containers & bags or compostable bags are encouraged for yardwaste set at curb.  
Visit [www.fitchburgwi.gov/solidwaste](http://www.fitchburgwi.gov/solidwaste) for larger printout.  
Last Revised Nov. 20, 2014

## Calendar

**Saturday, December 13**

- 10:30 a.m., Chinese/English Storytime, library, 729-1760
- 1 p.m., LEGOs at the Library (ages 5-11), library, 729-1760
- 1 p.m., Should I stay or should I go?, senior center, 270-4290

**Sunday, December 14**

- 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Madison Comic Book Convention, Badger Bowl, 506 E. Badger Road, epguides.com/comics

**Monday, December 15**

- 11 a.m. to noon, Handmade Holiday: Toddler Edition (ages 0-5), library, 729-1760
- 7-9 p.m., Resume and Interview Coaching, library, 729-1760

**Tuesday, December 16**

- 4 p.m., Teen Cram Session, library, 729-1760
- 5:30 p.m., READ to a dog (sign-up), library, 729-1760

**Wednesday, December 17**

- 10:30 a.m., (Tech) FACTV's Favorite Apps, senior center
- 10:30-11 a.m., Kids Dance Party (ages 1-5), library, 729-1760
- 12:30 p.m., Holiday Songs, Fitchburg singers, senior center
- 11 a.m., Microsoft Word Intermediate, library, 729-1760
- 7 p.m., Mother Daughter Book Club (grades 3-5), library, 729-1760

**Thursday, December 18**

- 5:30-7:30 p.m., Verona road project open house, City of Fitchburg Firehouse #2, 5415 King James Way
- 6-7 p.m., Science at the Library (ages 5-9), library, 729-1760

**Friday, December 19**

- 2 p.m., Rhyming with Spanish (ages 2-5), library, 729-1760

**Saturday, December 20**

- 3 p.m., Kids Movie, library, 729-1760

**Wednesday, December 24**

- Library, senior center and city hall closed

**Thursday, December 25**

- Library, senior center and city hall closed

**Monday, December 29**

- 6 p.m., Gummy Necklaces (for teens), library, 729-1760

**Tuesday, December 30**

- 2 p.m., Birds, Beaks, and Bingo (ages 5-11), library, 729-1760

**Wednesday, December 31**

- Senior center and city hall closed at noon
- Library closed at 5 p.m.

**Thursday, January 1**

- Library closed

**Friday, January 2**

- 11 a.m., Teen Movie, library, 729-1760

**Monday, January 5**

- 9:30 a.m., Preschool Storytime (ages 2-5), library, 729-1760
- 11 a.m., Preschool Storytime (ages 2-5), library, 729-1760
- 7 p.m., Library Ebooks, library, 729-1760

**Tuesday, January 6**

- 7:45-9 a.m., Business Before 9: Getting the most out of your membership, Candlewood Suites, 5421 Caddis Bend
- 11 a.m., Lapsit Storytime (ages 0-2), library, 729-1760
- 6:30 p.m., Guys Read Returns! (ages 7-11), library, 729-1760

**Wednesday, January 7**

- 10:30 a.m., Kids Dance Party (ages 1-5), library, 729-1760
- 11 a.m., iPad Basics, library, 729-1760

**Thursday, January 8**

- 11 a.m., Storytime (ages 2-5), library, 729-1760
- 12 p.m., Crafternoon Book & Craft Group, library, 729-1760
- 6:30 p.m., Green Thursdays: Bidder 70, library, 729-1760

**Friday, January 9**

- 4 p.m., Little Makers: Duct Tape (ages 6-12), library, 729-1760

**Tuesday, January 13**

- 1 p.m., Should I stay or should I go? (senior housing decisions), RSVP, senior center, 270-4290

**Tuesday, January 20**

- 2 p.m., History of Metcalfe's Market, senior center

## Coming Up

**The Giving Tree**

Many seniors are alone and without family or friends during the holidays. The purpose of the giving tree is to provide a gift for those seniors who might not otherwise receive gifts this holiday season.

In the front lobby of the senior center is a tree with gift ideas listed on ornaments. Pick an ornament off of the tree, give the number on the ornament and your name to the receptionist, purchase a gift for \$30 or less, wrap the gift, place the ornament on the gift and return it by Dec. 17.

**Hometown Pharmacy**

Hometown Pharmacy is trying to give back to the community. Return Hometown Pharmacy prescription bottle caps to a bin at the library, 5530 Lacy Road, or the pharmacy, 3000 Cahill Main, Suite 114, and for each bottle cap returned, Hometown Pharmacy will donate 10 cents to the Friends of the Fitchburg Library. As another way to help the local community, Hometown Pharmacy will donate \$1 to the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County for every flu shot it gives this year.

Funds from the bottle cap project will help fund the Friends of the Library's end-of-year annual giving to charity. (They plan on starting a 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten program as well as a story time program that would allow librarians and Friends of the Library members to read books at daycare centers.)

So far this year, 224 caps have been turned in, and Thad Schumacher, Hometown Pharmacy's owner, said he will continue the prescription bottle cap project for as long as the Friends of the Library wants to continue the program and will continue the flu shot project through to the end of the year and potentially longer.

**Comic book convention**

The Madison Comic Book Convention will be held from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 14, at the Badger Bowl, 506 E Badger Road. Admission to the public is free.

Comics from golden age to present day along with related collectibles will be available from dealers from five states. Plus, if you have old comic books sitting around you no longer want, dealers will be there to buy them.

For more information, call Alan at 309 657-1599 or visit epguides.com/comics.

**Handmade holiday for toddlers**

It's the season of giving. The library invites you and your toddlers to join from 11 a.m. to noon, Monday, Dec. 15, to make holiday crafts you can give as gifts. This program is great for families with children five years and younger. Call 729-1762 with any questions.

**Tech FACTV's Favorite Apps**

Come to the senior center at 10:30 a.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17, to learn about Apple Products. Learn how to use the App Store for Apple Products, how to download apps and about the top apps currently trending in the world.

You must register for this free class. Call 270-4290 for more information.

**Kids Dance Party**

Go shake your sillies out and dance with friends at the library from 10:30-11 a.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17.

Parents or caregivers are invited to come with their children to have some fun. This event is recommended for children ages 1-5 with their parents or caregivers.

**Christmas carols**

Celebrate the holidays with lunch and Christmas carols at the senior center. Listen to the Fitchburg Singers at the senior center at 12:30 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 17. A lunch will be served at noon. Reservations for the lunch must be made by 1 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 16.

**Science at the library**

Listen to stories about growing goo and a school-eating science project from 6-7 p.m., Thursday, Dec. 18, at the library.

Then, roll up your sleeves and make your own science projects using everyday materials. Children are asked to bring smocks, aprons or "messy" clothes. This event is for children ages 5-9.

**Rhyming with Spanish**

Enjoy a storytime from 2-2:30 p.m., Friday, Dec. 19, that will combine English and Spanish to help young readers and listeners have fun with rhyming. Then have fun with a coloring activity. This event is recommended for children ages 2-5.

**Movie Night**

Come to the library's storytime room from 3-4:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 20, to enjoy watching "Planes: Fire and Rescue." There will be free

popcorn. The movie is rated PG and is 84 minutes long. The event is sponsored by the Friends of Fitchburg Library.

**Birds, Beaks and Bingo**

Do you love birds? Madison Audubon Society will visit the library from 2-3 p.m., Tuesday, Dec. 30, with a hands-on exploration activity. Learn about bird beaks and a game of bird call bingo.

**Gummy necklaces**

Never before did your sweet tooth make you look so good. Come to the library to make personalized necklaces out of gummy candies from 6-7 p.m., Monday, Dec. 29. For grades 6-12.

**Library Ebooks**

Learn how to check out eBooks from the library using Wisconsin's Digital Library. At 7 p.m., Monday, Jan. 5, participants will learn how to search, check out items and download to their device (Kindle, iPad, Nook, etc.) with Overdrive.

Please register at the reference desk for this class or call 729-1763.

**Crafternoon group**

The library is starting a new group! Join at noon, Thursday, Jan. 8, and bring a favorite knitting, sewing or crochet project.

The group will enjoy good stories and conversation and plan this group's direction. Call 729-1763 or email kayce.henderson@fitchburgwi.gov with any questions.

**Green Thursdays film**

The library will offer a free screening of Bidder 70, a documentary about a young activist's fight for the wilderness, at 6:30 p.m., Thursday, Jan. 8. Popcorn and prizes will be available. Call 729-1763 with any questions.

**Tai Chi Chih with Stan Corwin**

At the senior center, learn the 19 easy-to-learn movements and one pose involved in Tai Chi Chih. It will help you reduce stress and promote serenity, flexibility and balance while increasing energy and mental focus to heal the body, mind and spirit.

Register for the seven-week program by calling 270-4290. The class begins at 11 a.m., Tuesday, Jan. 20 and costs \$25. Payments must be made to the Fitchburg Senior Center and are due by Tuesday, Jan. 13.

## Local children to dance in Nutcracker

Dance Wisconsin, under the artistic direction of Jo Jean Retrum, will revive its classical Nutcracker ballet at the Wisconsin Union Theater, 800 Langdon St., Madison, with appearances by local children.

Dancers from the Fitchburg area include John Crim, son of Elton and Dawn Crim, dancing the role of the Mouse King; Eily Duffy, daughter of Tommi Thompson and Brian Duffy, dancing as a Bon Bon; Yasmin Garcia, daughter of Lesly and Lina Garcia, dancing the role of Angel; Nina and Mia Millet, daughters of Ross Jackson and Laila Millet; Zoe Triatik, daughter of Jim and Holly Triatik, dancing the roles of Angel and Arabian; and Evan Schumacher, son of Michelle Chui and Thad Schumacher, dancing lead role of Nephew, Prince. Evan is also a corps member of the Dance Wisconsin Company.

The Tchaikovsky score will be performed by the Dance Wisconsin orchestra and conducted by Blake Walters. The Monona Grove High School singers will accompany several

**If you go**

**What:** Dance Wisconsin presents "The Nutcracker" ballet

**When:** 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20; 2 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 21

**Where:** Shannon Hall at the Wisconsin Union Theater, 800 Langdon St., Madison

**Tickets:** \$20-\$32

**Info:** uniontheater.wisc.edu or call 265-ARTS

pieces.

Performances will be held in the newly renovated Shannon Hall at 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., Saturday, Dec. 20, and 2 p.m., Sunday, Dec. 21.

Ticket prices for adults range from \$20 to \$32. There is a \$2 discount for seniors, and children are half price.

For more information or to purchase tickets, visit uniontheater.wisc.edu or call 265-ARTS.



Photo submitted

The following Fitchburg residents will perform in Dance Wisconsin's Nutcracker on Dec. 20-21 at the Wisconsin Union Theater: Front row from left, Nina Millet, Kendall Schumacher and Eily Duffy; back row from left, Zoe Triatik, Evan Schumacher and John Crim;



Photo submitted

Fitchburg resident Onita Mclin received a Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway from Diversified Personnel Services in Madison.

## Fitchburg woman receives Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway

Fitchburg resident Onita Mclin received a Thanksgiving Dinner Giveaway from Diversified Personnel Services in Madison, staffing division of Opportunities, Inc.

Each DPS location, including Fort Atkinson, Watertown, Oconomowoc and Madison, "selects a deserving recipient who has shown great teamwork and dedication," a news release said.

The giveaway included a box full of Thanksgiving dinner items.

Mclin has worked with DPS since June, and was "beyond grateful to be selected," the release said.

"Her hard work ethic and great attitude make her a joy to be around and to work with," it said.

Opportunities, Inc., is a not-for-profit training and employment organization.



Photos by Karina Galván

## Launch party

The library held a Launch Into Fun event Thursday, Dec. 4, where kids made "rocket launchers" and catapults with household supplies.

Above, Arinava Prabhakaran, 2, launches a rubber ball into the air.

Left, Adelyn Page, 5, launches a paper rocket by blowing air into a straw.



## Berbee Derby

More than 4,800 people participated in the Berbee Derby 10K/5K runs, and nearly 1,000 others in the walk, on a chilly Thanksgiving morning in Fitchburg.

Right, Kayla Zander, of St. Louis Park, Minn., runs the 10K in a turkey costume.

Left, Michael Pajewski, of Madison, wears a turkey hat while warming up for the 10K.

Photos by Samantha Christian



Photo courtesy Linda Friend

## A happy Thanksgiving

The Boys & Girls Club community Thanksgiving meal featured a poetry slam, music and children's performances at the Allied Family Center on Nov. 25. More than 200 families were served a Thanksgiving meal at the Boys & Girls Club event.

## Fitchburg resident receives Fulbright award

Fitchburg native Amy Porter is one of seven University of Wisconsin-Madison doctorate students who received a grant through the Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad program.

Porter plans to use \$26,447 in funding during upcoming research in Senegal, where she is working on a project called, "Senegal, Poverty and Enterprise - Negotiating 'Good' Economic Practice in Dakar, Senegal."

Porter, who attended Verona Area public schools through eighth grade before attending Edgewood High School, said she applied for the award as a means to fund an extended period of dissertation research in Dakar, the capital of Senegal, in West Africa.

She lived in Dakar all last year, learning the local language of Wolof while completing initial research for her Ph.D. in Educational Policy Studies.

The Fulbright award will be used to extend this preliminary research on young adults' - particularly young women's - understanding

of good economic practices. In January, Porter plans to return to Dakar to follow up with research participants she met last year, and to work with selected organizations that support and encourage young adults' economic activities.



Amy Porter

She lived in Dakar all last

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**Music Sunday - Choir & Bells**  
Sunday, December 14, 10:00 a.m.

**Longest Night Service**  
Sunday, December 21, 7:00 p.m.

### Christmas Eve

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Photos by Scott Girard



Santa and Sophia Lymburner, 10, left, wait to hear from Christian Lymburner, 8, on what he wants for Christmas.

**See more photos**

View photos from the Fitchburg Holiday Party and other events online at:

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**'Tis the season**

Fitchburg held its annual Holiday Party Sunday, Dec. 7, featuring a Lego train show, plenty of climbing around and special guest Santa. The event also began the judging of the Sustainable Castle competition, with cardboard castles for kids to climb around on that others had designed and built. Donations of a dollar were used for votes, and the money will go to Fitchburg Fields, a nonprofit food-growing organization.

Above, Deja, 3, right, laughs as she comes to the end of the bouncy obstacle course for the second time in a five-minute span.

Below, Zach, 4, left, and John Pirnstill, of Fitchburg, take a look at the passing train after Zach finished controlling one of the other mini-trains on the set of tracks.



A pair of girls check out one of the sustainable castles.

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## Tito's Readathon at Leopold Elementary

Leopold Elementary School held Tito's Readathon on Tuesday, Dec. 2, featuring poetry and book readings with authors, playwriting, playacting, literacy games and book swaps.

At right, Tito the Timberwolf mascot draws a face on a squash while Yasmine Kinney, 5, of Madison, left, and Sophia Bovee, 7, of Fitchburg, look on after Fitchburg author Pat Zietlow-Miller, not pictured, read her book "Sophie's Squash."

Below, Christopher Gaus, 16, of Madison, left, and Cam Gorman, 17, of Madison, right, help Miles Dawkins, 7, of Madison, make a bookmark.

Photos by Katelyn Bracken (right) and Brianne Hageman (below)



## A FLUENT INFLUENCE

West High teacher wins foreign language award

**SCOTT GIRARD**  
Unified Newspaper Group

Deana Zorko grew up with her father's side of the family speaking Italian around her house daily.

"From an early age, I just kind of had the language bug," Zorko said of her time growing up on the south side of Chicago.

But when she and her family moved to Poynette, Spanish was the only foreign language offered, so she embraced it.

Years later, she is an award-winning teacher of the language at Madison West High School.

The Wisconsin Association for Language Teachers (WAFLT) named the Fitchburg resident the 2015 Teacher of the Year in November.

"I'm feeling humbled and very, very honored by all of it," she told the Star.

Zorko received the award at the WAFLT annual conference Nov. 7, and said standing in front of her colleagues to be honored was a special experience.

"All I could see were people I considered world language teacher icons and mentors," she recalled. "It just seemed surreal, like I shouldn't be the one up front."

A former colleague, Lauren Rosen, had no doubt Zorko deserved to be up front.

"There's some people that I believe were just born to teach," said Rosen, who taught with Zorko in Middleton nearly 20 years ago before getting her master's degree. "It's not just about teaching Spanish (for Zorko). It's really getting students to be more globally competent."

### Immersive classroom

Zorko herself mentioned a similar concept, saying she hopes to ensure every student she has can experience more than just the language.

"If kids can't travel, if kids can't be exposed to the language, I can bring all that into the classroom for however many minutes I have them for complete immersion," she said.

She highlighted lessons on social justice in Spanish-speaking countries or having her students read through Pablo Neruda odes and eventually write their own.

"You just kind of push students just a little beyond their comfort zone in vocabulary," Zorko said. "Moving way far away from that old school idea of fill in the blank, verb conjugation, grammar translation."

### 'A great challenge'

She first entered the teaching world while majoring in Spanish at the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire after spending a year teaching English in Spain.

"I just fell in love with it," she said. "It was a great challenge and good brain food for my mind in being creative."

Now in her 25th year of teaching, and first at West, Zorko has also had to overcome a pair of recent health battles to continue practicing her passion. In April 2013, she required a dual organ transplant following complications from diabetes, and she had back surgery earlier this year,

causing her to miss the past few weeks of school.

"I can't stay away that long," she said, adding she hoped to be back before winter break. "This is what I do and this is what I love to do."

She credited everyone who has helped her through those situations, including the organ donors, doctors and surgeons, for her ability to keep teaching.

### Looking ahead

The next step for Zorko is competing with 16 state Teacher of the Year winners for the regional award in March. The regional winner will move to nationals, where the winner will be announced next November.

Zorko said that she's looking forward to the process despite the overwhelming work it adds, requiring a portfolio of data, videos and recommendations.

In the meantime, she said she would continue to innovate in the classroom, whether it's lesson planning or technology.

"What I used to say a lot about my teaching is I'm very eclectic," she said. "I look at the new trends, new standards, and kind of mesh them with what I'm already doing and then keep going."



Zorko



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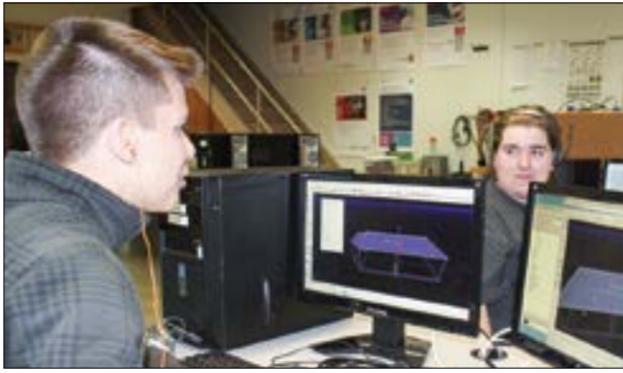


Photo by Scott De Laruelle

Oregon High School students Cameron Telfer and Tyler Hale talk about a project during the video game development class.

Read more Oregon School District stories at ConnectFitchburg.com, including the full story on the teacher compensation referendum and the following:

More than a game

Every year, a group of Oregon High School students is learning sophisticated skills to work in a rapidly growing, multi-billion dollar industry where high-paying jobs are the standard.

They make use of a wide variety of subject areas, including math, science, art and even history. Oh, and it's all based around video games.

Investigation clears coach

An independent investigation of Oregon High School basketball coach Jon Nedelcoff has concluded after school board members decided he did not violate district policy.

Nedelcoff had been accused earlier this fall of past bullying behavior by two parents of a former player, allegations that were repeated during the public comment period of an Oct. 12 school board meeting and brought up at the next meeting, Oct. 26, with around 150 of Nedelcoff's supporters in attendance.

Board members made their decision at a closed session meeting Dec. 4 after receiving an oral report from independent investigator Malina Piontek, a Madison-based attorney who specializes in public education, employment and labor law. She is now putting together an official written report for district officials, said school board president Dan Krause.

# District looks to avoid 'brain drain'

## Compensation referendum would revise pay scale to recruit, retain best educators

SCOTT DE LARUELLE  
Unified Newspaper Group

When Oregon School District residents went to the polls on Nov. 4, they approved by more than a 60-40 margin two referendums designed to improve the district's buildings and facilities.

Now, a committee of teachers, district officials and school board members is working on another referendum planned for April to improve teacher compensation and opportunities, with hopes to keep teachers in the district.

Under the current salary schedule, teachers receive pay increases only through years of service and by obtaining additional credits. Progression is relatively automatic, and it takes 25 years to reach the top of the pay scale.

The proposed model calls for teachers to have more choice over their progression, learning plan and time commitments outside regular job duties, something committee members hope will "attract, develop and retain" high quality teachers.

"Educators can move much faster through the

levels, which encourages professional growth and mastery, and boosts career earnings," committee members wrote in a report delivered to the board in November.

Oregon Education Association (OEA) and teacher compensation committee member Jon Fishwild said a new compensation plan is needed because the district has had no "defined compensation system" in place since the Act 10 "Budget Repair Bill" was passed by state legislators in 2011, which limits how a teacher can "get ahead."

"For the most part, the only way for a teacher to get ahead right now is to complete a district-approved master's program," he said. "Those who are not doing so or who already have done so for the most part only get a cost-of-living increase."

School board member Gwen Maitzen said teachers are "really behind" in terms of cost of living and health care, something the board hopes to address with the new compensation plan.

"Their increases were sucked up by health care increases, and in some cases teachers are losing money, and that's not right," she said. "Times are tough, but these are highly qualified professionals."

Maitzen and two others were elected in April after running on a platform that centered around improving relations with teachers, and

this proposed referendum is a tangible result. The new teacher compensation model would include six levels for teachers, from "beginning educator" to "leading educator," with a sliding scale for pay and responsibilities.

Beginning educators would start at \$40,000 per year, or \$44,000 for those with master's degrees. That compares to a starting salary for the 2013-14 school year of \$36,745. No educator would lose compensation as a result of initial placement on this system.

Once an educator moves out of the Beginning Educator level, he or she could move either up or down. Higher levels have additional ongoing requirements, such as extra days outside the normal contract.

For those with fewer than five years experience, the district would give credit for other years of relevant education experience outside the district.

Why a referendum?

To give any teacher a raise above cost-of-living under the current structure, Fishwild said the district has to "dive into other parts of the budget," as the state is not providing any further revenue assistance.

"Without a new teacher compensation system, teachers will not be able to earn a professional wage," he said. "We are competing with other districts and with jobs

outside of education – people just aren't going to see teaching in Wisconsin as a reliable means of sustaining a family if we don't alter how we fund our schools."

In the wake of the Act 10, however, this has become more costly for school districts. In June, as part of the 2013-14 contract negotiated between the district and the OEA, most educators received a 2.07 percent wage increase. The exceptions were a handful of teachers in technology education and agriculture departments who earlier in the year received a separate supplemental pay contract – for some as high as \$10,000 – as their positions were deemed to be high-demand.

District human resources director Jina Jonen said Act 10 has forced districts to adapt.

"Teachers are much more mobile than they ever have been," she said. "We want to keep our quality folks here, because we invest a lot of time and energy and support in finding the teachers who are the best fit for us and training them."

School board member Rae Vogeler said the planned April referendum should be viewed as the second of a two-part plan for investing in the schools – the first being the successful November referendums.

"We know that quality education is not just about the buildings, but those inside the buildings," she said.

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# NCS charter gets OK

## Core Knowledge presents limited changes

SCOTT GIRARD  
Unified Newspaper Group

The Verona Area School District's two oldest charter schools each took a step forward Dec. 1 in setting up their next five years.

For New Century School, that was gaining approval from the school board to spend the years until another charter renewal is required in 2019 transitioning to a science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) curriculum.

Meanwhile, Core Knowledge Charter School brought its charter renewal proposal to the board with few changes to what it's been doing in the 18 years since it opened.

Board members unanimously approved the NCS agreement, and did not signal much hesitation toward CKCS' proposal, which will be voted on Dec. 15. The NCS charter will allow the school to focus on STEM classes in addition to the environmental curriculum it brought in five years ago.

"That's going to set you up real well for the next five years," board president Dennis Beres said in praise of the new agreement.

Most of the changes in the CKCS agreement are related to new state tests and standards. The proposal would be good through the

2019-20 school year.

### Philosophical tack

The discussion turned a bit more philosophical after board member Renee Zook questioned why neither school requested exemptions from Department of Public Instruction requirements. Those exemptions are something a more recently created charter, the Exploration Academy, had in its charter agreement and was a major reason why it needed to be a charter.

"I'm just thinking when we have a school that's been in existence since 1996 ... why this can't be offered as a choice in our school district rather than something that has to be chartered every five years," Zook said.

Superintendent Dean Gorrell explained that EA needed exemptions from time in seats and attendance requirements for what it had proposed, unlike CKCS, NCS or the district's other charters, which instead stand apart because of their curriculum.

That struck Zook, and board member Joanne Gauthier, as something that could perhaps then be implemented in the district's attendance area schools. That's her entire philosophy behind charters, she said.

"If you have something that's proven that it works, then let's offer it as a choice," Zook said. "(Board members should) think about what our board philosophy is ... with charter schools with a proven track record."

### West End extension

The board also approved an extension to the deadline for West End property owner Vanta Properties to meet a set of contingencies on a purchase agreement that is expected to go to voters next spring.

Vanta Properties, which owns one of the parcels of land the district has agreed to purchase if voters approve it in an April referendum, needs to get signatures of "condominium" owners on the neighboring property as one of the contingencies on the purchase agreement.

The property was divided into many condominium parcels rather than platted as an alternate form of ownership and development, City of Verona planning director Adam Sayre explained to the Fitchburg Star. That protected the land from certain state easements but has complicated some of the paperwork for this transaction. Owners include UW Credit Union, a hotel developer, an apartment developer and multiple banks.

The original deadline was Dec. 1, but Vanta said it could not meet that and asked for an extension to Jan. 15. Given other deadlines for the school board around approving the referendum question, they compromised and settled on a Dec. 31 deadline.

Gorrell said he understood that Vanta has had conversations on the subject with all of the property owners, but has not received all of the necessary signatures.

The board unanimously approved the change.

### Teacher compensation

Gorrell reported the first meeting of the district's alternative compensation committee brought a few ideas for future changes to compensation structures.

The committee includes district administrators and representatives from the Verona Area Education Association, the union for most teachers in VASD.

Gorrell said a survey of district staff indicated a "great deal of interest" in looking at alternative compensation to the approach the district has used for years.

He said a model that would allow the district to "attract, motivate and retain quality employees" is the goal, and he emphasized nobody's salary would be reduced.

### MSAN

The Verona Area High School Minority Student Achievement Network (MSAN) will host the 2015 national MSAN conference.

The students attended the conference in October in Michigan, and next year will plan out the Oct. 7-9 conference for around 250 attendees from around the country.

The conference will be at the Concourse Hotel in Madison and include a tour of the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

*Fitchburg Star editor Jim Ferolie contributed to this story.*

## What's online?



Photo by Scott Girard

Stoner Prairie Elementary School is one of the schools in the district closer to a 1:1 ratio between students and devices. Above, from left, Jamie Puent, Brynn Stacey and Sotera Boado play with iPads during "SP Design Lab," which takes place every Tuesday and Thursday.

Read more Verona Area School District stories at [ConnectFitchburg.com](http://ConnectFitchburg.com), including the following:

### Equalizing the 'utility'

The Verona Area School District has had dozens of conversations about inequality in recent years.

But this time, it's not the usual test scores or access to high-level classes for low-income and minority students. Instead, it's the access to mobile devices at school.

### Future Schools Committee update

In 2010, the Sun Prairie Area School District opened a new high school for grades 10-12.

This year, the Middleton-Cross Plains School District added fifth-graders to its traditional grades 6-8 middle schools.

But whether either of those configurations or another alternative would work in the Verona Area School District remains to be seen.

That's one of the key questions for members of the district's Future Schools Committee, which held its second meeting last week – and its first since May. So they're hoping for help from those nearby districts that have recently undergone transitions VASD is considering.

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## VAHS girls swimming



Photo by Jeremy Jones

Verona Area High School junior Beata Nelson splashes to a new national high school and 15-16 National Age Group record in the 100-meter butterfly with a time of 51.7 seconds Saturday, Nov. 15, at the WIAA Division 1 state girls swimming championships inside the University of Wisconsin-Madison Natatorium. Nelson also added state titles in the 100 backstroke (her third) and a second 200 free relay crown.

# National record-Beata

## Verona junior wins three state titles, adds to records

JEREMY JONES  
Sports editor

Inside the University of Wisconsin-Madison Natatorium hangs a series of clocks counting down – among other things – the exact number of days and hours until the 2016 Summer Olympics in Rio de Janeiro.

Some 629 days from potentially swimming in Brazil, and with the Olympic time trials next summer, 16-year-old Verona Area/Mount Horeb junior Beata Nelson capped yet another stellar season at the WIAA Division 1 girls state swimming and diving championships.

Already the defending record holder in three individual events, Nelson went a step further Saturday, Nov. 15, breaking Katie McLaughlin of St. Margarita (Cali.) High School's national high school and 15-16 national age group record in 51.7 seconds.

"National record holder. It sounds awesome," said Nelson, whose time was two seconds faster than a week ago at sectionals. "I really had no expectations."

While breaking 52 seconds was a goal she set for myself at the end of last season, she didn't talk about it much.

"I didn't want to put too much pressure on myself, but I really wanted the record," she said. "When I saw my time flash I just wanted to cry. I'm speechless."

Having no idea what the record was last season, Nelson couldn't believe she came

within seven-hundredths-of-a-second.

"This year I was very aware of what the record was," she said. "I didn't have a very good finish, but 51.7. I can't say much more than that."

Shortly after her records-shattering swim, Nelson received a standing ovation from the capacity crowd of 1,500 spectators.

Having been watching Nelson swim since the age of 6, Wildcats head coach Bill Wuerger said, "I think I'm to the point now where nothing she does surprises me. However fast she swam in the past, she always finds a way to go faster."

The defending state champion in the 100 backstroke as well, Nelson broke her own state record by four-hundredths of a second with a 53.15. Sophomore Appleton North Britt Horn finished second 3.61 seconds

later in 56.76.

"Every time I swim an event, my jaw just drops when I look at the board," she said.

After just missing the 200 freestyle relay state record a year ago, sophomores Maizie Seidl and Kristi Larsen and senior Shelby Rozeboom joined Nelson to break the six-year state record of Madison East and shock Arrowhead with a time of 1:33.51.

It was more than a three-and-a-half second PR for the Wildcats. Arrowhead posted nearly a second best PR but still had to settle for second – well behind Verona in 1:34.91.

"It was absolutely amazing," said Rozeboom, the lone senior on the relay. "We set the goal to defend our title and I'm so

Turn to **VAHS swim**/Page 16

## MWHS boys hockey

# Regents ready to contend for title

EVAN HALPOP  
Unified Newspaper Group

Madison West High School boys hockey head coach Bret Farley said his team is ready to contend for the Big Eight Conference title with 13 returning letterwinners and a strong field of newcomers with junior league experience.

Farley, speaking before the season opener on Friday, Nov. 28, against Hayward at the Madison Ice Arena, pointed to the leadership of players such as senior goalie Henry Cutting as key to the team's early defensive success. Cutting is back on the ice after a junior season in which he saved 304 out of 324 shots on goal with a save percentage of .938 during the regular season.

Farley also said sophomore forwards Max Frey, who played five games for the Madison Capitols last year, Schuyler Hedican, who played 26 games for the junior Admirals as a freshman, Dean Fuhrmann and



Photo by Evan Halpop

Madison West senior forward Max Lentz (left) flips his first goal past Sun Prairie senior goalie Jake Thorton 1 minute, 17 seconds into the first period Tuesday, Dec. 2, in a Big Eight match at Madison Ice Arena. Regents sophomore forward Mick Messner tallied the assist.

Turn to **MW hockey**/Page 16

## OHS girls basketball

# Defense halts Edgewood

ANTHONY IOZZO  
Assistant sports editor

Pressure is an understatement when talking about the Oregon High School girls basketball team's performance Tuesday, Dec. 2, in a 46-35 win over Madison Edgewood.

The host Panthers (1-2 overall, 1-0 Badger South) bottled up the Crusaders for much of the night and collected 12 total steals while holding sophomore Estella Moschkau to just six points.

The defense also held Edgewood senior Emma Merigglioli to seven points in the first three quarters, though she ended up with 16 in the end.

"We don't have a star. We play team defense and that is something we stress," head coach Corey Sielaff said. "We talked about getting our hands up, using our feet, talking and communicating."

"Emma is a fantastic scorer, and Estella inside is really unstoppable if she gets position, so I was really happy with the way we played help-side post defense ... We forced them to take tough stops."

Senior forward Riley Rosemeyer was one of the catalysts on defense and also helped Oregon win the battle in the paint. She collected 13 points, 10 rebounds, five steals and two blocks.

Junior guard Leah Koopman added three steals for the defense.

"We got into a little bit of foul trouble, but our big thing is that we play everyone the same," Rosemeyer said. "We are going to play hard no matter if you are a 3-point shooter or a post player, and we did what we needed to do defensively."

Besides Rosemeyer,

Turn to **OHS girls**/Page 17

## Boys hockey

## Thrilling finish ices Norskies

JEREMY JONES  
Sports editor

Cole Hefty said it wasn't the best shot he's ever taken, but somehow the senior defenseman still managed to put the puck into the net for a 4-3 overtime victory Tuesday, Dec. 2, inside the Oregon Community Ice Arena.

Despite outshooting the visiting DeForest Norskies 48-8 in a Badger Conference crossover game, the Panthers needed a pair of third-period goals and a lucky break on Hefty's shot in overtime to prevail.

"The puck chipped up to me along the blue line and I just tried to get it on net. It was one of the worst shots I've ever taken," said Hefty who scored the game-winner 43 seconds into overtime. "The goalie wasn't paying attention, I guess, and it went in."

Senior forward Joey Andriacchi cut DeForest's two-goal lead in half on the power play early in the second period.

Despite outplaying the Norskies, which led to several opportunities in the period, Oregon struggled to capitalize and eventually saw the visitors go back up by two thanks to Logan Wright's short-handed goal.

The Panthers kept chipping away and eventually picked up a power-play goal from junior forward Dylan Ziomek before senior forward Collin Bundy knotted the score with 2 minutes left in regulation.

Sophomore Henry Roskos stopped five of eight shots on goal, while Brock Suchomel turned away 44 of 48.

"I thought from the second period on, we completely outplayed DeForest," Oregon head coach Rick Fleming said. "What was disappointing that we didn't come out with the energy I was hoping



Photo by Jeremy Jones

Senior forward Collin Bundy (10) celebrates his game-tying goal with 2 minutes remaining in regulation Tuesday against DeForest with teammates Joey Andriacchi (12) and Brandon Michek (16). Oregon twice overcame two-goal deficits to defeat the visiting Norskies 4-3 in overtime.

for in our first home game. That's a little concerning."

#### Madison Memorial 4, Oregon 0

Oregon managed just 10 shots en route to a 4-0 loss Tuesday, Nov. 25, inside Madison Ice Arena.

The area's top forward and University of Massachusetts recruit, Ty Pelton-Byce scored short-handed and even-strength goals and added an assist in the win. Jacob Padley added a goal and two assists, while Riley Karns also scored a goal.

Roskos turned away 41 of 45 shots on goal. Memorial sophomore Ryan Kenny stopped all 10 shots he faced to earn the shutout.

#### Appleton United 4, Oregon 0

Although has faced two of the top 10 ranked teams in the state in its first three games, losing both by an identical 4-0 final, Fleming said the similarities stop

there.

"I look at our team, and even though we lost to a good Appleton United team tonight, I thought we took a great step forward," Fleming said. "Our guys did everything I asked, getting pucks deep and getting end zone time. They executed our system to perfection."

Seventh-ranked Appleton United (5-0-0) didn't waste its opportunities as junior forward Trenton Bliss gave the visitors a one-goal lead early in the second period with a wrist slot in the high slot. He then extended the lead by flipping a short-handed goal over Roskos less than three minutes into the third period.

The dagger for the Panthers Bundy's boarding major at 12:37, which led to a pair of sophomore forward Matthew Gruber power-play goals.

"I thought we played a very disciplined game up to the penalty," Fleming said."

## Boys swimming

## Panthers break four school records in loss to DeForest

JEREMY JONES  
Sports editor

Oregon's top four swimmers combined to win five of 11 events and break four school records Tuesday, Dec. 2, in a 101-64 loss to DeForest.

Freshman Ian Charles led off the meet with along with Eli Rule, Jake Larsen and Jackson Marsden to post a school record meter time of 1:58.10 in the 200 medley relay.

Charles later added the backstroke title in 1:11.09, but it was the performance of Larsen that had everyone inside the Oregon Community Pool talking.

Minutes after guiding the Panthers' medley to victory, Larsen dove back into the pool to post yet another record, taking the 200 free in 2:04.21. He later added a second-place finish in the 100 fly before helping set yet another record as the lead leg of the first place 400 free relay in 27.20.

Charles, Marsden, Rule and Larsen were just off the school record pace in the 400 free.

Rule clocked the team's final benchmark, taking second in the 100 breaststroke (1:15.66).

Oregon's other win of the evening came in the 100 free

where Marsden posted a 1:00.38.

#### Sun Prairie Invitational

Oregon reached the medal podium in four events Saturday, Dec. 6, at the Sun Prairie Invitational.

The Panthers' top relay team of Charles, Rule, Larsen and Marsden led off the meet by finishing sixth overall on the 200-yard medley relay in 1:46.14.

Larsen went on to add a fourth-place finish in both events he has state aspirations in this season, posting a 1:51.52 in the 200 free and a 56.22 in the 100 fly.

Rule turned in Oregon's final trip to the medal stand, claiming fifth place in the 100 breaststroke with a time of 1:06.79.

The Panthers finished seventh overall out of a very talented nine-team field with 107 points.

Oregon saw lifetime-bests turned in by David Heim in the 100 free, Baptiste Como in the 50 free and by Jimmy Lutz and Tony Akale in the 50 and 100 free. Josh Greene (50 back, 200 free), David Heim (50 fly, 200 free), Ryan Wood (50 breast, 100 breast and 500 free), Marsden (50, 100 free), Charles (100 fly, 100 back) and Rule (50 breast, 100 free) all recorded season-best times.

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Football



File photos by Anthony Iozzo

Junior defensive lineman Trayvonn Johnson (67) and senior split end Christian Baltes (below) earned honorable mention All-State and first-team All-Big Eight Conference honors this season.

## Johnson, Baltes earn All-State honorable mentions

ANTHONY IOZZO  
Assistant sports editor

Senior split end Christian Baltes and junior defensive end Trayvonn Johnson both were named All-State honorable mentions by the Wisconsin High School Coaches Association this season.

Johnson finished with 82 total tackles (46 solo), including eight for a loss. He also added five sacks and three forced fumbles.

Baltes caught 34 passes for 778 yards and seven touchdowns. He averaged 22.9 yards per reception.

Both Baltes and Johnson also earned first-team All-Big Eight honors, joining senior offensive lineman Dillon Villacrez and junior linebacker Sam Favour.

Favour led all Wildcats with 101 total tackles (54 solo), including four for a loss. He added two forced fumbles, two fumble recoveries – one for a touchdown – an interception and half a sack.

Villacrez anchored an offensive line that helped Verona get 2,324 yards on 370 carries (6.3 yards per carry) and 25 touchdowns.



That line also protected senior quarterback Noah Roberts.

Roberts, a second-team all-conference selection, completed 92 of 193 passes for 1,490 yards with 15 touchdowns and eight interceptions.

Also making the second team were senior tight end Jake Toman, senior running back Eric Schmid, senior

Turn to **Football/Page 16**

Girls basketball

# Lost possessions sink Wildcats

ANTHONY IOZZO  
Assistant sports editor

There aren't many times that teams shooting over 60 percent from the field end up on the losing end, but turnovers doomed the Verona Area High School girls basketball team Friday, Dec. 4, in a 65-62 loss to Middleton.

The Wildcats had 29 lost possessions – 19 in the first half – and Middleton senior guard Elizabeth Norregaard made them pay with 8-for-11 shooting from 3-point range, a career high, and 32 total points – which tied a career high.

"She has such deep range. She really stretches you," Verona head coach Angie Murphy said. "When she is on, she is on. And she likes to pick to be on versus us, which always kind of stinks."

Four of Norregaard's 3-pointers came in the fourth quarter. She hit one to put Middleton up one to start the quarter, and then she hit back-to-back deep shots sandwiching a Verona turnover to put the Cardinals up 56-50.

The Wildcats battled back to take a 60-56 lead with under two minutes to play, but Norregaard once again swished a 3-pointer to cut Middleton's deficit to just one.

And she did it all with four fouls. "She was smart enough not to pick up that fifth foul," Middleton head coach Jeff Kind said. "She was unconscious tonight, and in games like this, it takes somebody to do that."

After a Grace Mueller basket, senior guard Katie Fermanich and junior



Photo by Anthony Iozzo

Junior Heather Rudnicki drives past three defenders, including Middleton junior guard Grace Douglas (12), looking for junior Kira Opsal in the post Thursday, Dec. 5, against Middleton. The Wildcats fell 65-62.

forward Grace Douglas each scored baskets with a Verona turnover in between to make it 63-62, Middleton.

Sophomore guard Bria Lemirande hit two of four free throws to seal the Wildcat's fate.

But despite the loss, there was much for Murphy to be excited about. Junior Cheyenne Trilling, who missed all of last season with an ACL injury, had her best showing so far with 12 points,

and the post play of Verona was dominant for much of the game.

"For Cheyenne's third varsity game after being off a year, she is really happy with the way she played," Murphy said. "She is a good floor leader out there, and she took control."

Cheyenne Trilling's play – which included a couple of 3-pointers and a

Turn to **VAHS girls/Page 16**

Boys basketball

## Shots don't fall in losses

ANTHONY IOZZO  
Assistant sports editor

Verona Area High School boys basketball head coach Alan Buss said the guys need to assert more toughness if they are to bounce back from a 70-61 loss to Middleton Friday, Dec. 5.

The host Wildcats battled back from a double-digit deficit to get to within one in the third quarter, but the shots weren't falling all night.

"We get down, and we make a run and get a surge of energy. But that energy has to be there for four quarters," Buss said. "It can't just be there for a two-to-three minute stretch. ... Every game we have played, we have been down double-digits. We made them all

games, but you can't play basketball that way."

Kellerman scored nine of his 15 points in the third quarter, while Schmitz and Toman combined for 11.

Schmitz, who hit the only first-half 3-pointer for Verona, brought the Wildcats within one, 39-38, with his second triple of the night.

Schmitz quietly had a big fourth quarter with 11 of his 20 points.

**West 55, Verona 51**

Verona traveled to Madison West on Dec. 2 and fell 55-51.

The Wildcats were led by Kellerman with 21 points, while sophomore guard Nathaniel Buss scored 14.

Schmitz added eight points.

Boys hockey

## Wildcat hockey rebuilding

JEREMY JONES  
Sports editor

After a three-year state tournament run that culminated with the first WIAA state title in program history last season, it's difficult to imagine the Wildcats in the midst of a rebuilding year. That has been the case this season as Verona has struggled to find consistent defensive play and goal scorers.

The defending state champions, which hadn't lost a conference game the past two seasons, lost Big Eight games to Madison Memorial and Middleton. Verona hadn't dropped back-to-back games under head coach Joel Marshall's since falling to Middleton and Beloit each by one goal early in the 2010-11 season. The

2009-10 season marked the last time the Wildcats lost three straight games.

"Guys are just a little inexperienced in their roles this year, and being down a few guys right out of the gate, we're just struggling to find our identity," Marshall said.

**Memorial 5, Verona 0**

The Wildcats found themselves down three goals through one period, giving up a pair of scores 36 seconds apart en route to a 5-0 loss Thursday, Dec. 4, against Madison Memorial.

Verona junior goaltender Alex Jones made 12 of 15 shots on goal in the first period before being replaced by Nathan Cleghorn (20 of 22).

**Middleton 3, Verona 2**

The Wildcats' schedule continued to cut through the best of the best in the Big Eight on Dec. 13 when Verona traveled to Capitol Ice Arena to face Middleton.

Despite jumping out to a one-goal lead in the first period thanks to Grant Smith's first goal of the season, the Wildcats were unable to hold on as Middleton rattled off three-unanswered goals over the next period and a half.

Captain Brodie Roehrig notched his fourth goal of the season to cut the Cardinals lead in half with just over two-and-a-half minutes remaining, but it was as close as Verona would get.

Jordan Hylbert, Nolan Kouba and Colin Butler tallied goals for Middleton, which saw goaltender Max McConnell stop 31 of 33 shots on goal.

Cleghorn turned away 22 of 25 in the loss.

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**Girls swimming**



Photo by **Jeremy Jones**

Madison West 400-yard freestyle relay anchor Mary First smiles with Arrowhead's Megan Doty following their race at the WIAA Division 1 state swimming meet on Saturday, Nov. 15. The Regents finished fourth in 3 minutes, 30.97 seconds. West finished eighth overall as a team.

**Regents finish eighth at state**

**JEREMY JONES**  
Sports editor

The Madison West girls swimming team reached the 45th annual WIAA Division 1 medal stand in two events Saturday, Nov. 15.

West's 200 free relay of senior Katie Feller, sophomore Katie Cardwell and juniors Sydney Higgins and Mary First finished a team-best fourth overall in a season-best 1 minute, 35.96 seconds.

The Regents closed out the meet matching the 200 relays finish with a season-best time of 3:30.97.

Sophomore Emily Mirus, Higgins, Feller and First swam on the 400 free relay.

Arrowhead won the event in 3:23.67.

Verona Area/Mount Horeb set a state record time of 1:33.51 en route to defending its state title.

West's 200 medley

relay of sophomores Mad-dy Sullivan, Mirus and seniors Paige Talerico and Feller opened the meet taking 11th place.

First added a 10th-place finish in the 50 free, while First added a 14th-place finish in the 100 free

Mirus placed 15th in the 100 butterfly.

Junior Tess Lutz chipped in with a 15th-place finish in the 500 free.

The Regents finished eighth overall, fourth among the Big Eight teams, with 88 points.

Verona/Mount Horeb (180) Madison Memorial (127) and Middleton (109) finished fourth through sixth, respectively.

Arrowhead ran away with the meet, scoring 337 points for its 11th state title.

Cedarburg, meanwhile, held off Waukesha South/Mukwonago to finish as runner up for the second straight year thanks to the final relay, taking silver 224-222.

Waukesha South/Mukwonago had won the last three state titles.

**Basketball**

**Regents win first Big 8 match**

The Madison West High School girls basketball team played its best game of the season Saturday, Dec. 6, at Madison La Follette.

The Regents defeated the Lancers 70-63 in double overtime.

West (1-4 overall, 1-2 Big Eight) outscored La Follette 10-3 in the second overtime.

Senior Shaquita Lee led the Regents with 21 points, while freshman Kate Carlson and senior Kyana Johnson added 15 and 12, respectively.

**Verona 58, West 20**

West opened the Big

Eight season with a 58-20 loss against Verona.

Johnson led West with eight points, but the Regents' defense couldn't contain Verona's post players.

Verona juniors Grace Mueller and Kira Opsal scored 21 and 10 points, respectively.

West was held under 10 points in every quarter.

**East 48, West 45**

The Regents fell 48-45 to Madison East Thursday, Dec. 4.

Carlson scored 15 points, while Lee added 12.



Photo by **Anthony Iozzo**

West sophomore Kate Hettenbach drives to the paint Tuesday, Nov. 25, in a Big Eight Conference matchup at Madison West High School.

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**Boys basketball**

**West takes down Verona in conference opener**

The Madison West High School boys basketball team hosted Verona Tuesday, Dec. 2, and picked up a 55-51 win to open the conference season.

Sophomore Terrell Carey and junior Parrish Crayton each scored nine points for West. Twelve different players scored a basket for the Regents.

Verona was led by Will Kellerman with 21 points.

**West 75, East 67**

West hosted Madison East Friday, Dec. 5, and won 75-67.

The Regents jumped out to a 16-3 lead after the first quarter and never trailed.

Junior Greg Wright led West with 16 points, while Carey added 12. Junior Sam Meyer and Crayton also reached double digits with 11 points each.

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**VAHS girls: Verona falls to****Craig, now 1-2 in Big 8***Continued from page 14*

few drives to the paint – was enough to give the Wildcats' bigs a little bit of space in the paint.

Juniors Grace Mueller and Kira Opsal took full advantage with 15 and 12 points, respectively, with many of those points coming from offensive putbacks.

"Their post play was very, very hard to stop. And so it was their post play against our perimeter play, and we were fortunate tonight," Kind said.

Murphy said that the Wildcats have a "tremendous upside," especially since Verona hung with Middleton with only three players back with significant minuets from last season.

"I am really excited to see how much better we are going to get as the year goes

on because they are playing really well," Murphy said. "To play with Middleton with them having so many returners, I am excited for this season."

**Craig 69, Verona 62**

The Wildcats didn't have time to dwell on the loss to the Cardinals as Janesville Craig came to town Saturday, Dec. 6, but they ran into another tough matchup, falling 69-62.

Craig senior guard Alison Hughes went off for 26 points, and slow starts to the first and second halves hurt Verona in the loss.

Sophomore Alex Luehring led the Wildcats with 14 points, while Opsal and Mueller finished with 13 and 12, respectively.

Verona (2-2 overall, 1-2 Big Eight) travels to Janesville Parker (1-3, 1-2) at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Dec. 12.

**Football: Cats get several all-conference selections***Continued from page 14*

defensive lineman Dakin Coons – who was listed as an inside linebacker on the Verona roster – senior outside linebacker Corey Miller and senior defensive back David Rogowski.

Toman caught 18 passes for 225 yards and four touchdowns, while Schmid rushed for 1,065 yards on 184 carries and 10 touchdowns. Schmid also caught 14 passes for 78 passes and a touchdown.

Coons had 93 total tackles (51 solo), including 13 for a loss. He added five sacks. Miller also had 93 total tackles (46 solo), including 11 for a loss. He added a forced fumble, a fumble recovery and five sacks.

Rogowski collected 84 total tackles, including three for a loss. He added a forced fumble and two interceptions.

Seniors Sam Strohl

(offensive line), Derrick Gosha (defensive line), Jackson Bryant (running back), Cameron Tindall (running back) and Grant Smith (defensive back) rounded out the all-conference list as honorable mentions.

Gosha had 51 total tackles (22 solo), including four for a loss, and added four fumble recoveries and 1 1/2 sacks. Smith picked up 81 total tackles (41 solo), including three for a loss, and had a fumble recovery and an interception.

Tindall was second on the team with 534 yards on 70 carries and five touchdowns. He also had five catches for 138 yards and two touchdowns. Bryant rushed for 247 yards on 32 carries with a touchdown. He added five catches for 81 yards.

Verona finished 6-3 in the Big Eight after dropping the first three games but fell to Madison La Follette in the Level 1 playoffs.

**MW hockey: Regents start season 5-0***Continued from page 12*

Easton Smith add depth to a team that only lost four seniors, two juniors, and two sophomores.

"We have some of the best goal scorers in the area. But everybody is going to have to play harder," Farley said.

Farley credited Regents' assistant coach Steve Libert with bringing the younger team members up to speed quickly, especially on defense. Libert is new to the team this year and joins assistant coaches Rich Smith and Jacob Esch.

Farley said sophomore forward Cole Fuhrmann will also have a big impact this season.

Other Regent newcomers include freshmen defenders Kieran Garvey and Easton Smith, Rich Smith's son.

Farley expects a competitive season given the depth of the Big Eight Conference, including rival Madison Memorial.

"It's going to be a battle," Farley said.

**Regents 4, Hayward 0**

West opened the season Nov. 28 and shut out Hayward, 4-0, at Madison Ice Arena.

"The team really came together in the second period building off the momentum of back-to-back goals," Cutting said.

Goals were scored by Hediccan, Max Lentz, Cole Paskus and Mick Messner, with assists by Lentz, Messner, Cole Fuhrmann, James Pretto and Kalen Balas. The Regents had just six minutes of penalties to Hayward's nine minutes of penalty time.

"Everyone was just trying to figure it out and did," junior forward Casey Olson said. "We have a lot of seniors this year. Hopefully we can get them to state."

**Regents 3, Rice Lake 1**

The Regents played Rice Lake on Saturday, Nov. 29, at Madison Ice Arena and won 3-1.

Messner and Balas each scored in the first period, with assists by Lentz and Pretto. Lentz added the third goal in the third with an assist by Paskus.

**Regents 5, Sun Prairie 1**

West traveled to Sun Prairie Ice Arena on Tuesday, Dec. 2, and knocked off the Cardinals 5-1.

Highlights of the match included a quick goal by Lentz, with an assist by Messner, just over a minute into



Photo by Evan Halpop

The returning letterwinner for the Madison West High School boys hockey team (not in a particular order) are: Cole Fuhrmann (2), Max Lentz (5), Ollie Fisher (6), Casey Olson (7), Jake Garvey (9), Mick Messner (10), Nathan Ehrlich (11), James Pretto (13), Edwin Jiang (14), Cole Paskus (16), Kalen Balas (18), Devon Phaneuf (20) and Henry Cutting (30).

the first. The Regents scored again late in the period off a Hediccan goal with assists from Lentz and Olson.

The Regents increased their lead to 3-1 with a third goal coming from Messner with assists by Hediccan and Lentz. West held off Sun Prairie from scoring on the 15 minutes of power play time on six penalties throughout the game.

Cutting said that he felt the team took a big step in the right direction and was moving the puck well. He also added that with all the new teammates on defense they were really clicking, especially Fuhrmann.

"I felt that the team did well killing off penalties and capitalized on a few of them," Paskus said. "With the first Big Eight game out of the way, we feel we can keep rolling, while knowing not to underestimate the other teams."

**Regents 5, Janesville 2**

The Regents traveled to Janesville on Dec. 6 for a match against Janesville at Janesville Ice Arena and won 5-2.

The Regents scored four goals in the first period. Paskus and Messner scored one each while Pretto added two.

Lentz scored the Regents' fifth goal late in the third period.

Lentz, Paskus, Pretto, Jiang, Fisher and Messner all had assists.

**Regents 4, Verona 2**

West hosted Verona Tuesday, Dec. 9, at Madison Ice Arena and knocked off the defending WIAA Division 1 state champions 4-2.

Paskus scored twice, while Pretto and Messner added goals in the third period. Balas added two assists, while Devin Phaneuf, Paskus, Hediccan and Lentz all added one.

The Regents travel to Beloit Memorial at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13, at Edwards Ice Arena and return home to play rival Madison Memorial at 8 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 18, at Madison Ice Arena. They also travel to non-conference Waunakee at 7 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 20, at Waunakee-DeForest Ice Arena in Waunakee.

**Culvers Cup**

The Regents will be contending in the sixth annual Culvers Cup from Dec. 27-29. Both Madison Ice Arena and Hartmeyer Ice Arena host the tournament.

The Regents are scheduled to play Lakeland for the first round at 2:45 p.m. Dec. 27 at Madison Ice Arena. The Regents last won the cup in 2011.

There are now three divisions: eight teams in the boys varsity, eight teams in the girls varsity and eight teams in the boys junior varsity.

**VAHS swim: Verona finishes in fourth place at state meet with 180 points***Continued from page 12*

proud.

"I'm really going to miss that relay. It's one of my greatest high school memories."

Nelson settled for silver in a school record 1:44.63 as a member of the 200 medley relay with a lead leg 24.62 50 backstroke split. She, Larsen, senior Sammy Seymour and Rozeboom

finished 1.33 seconds behind Arrowhead.

Rozeboom anchored the relay to the wall with a lifetime best 23.15 split for the 50 free – nearly seven-hundred of a second ahead of her individual fifth-place finish in the 50 free (23.82).

"Today was more than I could ever ask for," Rozeboom said. "It was the most amazing state meet I could have hoped for."

The Wildcats matched last year's fourth-place finish with 180 points – 53 ahead of Madison Memorial. Middleton (sixth), Madison West (eighth) and Sun Prairie (10th) helped the Big Eight Conference place five teams in the top 10.

Arrowhead didn't leave any doubt rolling runner-up Cedarburg by more than 110 points to wins its 10th team title, 337-224. The Warhawks picked up wins from junior Kelly Jacob in the 50 and 100 free, along with a

sixth-consecutive win in the 200 medley relay, as well as a win in the 400 free relay.

Waukesha South/Mukwonago (222) finished two points behind Cedarburg. Both teams were tied entering the 400 free where the Bulldogs finished second, while the Blackshirts took third.

Despite the first undefeated Big Eight Conference season in school history, his first season back as head coach of the program, Wuerger said, "At the start

of the season I thought we were going to be fourth in the conference. We can't control how the Milwaukee area schools do, but to get fourth in the state, I think we were all very happy.

"Sophomore Maizie Seidl finished one spot shy of the 100 free medal podium in seventh with a lifetime best 52.3. Seidl (1:54.32) and freshman Sophie Henshue (1:56.63) turned in a 10th and 16th-place finish in the 200 free, respectively.

Seidl had personal best times by a half-second each in both events.

Henshue later stopped the 500 free clock with a two second season-best 5:10.43 – good for 12th place.

Freshman Maggie Nunn rose to as high as 11th for VA/MH before finishing 12th overall during Saturday morning's diving competition with 412.65 points. The top three divers: Neenah senior Hazel Hertting (576.45), Racine Case

senior Cassidy Bose (531.4) and Franklin senior Katrina Voge (519.55) all posted state record scores to round out the top three.

"I was super nervous with my toughest dives to start the meet," Nunn said. "I settled down eventually, and I think I did pretty well. I was glad I made it all the way through to finals."

Larsen moved up from a non-scoring 17th seed to add valuable points with her 10th-place finish in the 100 breaststroke with a personal-best 1:06.98.

Seidl, Henshue, Rozeboom and Larsen capped the meet by taking 10th place on the 400 free in a season-best 3:36.68.

Junior Julia Ver Voort added a 16th-place finish in the 200 IM with her time of 2:12.02. Seymour posted a 19th-place finish just off her 100 fly PR in 59.27.

"What's not to be happy with?," Wuerger said. "All the girls swam great."

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Boys basketball

# Slow start dooms Panthers in loss to Monona Grove in Badger South season opener

**ANTHONY IOZZO**  
Assistant sports editor

The Oregon High School boys basketball team played with Monona Grove for most of the Badger South Conference matchup Friday, Dec. 5, but a slow start in the first quarter was enough for the Silver Eagles, as the Panthers fell 52-45.

Monona Grove jumped out to a 14-5 lead in the first, but Oregon scored with the Silver Eagles for the rest of the game, including a

22-22 tie in the fourth quarter.

Senior Markus Tobias led three scorers in double digits with 18 points, while senior Mitch Morhoff collected 11. Junior Charlie Soule added 10 points.

Seniors Jackson Riley and Zach Stinson led Monona Grove with 14 and 13 points, respectively.

Oregon continued the season with a non-conference game against Randolph Thursday at Oregon High School.

The Panthers travel to Badger South rival Milton at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 13, and hosts non-conference Whitewater at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16.

**Conference preview**

Stoughton is once again the pre-season favorite to win the Badger South.

For Oregon to compete, head coach Jon Nedelcoff said it will come down to the mix of inside and outside pieces and the possibility to change tempos to keep

other teams out of sync.

Stoughton brings back top scorers Nick McGlynn (309), who signed to play at Division I Drake University, Troy Slaby (211) and Bradley Graffin (78).

The Vikings graduated Paul Rosowski (209), Will Clark (143), Luke Logan (75) and River Hoaglin (79).

**Oregon 60, Platteville 37**

The Panthers scored at will early on in a 60-37 win Nov. 28 against Platteville at the

University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

The Panthers jumped out to a 37-18 lead at halftime and never lost the lead.

Senior forward Markus Tobias led all Oregon scorers with 16 points, while junior forward Alex Duff picked up 15. Junior forward Charlie Soule added 10, and senior guard Mitch Morhoff collected nine.

Senior forward Blake Wagner led Platteville with 16 points.

## OHS girls: Panthers fall to Stoughton in Hwy. 138 rivalry

Continued from page 12

sophomore forward Danica Keisling, freshman forward Ellen McCorkle and freshman guard Taylor Schmidt also had big games on the inside.

Keisling scored seven points, while McCorkle collected seven points and six rebounds. Schmidt added six points with three drives from the wing to the basket.

"It is huge when you lose a player like Maddy Gits and replace her with players like McCorkle and Kiesling, we still have an advantage inside with most teams," Sielaff said. "With the leadership and strength of Riley and to be able to go to a scorer like Ellen, why not slam it inside?"

While Sielaff said a win always feels good, she added that the win over Edgewood was even bigger for the younger players. For them, this was the first taste of winning at the varsity level.

"It is good for these young kids to see that we are a good team and to see that we can win," Sielaff said.

**Stoughton 52, Oregon 41**

The Panthers hosted Stoughton Tuesday, Dec. 9, and were held to five points

in the third quarter in a 52-41 loss.

"We are trying to figure out who wants to score, and I think that is really our problem right now," Sielaff said. "Everyone is looking for another person to score. Everyone on this team can score, and they all know it and do it in practice. So we just need to step up and be confident."

"And if it is your night to score, then look to attack and score."

It also didn't help that the Panthers shot 14-for-29 from the free-point line and only hit 30 percent of their field goals.

Tack on 19 turnovers, and it was just too much to overcome with a team like Stoughton, Sielaff said.

"We need to get tougher, all-around physically tougher and a lot mentally tougher," she said. "We can't let small things affect us and take us out of the game ... We can't let a missed free throw or a turnover or a missed layup mess us up for the rest of the game."

But Oregon did match the physical play of the Viking, forcing several turnovers and rushed shots with the full-court press.

That press nearly propelled the Panthers back



Photo by Anthony Iozzo

Junior Leah Koopman (3) fights for a loose ball with Edgewood sophomore Kendall Tribus in the first quarter Tuesday, Dec. 2. The Panthers had 12 total steals, including three from Koopman.

in the game with several turnovers in the fourth that helped them cut the deficit down to eight. But it was the offense that didn't capitalize in the end.

"Our press was great. We were getting steals. We were frustrating them on defense," Sielaff said. "I think offensively, we were just getting too frustrated."

Rosemeyer led Oregon with 16 points, 13 rebounds and six steals. Koopman added eight points.

Cassidy Nikolai sat out the game with a sprained ankle and will return for either the Milton or Fort Atkinson games coming up.



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Kathleen C. Aiken

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**Q. I'm getting ready to apply for a mortgage. My credit card company has augmented the spending limit on a card. Will this be good or bad for my score?**

**A.** Unless you use more of your credit, a higher limit will be to your benefit. Your credit utilization ratio, which is the percentage of available credit you're actually using, plays a role in determining your score. Credit bureaus look more favorably on a lower percentage, as you don't seem to be using all the credit available to you. I hope your increased credit line improves your score.



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Kathy Bartels  
Realtor

## REAL ESTATE

**Q. When should I start shopping for the holidays?**

**A.** Start now! Thank you for allowing me to be your Realtor. I am truly grateful to be celebrating over 20 years of specializing in the Verona Area School District. It has been a joy to assist so many people in doing something I love to do.

*Happy Holidays to all, and special wishes to those whose loved ones are overseas and/or can't be home with them this holiday season.*



**Kathy Bartels**  
**(608) 235-2927**  
kbartels@cbsuccess.com

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Mark Boebel,  
CPA/ABV & CVA

## CPA/TAX ACCOUNTANT

**Q. What is so important about year end tax planning?**

**A.** It is a time to evaluate tax strategies available before year end and plan for the projected tax liabilities due April 15, 2015.

Based on facts and circumstances, a tax expert may be able to identify steps to be taken before December 31 to accelerate deductions and tax savings. At a minimum it is important to plan for the taxes due once the returns are finalized because no one likes surprises on April 15. Therefore, it is important to contact your tax expert as soon as possible while there is still time.



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Stephen Rudolph  
FACHE, CSA

## SENIOR CARE

**Q. Why Are Elders Always So Cold?**

**A.** Chances are their bodies are merely going through a natural dip in metabolic rate due to the aging process. A lowered metabolic rate affects the body's ability to maintain what is considered a normal temperature of 98.6°. When metabolism slows, so does the body's ability to generate heat. This means elders can become cold outdoors in the sun during summer or indoors in a well-heated room during winter. It is important to seek medical advice in order to identify underlying causes. Hypothyroidism and cardiovascular disease are chronic medical conditions that affect body temperature. It is important to note that, regardless of the reason, the body's inability to stay warm can lead to hypothermia if the body temperature reaches 95° or below. Elders in frail health are more susceptible to hypothermia, even when the room temperature is 71 to 75°. Whether being cold is the result of slowed metabolism or a medical condition, older adults must stay warm to maintain an appropriate body temperature. Nearly half of the elderly who develop hypothermia die from its effects. Therefore, a cozy blanket, sweaters, caps, scarfs and gloves are a must during cold months. Large meals during cold weather also help heat up the body as the digestive process generates heat within. A warm beverage such as hot chocolate helps too. Avoiding alcoholic beverages is also recommended as they cause the body to lose heat.



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Kathryn Newhouse

## RESIDENTIAL HELP IS AT HAND

**Q. What is it about your work in the concierge business that you enjoy the most?**

**A.** Helping people, that's what I enjoy the most. Let's face it, we all get behind at home. It bothers you, and you may be arguing about it with your life partner. It puts stress in the home and you may struggle with how to resolve the problem. The truth is, there are only so many hours in the day. Instead, call Concierge Madison. What I enjoy the most is relieving stress in my customer's lives. I've been helping people manage their homes for 16 years and have even been accused of saving people's marriages! Some things we have no control over; some things we do have control over. Relieving stress in the family begins with a call to Concierge Madison.



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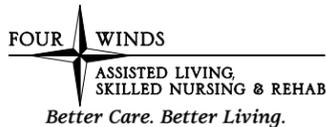
Dr. Peter C. Jackson, PSYD  
Consultant for Four Winds

## LONG TERM CARE

**Q. My mother is in a nursing home, and I would like to bring her home to my house for the holidays, but given her needs that won't be possible. What can I do to make her holiday time special?**

**A.** Holiday time can be difficult for older people separated from their loved ones by illness and physical frailty, and these are the very people who tended to us in our early years to support us into adulthood. This is the time to give back to our loved ones. We can do this by cultivating that sense of gratitude, an appreciation for the value they have had for us throughout our lives. Take some time out of the holiday season to reflect on this and jot down three things that you appreciate about a family member or members. By writing down these simple statements of gratitude, you will be inspired to respond in a way that will be meaningful and special to our families during this holiday season. For help with tough issues

like this, or for more information, contact **Dr. Peter C. Jackson** at **(608) 276-9191, x209** or visit **ftcm.org**.



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Kristin Kelleman  
Investment Advisor

## FINANCIAL

**Q. Did you know?**

**A.** Starting January 1, 2015, the IRS announced that an individual can only do one rollover from one IRA to another in a 365-day period. Upon first reading, that may seem limiting to many individual investors, particularly those with IRAs and Roth IRAs in their portfolios. However, the key is to understand the definition of "rollover." A rollover in this context is when an investor requests that the investment company that holds their account to send them a check—**made out to the client**. This is the action that can only occur once a calendar year. However, if the company writes the check out to your new IRA account "for the benefit of" you, then that is considered a trustee-to-trustee transfer of an IRA and there are no limitations on the number of transactions in a year.

Advice: talk with a professional to make sure you are following all the IRS rules when you are considering moving an IRA or Roth IRA. My team would be glad to help.

Source: IRS.gov.

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Gail C. Groy  
Attorney at Law

## ATTORNEY

**Q. How do you resolve a small claims dispute by mediation?**

**A.** Disputes can arise from many situations in our lives, including with neighbors, in the school yard, at home with your family, with your landlord, in the shopping mall, or in your business. These disputes can become fierce and nasty and can escalate to the point of one party looking to the courts to resolve the dispute against the other. Mediation is a process when two or more parties agree to a neutral impartial third party, the mediator, to help them to talk to one another to reach a resolution of their dispute. In the right situation Mediation can be an effective way to resolve these disputes rather than continuing the dispute through the court system.



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Jill Unwin,  
D.C., C.C.E.P.

## CHIROPRACTOR

**Q. I've been getting headaches at least once a week and my medical doctor has ruled out any underlying condition. Is there anything a chiropractor can do that will have a lasting effect?**

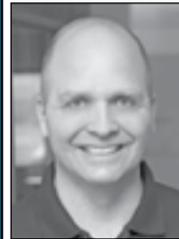
**A.** 95% of headaches are primary headaches, meaning they are tension or migraine headaches and are not caused by disease but originate from muscle tension in the head and neck. Chiropractic adjustments restore normal spinal function which helps to alleviate tension and increase circulation to these areas. Chiropractors will also guide you in correcting common causes of headaches such as stress reduction, ergonomics, and diet. As far as long-term effects, a report released in 2001 by researchers at Duke University Evidence-Based Practice

Center in Durham, NC, found that spinal adjustments resulted in almost immediate improvement for those headaches that originate in the neck, and had significantly fewer side effects and longer lasting relief of tension-type headache than a commonly prescribed medication.



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Dr. David Gundersen

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## Battle: Ray, now an artist, used Boy Scout training to battle cold during World War II

Continued from page 1

sub-zero temperatures, without much sleep, food or water – a faceless replacement exposed to the many dangers of war, including deadly traps sprung by savvy German soldiers.

### Off to battle

Though he was determined to train hard, do his best and make it home alive, Ray certainly wasn't thrilled to be drafted.

"Then we got caught in a cold draft in Belgium," he quipped.

He didn't leave without some words of advice from his father, who lived through the first World War. He also got from him a two-edged dagger to use in an emergency.

"I learned to throw it – you take the blade and you flip it," he said. "If you got too close to the Germans, you could use that as an alternative."

He started with 17 weeks of basic training in Camp Blanding, Fla., which he said he was "lucky" to get.

But the weather there – "too damn hot" – didn't prepare the soldiers for the bone-chilling cold they would soon experience in combat, he said.

Ray left for Europe with the 28th Division from Fort Meade, Md., traversing the Atlantic Ocean with about 5,000 soldiers on a converted cruise ship. Heavy storms rocked the boat much of the four-day journey to Scotland; something most men were not prepared for.

"There were five bunks (high) in each hold, and this one guy got seasick from the top bunk, and it was just like a waterfall," he said. "That did it for all of us. About half a week later, we were out getting some fresh air, leaning over the rail, and my sergeant called down, 'Hey, Ray, what's wrong, you got a weak stomach?' I said, 'No, I'm throwing up just as far as that guy is.'"

After landing, the troops quickly boarded a train to the south of England, where they were transported across the English Channel to the Allied beachhead at Le Harve, France. From there, they got on another train, headed for Belgium, to face the bloody German breakthrough.

Ray reached the front lines around Dec. 27, as American reinforcements were being rushed to the scene, taking the place of men killed during the first two weeks of the battle.

"We went to a replacement depot and went on to those units, and from then on, we were in the hot fighting," he said.

Ray was "volunteered" by his commander as a point man, sent out ahead of the main group to locate the enemy. It was a difficult job, and he was anything but pleased to have just a short-range carbine as a weapon, instead of a rifle.

"You had to be close if you had to kill them," Ray said.

The soldiers who had been in the fighting for weeks wanted little to do with the replacements, Ray said, as they didn't want to get to know men who they thought would surely be dead in a

matter of days. Sadly, one of Ray's best friends from basic training who went over with him – a Princeton, Wis., native – was killed the second day there.

The men were quickly thrust into battle – against both the Germans and the elements. Neither offered much comfort.

"We were scared, and of course, after the first big battle, you had to change your underwear, because you are damned scared," Ray chuckled. "But you get used to it, and you know it's either that guy or you."

### Out in the open

While he never got close enough to use his father's throwing knife, the one thing that probably saved his life and the lives of two others was remembering some Boy Scout training. The men were caught outside in 35-below-zero weather and needed some kind of cover to avoid freezing to death; a fate suffered by many soldiers.

"You couldn't get warm in any of the buildings, because if you built a fire, they'd shoot mortars and artillery and everything else at you," Ray said.

His two companions – likely raised in the city – had no idea what to do outside in such conditions, and asked Ray for advice.

"I said, 'Take your knife and cut some pine boughs off those trees and clear some snow so we could sit back to back to back,'" he said. "We each had a blanket, so we put one on the ground under us and put the two others over all of us, and kept all the body heat in that little capsule. We would have frozen to death."

As they moved forward through the Hurtgen Forest, the unit was trying to capture or kill fanatical members of the "Hitler Youth" who were menacing the area.

"Our medics had a red cross on their helmets, and if they saw these, they would sneak up and run right at them and shoot them in the back of the head, so if we were injured or shot, we would die of exposure before we could get any help," Ray



Photo by Scott De Laruelle

Fitchburg resident Raymond Ray looks at his display of Army medals from World War II. He fought in the Battle of the Bulge in Belgium 70 years ago this month.

### Hitler's final gamble

After a promising start to World War II, the once-powerful German war machine was under siege by the end of 1944, with the armies of the Soviet Union, United States, Great Britain and Canada closing in from three sides. Ignoring his generals' advice to fight defensive battles, German leader Adolf Hitler instead ordered a desperate, all-out assault designed to divide and destroy Allied forces gathering in the west. It would strike, he thought, where and when they least expected it – in mid-December, through Belgium's heavily forested, lightly defended Ardennes Forest.

On the morning of Dec. 16, the Germans unleashed a massive artillery barrage, preceding an attack of more than 200,000 troops and 1,000 tanks that created a "bulge" in the American lines that gave the battle its historical name. After several weeks of bloody fighting in temperatures that plunged far below zero, the lines were restored, but at a tremendous cost. The U.S. suffered an estimated 75,000 casualties; Germany around 80,000, according to the U.S. Army. While initially successful in pushing the Allies back, the gamble proved a failure, as irreplaceable German losses ultimately sealed its fate. Germany surrendered on May 7, 1945.

said. "They were like robots; you can't imagine."

There were plenty of dirty tricks being played on the Americans, and soldiers had to be vigilant at all times.

"The Germans had changed a lot of the road signs – they had taken captured Americans and put their uniforms on," he said. "They would also tie real strong wire across two trees

in the road, and a lot of guys lost their heads, literally."

Even Americans who surrendered were not safe. Ray's men were stationed near the Belgian village of Malmedy, the scene of one of the most infamous atrocities in the war. On Dec. 17, around 100 men from the 85th Field Artillery Observation Battalion – a lightly armed group captured earlier

in the day – were herded into a field and machine-gunned by German SS troops. Only a few survived to tell the story.

When Ray was back in a hospital in England, he read about it, not realizing how close he had been to that scene.

"You never knew," he said of facing the dreaded SS troops. "You never wanted to get that close."

While Ray did his best not to run into any Germans, he did meet up with American general Omar Bradley, who was commanding the ground forces.

"He was on the front lines," Ray said. "We saw the four stars and we saw Bradley – he was walking around, and we said, 'You better get out of here because there are (Hitler) Youth all around.' He said, 'I'm not worried.' A wonderful guy."

### Coming home

After serving in the front lines for several weeks in the freezing forests of Belgium, Ray and his unit were sent back to England for rest.

"We were pulled back because we were almost frozen to death; we were no good to them – used goods," he said. "We were so stiff; we were like boards. We were in the final stages of hypothermia, and that's what destroyed the legs, nerves and skin. Now I'm 100 percent disabled, I can't hardly walk without a walker from

the damage done by the freezing."

Re-crossing the channel, Ray slept all the way from Belgium after going several days without sleep, and with little food or water.

"It was exhausting," he said. "Thank God we were 18 years old."

They recovered in England until April, when they returned to the United States, happy to be coming home, but changed forever.

"We came past the Statue of Liberty, and I don't think there was a dry eye on any of us," he said. "We went through a New York hospital, and there was a lawyer there who told us to put in a claim, and thank God we did, because it helped all the way down to now. We were put in the service to serve our country, but we also were damaged badly."

For many of the men, it wasn't easy to come back to civilian life after seeing and doing what they did, Ray said.

"Two guys that were in the Navy and I drank for about a year, and finally figured, 'It doesn't help you, doesn't make any sense,' so we just went on with whatever jobs we were going to do for our life," he said.

Ray still wanted to be an artist, though, and through the G.I. Bill went to art schools in Madison, beginning a career in design and art that continues to this day. In 1947, working for an advertising agency, he designed the logo for Stoughton Trailers that's still in use. A talented painter, he's had his works displayed all over the area, including the Madison Central Library, UW Memorial Union, Wisconsin Veterans Museum and a recent month-long display at the Fitchburg Library.

His apartment is filled with incredible portraits, nature scenes and other works of art. These days, he's working on a portrait of his great-grandfather who served in the Iron Brigade. He said he'll keep busy as long as his mind and body allow.

"You do it when you can, if you're in the mood," he said.

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## Urban Forest public survey input sought

The Parks and Forestry Department is updating the Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan, and is looking for input from the community.

Residents can participate in an upcoming survey that will be posted next month.

The Urban Forest Strategic Management Plan is a document that will guide longterm management of our urban forest and shape future tree policies.

Community input will help to develop a cohesive plan that is geared toward optimizing the benefits that a well-managed urban forest can provide to residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The survey will be available to all city residents beginning in mid-January. It will be accessible online through the city's website at [fitchburgwi.gov](http://fitchburgwi.gov) and paper copies will be available at City Hall and the Fitchburg Community Center.

## Quarry Vista apartments advance

Landfill on property could force some adjustments

MARK IGNATOWSKI  
Unified Newspaper Group

Plans for 152 multi-family housing units on the corner of Lacy and Fitchrona roads moved forward after a brief review Nov. 18.

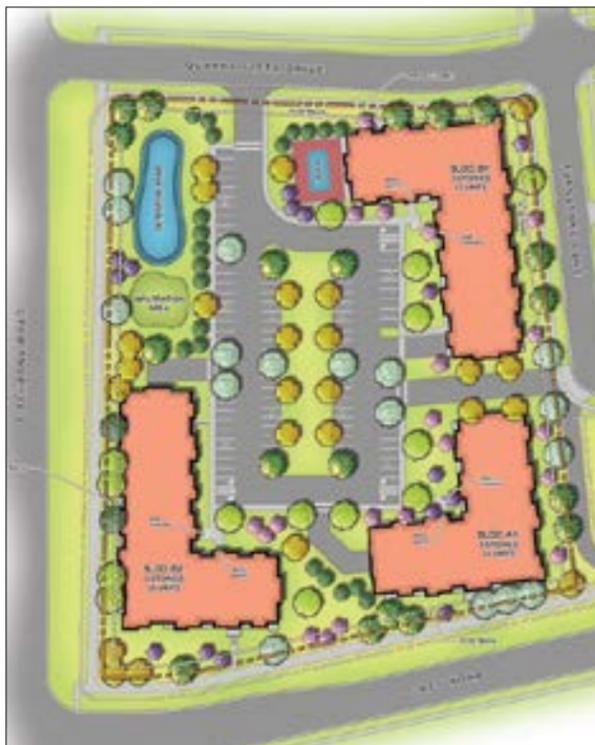
City of Fitchburg Plan Commission members unanimously approved the general implementation plans for Quarry Vista, a trio of three-story buildings proposed by Fiduciary Real Estate Development, Inc.

The general design approval is contingent on staff review of the project, including some possible changes to the zoning and plat map for the area, city planning director Tom Hovel told the commission. A landfill was found on the property, Hovel said, and that might change how some parts of the property are mapped and zoned.

The company hopes to begin construction this spring, Fiduciary development director Craig Raddatz told the commission, and winter will give the company and staff time to review any issues with the land use plans.

"We're patient in getting this going," Raddatz said.

The city will have to install a water main



Map courtesy Fiduciary Real Estate Development, Inc.

A set of three multi-family buildings along Lacy and Fitchrona roads would have access to Fitchrona Road via the new Quarry Vista Road.

connection this spring, as well. That project was bid this fall but no companies submitted bids, Hovel said. The project will be rebid this winter and completed when weather allows this spring.

Documents submitted to the city show the development would be phased in starting this coming summer, with expected completion by spring 2016. Market conditions would determine the schedule.

The project calls for three three-story buildings with a mix of studio and one- and two-bedroom units. Some units would have dens. The average size will be about 875 square feet, and rent is projected to average \$1,150 per month.

The plan submitted last

month shows buildings containing 55-, 52- and 44-unit buildings with access provided via Quarry Vista Drive, a new road that would intersect with Fitchrona Road north of Lacy Road.

Fiduciary has been working with staff since the concept was first proposed last spring. Site plans have been reworked during the past few months to make the area more walkable, Raddatz said, but the general layout of the neighborhood remains relatively unchanged from previous designs presented to the commission.

"Not a lot has changed since we last saw you," Raddatz said to the commission.

## City of Fitchburg

## New neighborhood proposed near McGaw Park

MARK IGNATOWSKI  
Unified Newspaper Group

City officials have begun reviewing a comprehensive development plan for a new residential neighborhood between McGaw Park and the Fitchburg Technology Campus.

The city's Plan Commission will get a look at the neighborhood proposed by Fahey Lands, LLC and developer Tony Heinrichs at its Dec. 16 meeting.

A mixture of single family homes and multi-family buildings would be spread across about 200 new residential lots covering about 80 acres, according to documents submitted to the city.

Plans were submitted in late November and call for 135 single-family units on about 35 acres and 333-multi-family units on about 11 acres. A 2.4-acre section of land could be used for a future school. McGaw Park would be expanded by about 14 acres, as well. The area would be developed over a 10-year period, and development would occur in phases determined by market demand.

### If you go

**What:** City of Fitchburg Plan Commission  
**When:** 7 p.m. Tuesday, Dec. 16  
**Where:** Fitchburg City Hall, 5520 Lacy Road, Fitchburg  
**Info:** [fitchburgwi.com](http://fitchburgwi.com)

### Online update

Read about the city's Plan Commission discussion in the next Fitchburg Star or online at:

[ConnectFitchburg.com](http://ConnectFitchburg.com)

The development plan review is one of the first steps in getting approval for the new neighborhood. The Plan Commission can recommend approval of the comprehensive development plan to the Common Council at its meeting next week. Any major changes made to the plan would have to go through the Common Council, as well.

The land will have to be rezoned and platted before any development could occur.

## Holiday tree curbside collection starts Jan. 5

Holiday tree collection will begin the week of Jan. 5 for single-to-four unit residential homes, as well as apartments and condominium properties subscribed to "brush collection" by the City of Fitchburg.

A second holiday tree collection will take place the week of Jan. 20.

Trees should be at the curb by 6:30 a.m. on Monday morning of the collection week.

Collections may be delayed until plowing is complete in the case of snow/ice conditions.

Place trees so that the trunks face the street and remove all foreign matter from each tree.

Flocked trees and trees with nails, etc. are not collected.

Wreaths, although often made from tree branches, are considered refuse if they contain metal or other foreign supporting devices and should be disposed of accordingly. Set wreaths and garland in your refuse cart or in a bag next to your refuse cart with a Refuse Tag attached.

### Holiday lights

For holiday lights that no longer work, remember to recycle old light strings at Fitchburg City Hall prior to Jan. 30. A special cart is now available 24 hours/day in the City Hall lobby, 5520 Lacy Road. Fitchburg residents can drop off non-working holiday light

### Keep carts clear of snowbanks

Winter time means new challenges for everyone as we deal with the snow and cold. However, it's important to follow these two Fitchburg Refuse and Recycling Cart Placement guidelines all year round:

- Place carts about 1 to 3 feet behind the back of the curb (or edge of the street) and at least 4 feet away from surrounding objects – NOT in the curb or street are a safety hazard for traffic, create obstacles for snow plows and street sweepers and can be damaged if hit.
- Avoid placing carts curbside the night before collection if high winds or storms are expected.

strings and extension cords for recycling.

Residents must remove any bulbs larger than marble-size and recycle those separately at participating stores listed in Fitchburg's Recycling Guide.

For more information on holiday recycling and what types of packing and wrapping materials are recyclable, visit Fitchburg's website: [fitchburgwi.gov/solidwaste](http://fitchburgwi.gov/solidwaste).

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**TO REQUEST AN APPLICATION:**  
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Pre-employment drug screening and background check required.

Mail or Email resume' to:  
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[hr@carnes.com](mailto:hr@carnes.com)

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## Aim for zero waste this season

Extra packaging and materials from holiday celebrations and gift exchanges can leave your refuse and recycling carts overflowing.

Americans typically generate 25 percent more waste during the holidays. Much of your holiday packaging can be recycled curbside in your recycling cart or dropped off at the Fitchburg Recycling Drop Off Site at 2373 S. Fish Hatchery Rd.

Here's how to recycling some common holiday items:

- Wrapping paper can be recycled in your blue recycling cart as long as it's paper-based. Foil-type or plastic-based wrapping paper is not recyclable and should either be reused or discarded in your green refuse carts.

- Wrapping paper tubes, along with paper towel and toilet tissue cores, can be recycled in your blue recycling cart.

- Tissue paper is not recyclable.

- Greeting cards and envelopes that are non-foil and paper-based can be recycled in your blue cart

- Cardboard and paper-board gift boxes can be reused or recycled in your blue recycling cart or taken to the Fitchburg Recycling Drop Off Site and placed in the cardboard recycling dumpsters.

- Ribbon is not recyclable and should either be reused or discarded.

- White block polystyrene, also known as Styrofoam, can be taken to the white polystyrene recycling dumpster at the Fitchburg Recycling Drop Off Site.

- Polystyrene packing peanuts can be taken to Surplus-IT at 901 Watson Avenue, Suite 55, in Madison.

- Batteries that are rechargeable can be dropped off at Fitchburg City Hall.

### Waste reduction

Fitchburg staff is looking further into understanding and implementing "Zero Waste" initiatives to start 2015.

#### RECYCLING GUIDE

One initiative is to do a thorough review and update to Fitchburg's Recycling Guide, and consider renaming it, since it's really much more than just a "Recycling" guide; it also includes recommendations on "Reducing," "Reusing" and "Rethinking."

If you have suggestions for refinements to the content or name of this guide, please email [rick.eilertson@fitchburgwi.gov](mailto:rick.eilertson@fitchburgwi.gov).

#### FITCHBURG'S "GREEN E-NEWS"

Another initiative the city is working on is increasing free subscriptions to electronic updates on "Green"/sustainability-related events and opportunities in and around Fitchburg.

If you'd like to subscribe to future Fitchburg Green E-News updates, sign up at Fitchburg's "Notify Me" web page: [fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx](http://fitchburgwi.gov/list.aspx)

#### NEW COLLECTION BINS

Staff will be adding a "Plastic Bulky Items" recycling dumpster at the Recycling Drop Off Site as well as adding a "Non-rechargeable Battery" recycling container at Fitchburg's City Hall lobby.

## 2015 state trail passes available at Fitchburg Community Center

If you are looking for the perfect gift for your favorite outdoor enthusiast, give the gift of access to the great State Trail system within and adjacent to Fitchburg.

With special thanks to the Friends of Capital Springs Recreation Area, 2015 State Trail Passes are now available for purchase at Fitchburg's Community Center, 5510 Lacy Road, from 7:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

The payment of \$20 per pass can be received in either cash or check.

A state trail pass is

required for all people age 16 or older who are biking, in-line skating or cross-country skiing on state trails.

State trails in Fitchburg requiring passes include: the Capitol City State Trail, the Badger State Trail and the Military Ridge State Trail. No passes are required for the Cannonball Path, Military Ridge Path or Quarry Ridge Mountain Bike Trail and Free Ride Area.

## CARPC votes against Northeast Neighborhood

SCOTT GIRARD  
Unified Newspaper Group

A regional planning body voted against a City of Fitchburg neighborhood proposal, leaving the final decision up to the state's Department of Natural Resources.

Commissioners on the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission (CARPC), which advises the state on expansions to sewer service, voted 6-5 against the Northeast Neighborhood at the commission's meeting last Thursday.

Two commissioners voting against the proposal cited concerns over how development could affect the nearby Waubesa Wetlands and the possibility of engineered protections failing, said deputy director Kamran Mesbah. That issue previously came up throughout the city's own approval process late last year and earlier in 2014. The other four commissioners voting against did not provide their reasoning at the meeting, Mesbah said.

A CARPC staff report, which analyzed the potential effects of

development, had recommended approval as long as the city pursued a list of additional stormwater management and erosion control protections, but the majority of speakers at the October public hearing on the development spoke in opposition, according to meeting minutes.

The proposed plan would include an additional 498 acres of development in addition to the existing development already in the neighborhood, city planner Tom Hovel said.

The neighborhood, bounded by Nine Springs Creek to the north and the Lacy Road corridor to the south next to Hwy. 14, would cover nearly 986 acres total when including environmental corridors and existing residential development.

The 13 commissioners must get an eight-vote supermajority to recommend approval to the state. Because there were only five votes for approval, the two absent commissioners could not bring it to that number, meaning CARPC will not vote again on the proposal.

The state's Department of Natural

Resources will now have the final say on whether the city can expand its urban service area, which is where a municipality can provide sewer service necessary for most urban development.

CARPC had essentially been the final word on those determinations until a 2010 decision on a lawsuit from the Village of Mazomanie clarified it is only advisory to the DNR. Since then, CARPC's denial of the Mazomanie plan and one other were forwarded to the DNR, which approved them.

CARPC's decisions have sometimes been highly political, unlike those of its predecessor, the Dane County Regional Planning Commission.

Fitchburg Mayor Shawn Pfaff said he expects the DNR to ultimately approve the neighborhood plan.

"If DNR looks at the science that Fitchburg has done, it should be accepted," Pfaff said.

For information on CARPC and to see meeting minutes, visit [capitalarearpc.org](http://capitalarearpc.org).

## Show off your kids in Unified Newspaper Group's 5th Annual

# CUTEST KIDS CONTEST

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Photos are categorized by age group and winners are selected randomly from each age category.

**To enter, send the form below and a current photo or visit one of our websites to fill out the form online and upload your photo by Friday, January 2, 2015.**

Please print clearly. One entry per child. One form per child. Mail to:

#### Cutest Kids Contest

133 Enterprise Dr., PO Box 930427, Verona, WI 53593

Or go online to enter on any of our web sites:

[connectoregonwi.com](http://connectoregonwi.com), [connectstoughton.com](http://connectstoughton.com), [connectverona.com](http://connectverona.com), [connectfitchburg.com](http://connectfitchburg.com)

Child's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Age (please indicate months or years) \_\_\_\_\_ Please check one:  Male  Female

Parents' Names \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (for contact purposes only) \_\_\_\_\_ City \_\_\_\_\_

Photo taken by (if a professional photo) \_\_\_\_\_

Please check age category:  0-11 months  12-23 months  2-3 years  4-5 years  6-7 years

Pictures should be full color and wallet size or larger. For optimal printing quality, please be sure the head in the photo is no smaller than the size of a nickel.

If submitting your photo(s) electronically, please be sure the photo resolution is at least 150 DPI.

Photos must be received by Friday, January 2, 2015 to be included. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope if you would like your photo returned.

Have a business story to share?

Submit your business story ideas, news, briefs and photos on our website, ConnectFitchburg.com, or email UNGbusiness@wcinet.com.



Photo submitted

Members of the area Box of Balloons group are, front row, from left: Nicole Moll and Rebecca Verhulst; back row, from left: Kaitlyn Hansen, Amy Harris, Amy Ritzke, Emily Kaellner, Michelle Krogstad, April Britto and Jen McClure.

## You say it's your birthday 'Box of Balloons' helps celebrate big days

SCOTT DE LARUELLE  
Unified Newspaper Group

There are few things as important to children as celebrating their birthday.

But in a tight economy, many parents aren't able to provide as much of a birthday party as their son or daughter might want. And that's where Fitchburg's Hailey Berg and her "Box of Balloons" comes in.

Berg first found out about the nationwide program from her sister, who worked with a Box of Balloons group in Poynette. She loved the idea of helping out kids in need by providing needed supplies for their birthday parties but found she ended up doing more traveling than she wanted.

"I had to bring \$5 dollars of supplies all the way

### On the web

For information on the program, visit [boxofballoons.org](http://boxofballoons.org).

"The more volunteers we have, the more birthdays we can celebrate in the area," Berg said. "They're such fun things to be a part of."

to Poynette," she said. "I wanted to be involved, but I didn't really want to be driving all that way for small supplies."

When she asked how else she could help, it was suggested that she open a chapter of the organization for the west side of Madison, so she did exactly that.

The non-profit group, now in its third month, relies heavily on volunteers to provide supplies needed for birthday parties – everything from decorations and party favors to plastic spoons, forks and napkins. Each box costs \$50 to put together, and the group tries its best to fill each requested order, and personalize each box as best as possible.

Box of Balloons works with social workers or teachers at schools to help identify families who might need a little extra help to make their children's birthdays a bit more special.

"They'll say, 'Hey, he or she has a birthday coming up,' and they give us some information on the child – 'Johnny's turning six, and his favorite color is blue. Or he has an allergy to coconuts,'" Berg said. "They give us a run-down of what the kids like, and we customize it."

Her "West Madison" chapter has close to 10 volunteers, and Berg is hoping to get many more. Supplies can be brought to members' houses to be put together in boxes, which are sent to schools, homes or homeless shelters as needed. So far, the group has helped 10 children

### How it works

#### PARTNER

The group partners with school social workers, teachers and other community advocates. They find families who have children but not the means to celebrate their birthdays. A simple form is filled out giving us the child's birth date, age, gender and likes.

#### PLAN

Once the birthday box request is received, an email sign up goes out to our entire volunteer group. Volunteers click the link and decide which party supply they are going to fill the box with. Each box is filled with decorations, tableware, balloons, a party game, party favors, cupcakes and a gift for the birthday child.

#### CELEBRATE

Birthday Boxes are delivered to the school or community organization that submitted the request on the Friday closest to the child's birthday.

Source: [boxofballoons.org](http://boxofballoons.org)

celebrate birthdays.

"It's really growing, and we're looking for more volunteers in the area," she said.

People can get involved by either donating items or money, or helping put together boxes. Berg said volunteers can sign up as often as they want for a variety of duties.

"There's no time commitment," she said. "Whenever they like the theme of a kid's birthday party or might think it's a fun one to help out."

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## Serenity: Friendships formed at club help those in recovery get through stressful times

Continued from page 1

wanting people to know, embarrassment. It's kind of a set up aversion to it," Mary said. "But this is the place for desperate people."

Jimmy M., board vice president at the 511 Club in Madison, also attends meetings at FSC that are geared toward a younger crowd. Mary and Jimmy are working to better connect the clubs and learn from each other.

"Twelve-step programs are going to further ask you to take responsibility for your life ... (And) this becomes like a community support," he said.

The FSC is entirely run by donations and volunteers. Aside from passing the basket, another way those who attend meetings can give back to the club is by becoming a member through a monthly \$10 (or agreed-upon) fee.

Membership gives people voting rights for election of the board and all vital clubhouse issues, as well as provides them with their own in-house coffee mug.

In many communities, 12-step meetings are commonly held in churches, senior centers or other public places, but in Fitchburg, the gathering place is the FSC.

Scott J., who goes to about six meetings each week, said the club provides a "safe haven."

"The club gives us a shelter. And that's what clubs are about. It's a safe place to go where there's a friendly face and people that understand me, and accept me no matter what," he said. "I'm just a broken human being trying to get better."

### Step by step

Coffee mugs, lined by the hundreds, cover a wall near the entrance of the clubhouse. Some are stuffed with notes, others wear a film of stains and some look like they've never been used at all.

Each is personalized with a first name and last initial and assigned a number so members can easily find them on the wall.

Scott, who has been around long enough to have No. 42, is one of the first to get in the building nearly every day to make coffee at 6 a.m. before the first group arrives.

"It's just a bit of service," he said. "I'm a firm believer in clubs, because the doors are open and the coffee's hot."

Scott didn't talk much about his past, but simply said he lost everything dear to him – along with his self-respect – in one night's drinking.

So, like many others, he switched to coffee.

Above the kitchen is a piece of artwork with words



### To help or be helped

**What:** Fitchburg Serenity Club, Inc.

**Where:** 6048 McKee Road, Fitchburg

**When:** Open daily 6 a.m. to 10 p.m., meeting times vary

**Phone:** 271-9817

**Website:** fitchburgserenityclub.com

**Email:** board@fitchburgserenityclub.com

**Mission:** To serve 12-step recovery groups by providing space for meetings, the opportunity for fellowship and a safe, positive environment for recovery

**Meetings offered:** Alcoholics Anonymous, Al-Anon, Adult Children of Alcoholics, Co-Dependents Anonymous, Debtors Anonymous, Gamblers Anonymous, Overeaters Anonymous, Sex Addicts Anonymous, Meditation, Universal Back to Basic, Spanish Speaking AA En Espanol and Al-Anon En Espanol

**Donations:** The nonprofit is entirely reliant on donations, which can be made online at the FSC website

taken from the Serenity Prayer: "God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, The courage to change the things I can, And the wisdom to know the difference." A key shown below it symbolizes willingness.

Distributed throughout the building are the meeting rooms – which look somewhat like classrooms – each with their own vibe depending on the group that occupies them. A large chalkboard on a wall upstairs was left over from the days of the old schoolhouse.

In another room, folding tables, dotted only by a few books, boxes of facial tissue and hand sanitizer, are set up in a square with chairs around the perimeter facing in.

Paul A. has been sitting there three to five days per week for the last eight years, but he's been coming to the clubhouse far longer than that.

He attended his first meeting there in 1981, having suffered "extreme consequences" from his drinking.

"I had crashed my car into a pole and my girlfriend died on impact," Paul said. "It was the culmination of many years of drinking and drugging, and it had already been out of control, but that's when it kind of came to a head."

He was facing possible jail time, and attending 12-step meetings was his ticket out. For the next 10 years, he would come to the FSC on and off – a trend that coincided with his bouts of sobriety.

Somehow in 1991, at the age of 30, for reasons he

can't explain, the meetings started to stick.

"It started to make sense to me," Paul said. "I started to see changes, and life got a lot easier."

He hasn't had a drink in more than 23 years.

"The solution for me had always been there, but I just kinda had to get around to where I was willing to accept it. And all along through there I was coming here," Paul said. "It's like an oasis ... Or, they talk about it in the (Big) Book, it's a daily reprieve."

The Big Book, written in 1939 by Bill W., outlines the 12 steps, which include accepting powerlessness, seeking guidance from a higher power, admitting wrongdoings, making amends for them and sharing the message with others.

### A place to call home

Jimmy also said actively coming to meetings and giving back to clubhouse is why he will be five years sober on Christmas Eve.

"It just works for me. It uplifts my life," he said. "And without it, without a solution at all, the world would eat me up if I don't have people like Mary in my life, a place to go, a place to give back to, it's what I've looked for my whole life."

Having attended meetings at the FSC since 1985, Mary believes one of the reasons people come back is the fellowship, especially in the moments when someone else tells their story and they no longer feel alone.

"That's where the camaraderie comes from, too, and



Photos by Samantha Christian

Above, hundreds of coffee mugs line the wall near the entrance of the Fitchburg Serenity Club, located at 6048 McKee Road (show at top). Each personalized mug belongs to members of the club.

this feeling of family," she said. "We're all fighting the same battle."

Scott said the bonds formed between those who attend meetings can be stronger than those with family members.

"I've formed friendships that are closer than belly-button family," Scott said. "You find your brothers and sisters that you love dearly."

He added that groups meeting at the FSC try to nurture these family bonds by avoiding topics of religion and politics, which often come up around the dinner table during holidays. That source of stress can cause people to reach for their addictions rather than for support in those who are also struggling.

For this reason, and since not everyone has a place to call home, the FSC provides annual Thanksgiving and Christmas meals. There will even be a New Year's Eve party this year.

Scott has attended meetings across the country, but said a "home group" is where people really get to know him – and that's what the FSC has been to him since the 1980s.

"If I don't show up for a day or two or get out of my regular routine, somebody will call," he said.

### Learning how to live

Likening them to exercise, Paul makes meetings part of his morning routine – even if he'd rather sleep in.

"On the days that I don't want to go, those are the days I really need to go," he said. "Every once in awhile, and just often enough to keep me coming back, I go to a meeting where – it sounds so hokey – I witness a miracle."

Paul said that often happens during first-step meetings, which occur when a newcomer attends or when it's someone's first meeting after their last drink.

"Everyone talks about how their lives are unmanageable and how alcohol screwed it up," he said. "In those stories is the common ground that that new person needs to

who meet to share their experience, strength and hope that they may solve their common problem and help others recover from it, too.

Scott said he thinks one of the most important functions of the club is to "teach people how to live a happy, sober life."

"It keeps me happy, it keeps me behaving. It keeps me out of taverns, (and) my kids love me," he said. "Because we don't have classes on good behavior and stuff like that, it's just by example."

"What the clubhouse does is it gives us a warm, dry place to sit and do that stuff," Paul said. "You can't do it online. You can't do it over the phone."

Scott remembers back to a time when meetings were held in the "mouse-ridden, dirty and cruddy" basement, which he said was painted "an icky yellow and icky green" – definitely not Packers colors.

He said the club has come a long way in terms of renovating and expanding the building, but it is still fundamentally the same.

"You see the newcomers come in and a lot of them make it, and some don't, and some die, and it's really sad," Scott said. "And you see them have kids and see them have families ... There's a lot tears, and there's a lot of happiness and joy. But it's a home."

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