

Lake Country

THIS MONTH

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Another reason to smile in Delafield

Smiley Barn selected for one of two Playmobil playrooms

By Ian Bergersen
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DELAFIELD — Despite being loved by children around the world, Playmobil had yet to bring its interactive playrooms to the United States prior to this holiday season. After exhausting their list of potential toy stores across the nation, the company decided on just two locations: world-renowned FAO Schwarz's store in New York City, and local favorite The Smiley Barn in Delafield.

Maria Luther, owner of The Smiley Barn, and Mary O'Malley, The Smiley Barn's general manager, got together for lunch one day and discussed the possibility of having a Playmobil store in the upper space of The Smiley Barn, similar to Lego stores in malls. O'Malley is a seasoned toy sales representative with experience selling Playmobil, so she knew people within the company that they could reach out to.

It turned out that Playmobil had already been putting together a list of candidates to host a dedicated showroom, and the company decided to consider The Smiley Barn. Playmobil's vice president of U.S. sales flew in from New York City with one of their top marketing professionals to tour The

Smiley Barn and its upper space.

"I think they were impressed by the barn and the amount of space it had, and with the location being proximate to Milwaukee, Madison and the Chicago area," said Luther.

The Playmobil representatives liked what they saw, and decided to choose The Smiley Barn as one of the first two toy stores in the United States to house a Playmobil-themed playroom.

Luther and O'Malley incorporated ideas and suggestions from Playmobil's marketing professional, and also came up with some on their own. Corporate supplied all the decorations, such as play stations, life-size Playmobil figurines and a huge mural featuring the toys.

On Nov. 17, the Playmobil room had its grand opening and became one of The Smiley Barn's highest day of sales, second only to the opening day of the store itself.

"It was packed," Luther said. "Sales of Playmobil were through the roof, it was a wonderful way to start."

Playmobil sets remain extremely popular items at the store, and the room continues to see steady traffic.

"We're working as hard as we can to keep the shelves stocked," Luther said.

Bringing back the magic of old-fashioned toy stores

An attorney by profession, Luther wanted to start a business where she could be creative and give back to the community, so she decided to start a local toy shop.

"When looking for a business, I didn't have the goal of



Pierce Anderson plays with the Playmobil space toy set as his mother, Becky Anderson, watches.

just making money, I had a goal of doing something that could benefit others," said Luther. "I feel that there's a loss of these magical, old-fashioned toy stores that can become part of a kid's happy childhood memories. I wanted to give that to others."

After looking at regular commercial properties, Luther found out that The Smiley Barn, which had lost its smiley face in 2001 when The Amish Barn moved in, was up for sale. There were already two bids on the location from buyers who wanted to tear the barn down and build fast food restaurants on the property.

"I took that as a sign that it was meant to be," Luther said. "We had to save the barn."

Her bid on the property was accepted, and she immediately



The Smiley Barn brought back the iconic smiley face after 17 years of absence.

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DECEMBER 2019

The Delafields: city and town working together

New leaders not burdened by past tensions

By Kelly Smith
Special to The Freeman

It takes about 7 minutes to drive the 3.8 miles from the Delafield Town Hall to Delafield City Hall but lately the political distance between the two municipalities has become shorter.

City and town officials are working together on common concerns ranging from the overpopulation of deer to whether to consolidate their fire departments.

Town Chairman Ron Troy and Mayor Kent Attwell, both in their first terms, are providing leadership not burdened by the baggage of past disputes between the local governments, according to community leaders interviewed by The Freeman.

There are always likely to be differences.

The town is one the last bastions of rural residential living in Lake Country.

Its 8,000 residents are spread across about 20 square miles.

Many of them live in \$500,000 to \$1 million homes on one to three acres parcels amidst farms and woodlands. There is very little commercial development.

Until lately, the residents have expected little of their town government.

Part-time police protection is provided by a contract with the county sheriff. The fire department relies heavily on part-time firefighters and paramedics.

The city has become one of Milwaukee's most western suburbs.

Most of the approximate-

ly 8,000 residents in about 9 square miles live in suburban-style subdivisions or on small lots along Nagawicka Lake or near the downtown business districts.

There are strip malls on the north and south edges of the city.

There are about 30 city employees, a full-time police department, a library, and the local fire department serves the city and two adjacent villages.

Relationships between town and city municipal leaders have never been warm and fuzzy.

"There have been the usual tensions between a town and a city," said Jim Behrend, Waukesha County Register of Deeds, who also served as city mayor and alderman.

Some tensions began in 1959 when a small group of town residents decided to create a city so zoning laws could be adopted to protect Nagawicka Lake, according to Behrend.

Over the years, some city leaders were resentful city taxes were twice as high as town taxes, yet the city provided the infrastructure for public services and commercial development that benefited town residents.

Tensions grew again in the 1990s when the city tried to annex town lands in order to expand the city's tax base.

"There were some ruffled feathers until we got a border agreement," explained Clare Dundon, who served for 16 years on the Town Board.

"Since then we have pretty much coexisted with the understanding that the com-

mercial developments in the city were not going to spill into the town," she added.

Some common problems

The communities share common problems.

Both are considering 2020 referendums to raise real estate taxes.

Both are experiencing rapidly increasing costs of emergency services.

Both are facing land use and development issues that could change the character of the communities.

And both have neighborhoods being overrun by a deer population damaging residential landscaping, destroying natural vegetation in parks, and posing a public health threat.

Shortly after Troy's election as chairman in April, he and Attwell began working together with state and local officials to allow local bow hunters to hunt deer on designated town and city properties.

Negotiations also began over the possibility the city would provide the town with water services to potential developers of 350 acres of farmland north of the Interstate 94 near the town and city border.

The developers would pay the cost of installing the approximately 1.5-mile-long water main and the tenants in the development would pay for the water services.

"Both the town and the city would benefit," Troy explained.

"It would help the town by providing water services to a potential developer and it would help the city by providing their water utilities with new customers and more revenues," he continued.

Recently, the two leaders began "very, very preliminary" discussions about consolidating the town fire



Kelly Smith/Special to The Freeman

Delafield Town Chairman Ron Troy, left, and Town Supervisor Billy Cooley chat with Delafield City Mayor Kent Attwell following a city Deer Management Committee meeting. The leaders of the two municipalities have been working together on several common concerns.



Kelly Smith/Special to The Freeman

The Town of Delafield's Town Hall building.



Kelly Smith/Special to The Freeman

A sign welcomes residents and visitors into the city of Delafield.

Battling bad behavior

Draft bill would make harassing sports officials a misdemeanor

By Ashley Haynes
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WAUKESHA — State lawmakers are backing up sport officials with a draft bill that would create a new penalty for spectators who act disorderly at sporting events.

The preliminary draft of LRB 4781, which has not yet been formally introduced, would make harassing a referee, umpire, judge, or other sports official a Class A misdemeanor. Currently, any person found to be harassing a sports official is subject to a Class B forfeiture.

Over the last several years, an increasingly aggressive culture of verbally and sometimes even physically abusing sports referees has led to a national shortage of such officials.

"The crescendo of this, of people being obnoxious at games, is probably 10 years ago. I think it's a little better now. It's still there, don't get me wrong, but I think it's a little better now," said sportswriter and Freeman correspondent Chuck Delsman, who has also been a local referee for 47 years and officiates around 250 games annually.

He explained that right now, at high school sporting events, there are normally gym supervisors on hand to deal with unruly fans. Delsman said he finds it best not to approach or make a comment to a fan directly, but have the gym supervisor or home team coach handle it.

The draft bill specifies that if a spectator were found to be harassing a sports official, they could be penalized with up to 40 hours of community service or ordered to participate in counseling such as anger management.

Delsman said he was unsure if any incidents he's seen at sporting events would warrant those kind of



Photo courtesy of Kenny Yoo

Referee Patrick Courtney officiates a hockey game between Arrowhead and Kettle Moraine-Mukwonago-Oconomowoc hockey teams.

penalties.

"I don't know about that. Not knowing the background of those people who are obnoxious in these stands ... I could see it might work but I don't know how enforceable that might be," Delsman said.

He has questions about who would be responsible for actually issuing the ticket if the draft bill were to eventually get through all the needed stages of approval.

He also questioned whether the bill could just be a "scare tactic" to discourage spectators from unruly behavior.

Regardless, Delsman said, in his opinion, spectators have actually gotten a little better this year, ending a several-year trend of increased disruption.

Dave Birch, another local referee who has been a high school basketball official for 36 years and a volleyball official for 25 years, said he would support the bill, especially if it helps retain younger officials who need more time to learn how to deal with fans.

Birch said he could also see the bill serving as a deterrent to disorderly behavior.

"I hope it does but without real consequences, I don't think it will help much. I'd love to see a hefty fine if (it's a) first offense," Birch said.

Statewide support

Despite still being a work

in progress, the draft bill has already received official sponsorship from the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association.

WIAA officials released a statement that voiced concern with the ongoing decline of high school sports officials.

According to the National Association of Sports Officials' National Officiating Survey, which questioned 17,000 sports officials across the country, 56.9% of respondents said sportsmanship is getting worse and 42.8% of respondents believed that most new officials quit within the first one to three years.

"Responding to the national crisis as a result of the shortage of amateur and youth sport officials, we applaud and recognize the Wisconsin legislature's bipartisan efforts to create protections for the men and women that officiate these events," said WIAA Executive Director Dave Anderson in the statement. "We are grateful for their willingness to help protect and preserve these school-based activities, as well as youth and adult recreation opportunities, which contribute to the fabric of our communities and society."

Other organizations supporting the bill include the National Association of Sport Officials, Wisconsin Athletic Directors Association and Wisconsin Intercollegiate Athletic Conference.



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Keeping a healthy Hartland

Mobile app ‘nroote’ allows users to view and post local events

By Eddie Morales
Special to Conley Media

HARTLAND — A general health and wellness campaign, Healthy Hartland, is being backed by Waukesha County Board Chairman Paul Decker and fueled by data collected from ‘nalytix CEO Regi George.

“How do we make the community better,” said Decker. “How do we increase engagement?”

Decker hopes to achieve a stronger community through the Healthy Hartland campaign.

Objectives for the campaign include promoting public events, tracking consumer data through local businesses and offering community members opportunities to learn new skills, such as cooking healthy meals. Decker and George aim to improve the physical and mental health of not only individuals, but also the village of Hartland as a whole.

Data is collected through an app called ‘nroote. Over the course of three to five years, data will be analyzed to better understand community behavior, provide fact-based data for businesses, and a platform for users to view and share public events.

“When you look at what makes an area safe, it’s usually a sense of community,” said Decker. “That sense of place gives people a little more incentive to do something different every day.”

Decker’s personal involvement in Healthy Hartland is influenced by his 23 years as a Hartland resident. If the project is successful, Decker could use ‘nalytix in his efforts as a county chairman.

George is the founder of ‘nalytix, the company that created ‘nroote. One of his focuses is to partner with businesses and provide them with consumer data.

Data is provided to business owners through the app. The statistics gathered by ‘nroote give businesses



Waukesha County Board Chairman Paul Decker, left and ‘nalytix CEO Regi George at the Hartland Public Library.

the opportunity to use factual information to attract a targeted consumer base.

Patrick Endter, owner of Hartland restaurant Endter’s Sports Grill, has used the app for about six months. He has hosted several events through ‘nroote, including a Packers game that was casted on the restaurant’s largest screen.

“The app helps to drive traffic into downtown Hartland, which drives traffic into the restaurant,” Endter said.

Another function of ‘nroote is analyzing how people interact with

their surroundings. ‘nroote features an event platform that provides users with a dedicated in-app space to view and publish public events.

“Everybody is into digital media right now,” said George. “How can we use that platform to actually create a local engagement?”

George is self-funding the project. Initial costs for businesses is pennies, said George. He plans on building value in ‘nroote over time, which could potentially lead to standard costs for businesses.

“I call it low price, high impact,” said Decker. “It’s also not costing

businesses time. They just have to enter the app and they get quite a lot out of it.”

Before expanding into larger communities, George plans on collecting data only from Hartland. Going forward, George’s goal is to collect data from two suburbs and one rural, metro and tourist area each.

“This is where we rebuild people’s lives and faith in government,” said Decker.

“It’s through local engagement. We have to do this village by village.”



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Town of Delafield hires Green as clerk

Administrator duties will be added

By Kelly Smith
Special to Conley Media

TOWN OF DELAFIELD — A year ago, Dan Green, a 32-year-old bachelor, left his job as city clerk in New Berlin, population nearly 32,000, and took a \$20,000 cut in pay so he could be town clerk in Lisbon, population about 11,000, to learn more about local government so someday he could become a municipal administrator.

At the end of November, it paid off for Green.

The Delafield Town Board unanimously agreed Nov. 26 to hire Green as clerk/treasurer with the understanding his responsibilities will be expanded to include town administrator as soon as he and Town Chairman Ron Troy can define the position and write a job description that must be approved by town supervisors.

His starting salary will be \$65,000, but that could be subject to change based on a job performance review in six months.

Green and his fiancée Mary Kuehl waited in the foyer in Town Hall, outside the board room, as the super-

visors met briefly behind closed doors to make their final decision to hire him.

She is the deputy clerk for the city of Delafield. They met at a clerks’ convention and will be married on Dec. 13.

Upcoming challenges

Green will face several challenges when he begins his new job on Jan. 2.

He says his first priority will be to update the town’s website. Citizens complained at a recent public hearing the website is not providing timely information.

But revenues are limited because of state-imposed limits on the amount of real estate taxes the town can raise each year.

Green is likely to play a lead role in the town’s effort to pass a referendum in November 2020 that will allow the Town Board to raise taxes higher than the state-imposed limits.

The town is also embroiled in a controversy over creating a new zoning district that would allow development of light industrial and office buildings, clinics, and multi-family housing develop-

ments along town roads in the Interstate 94 corridor. (According to Troy, Green received great references from Town of Lisbon officials where he became clerk a year ago after Lisbon supervisors decided to split the clerk/administrator job into two positions.

When Lisbon Town Chairman Joe Osterman learned Green was a candidate for the Delafield job, Osterman told Conley Media, “We want to see Dan succeed and we are going to support him 100 percent, but we hate to lose him.”

Troy, a lawyer, said during the next 6 to 8 weeks he will research state law, consult with the Wisconsin Towns Association, and confer with Green in drafting a definition of the position and job description he will later present for board approval.

He told the board he anticipated the fire chief and highway superintendent would continue reporting to the board but would also report to the new administrator.

Supervisor Christie Dionisopoulos questioned whether one individual



Dan Green and his fiancée Mary Kuehl were at the Delafield Town Board meeting Nov. 26 when he was appointed town clerk and is expected to become the town’s first administrator.

could perform the tasks of clerk, treasurer and administrator within a 40-hour work week.

Dionisopoulos, a former town plan commissioner, is the newest member of the board, recently appointed to fill the vacancy created by

the resignation of former Supervisor Chris Smith.

Supervisor Pete Van Horn, the senior member of the board, explained to Dionisopoulos the town recently contracted with Waukesha County to collect town real estate taxes, which means

tax bills are not longer paid at Town Hall, relieving the treasurer of one of the office’s most time-consuming tasks.

I think this will be good for the town, Van Horn said about creating the administrator position.



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Williams retiring as Delafield finance officer

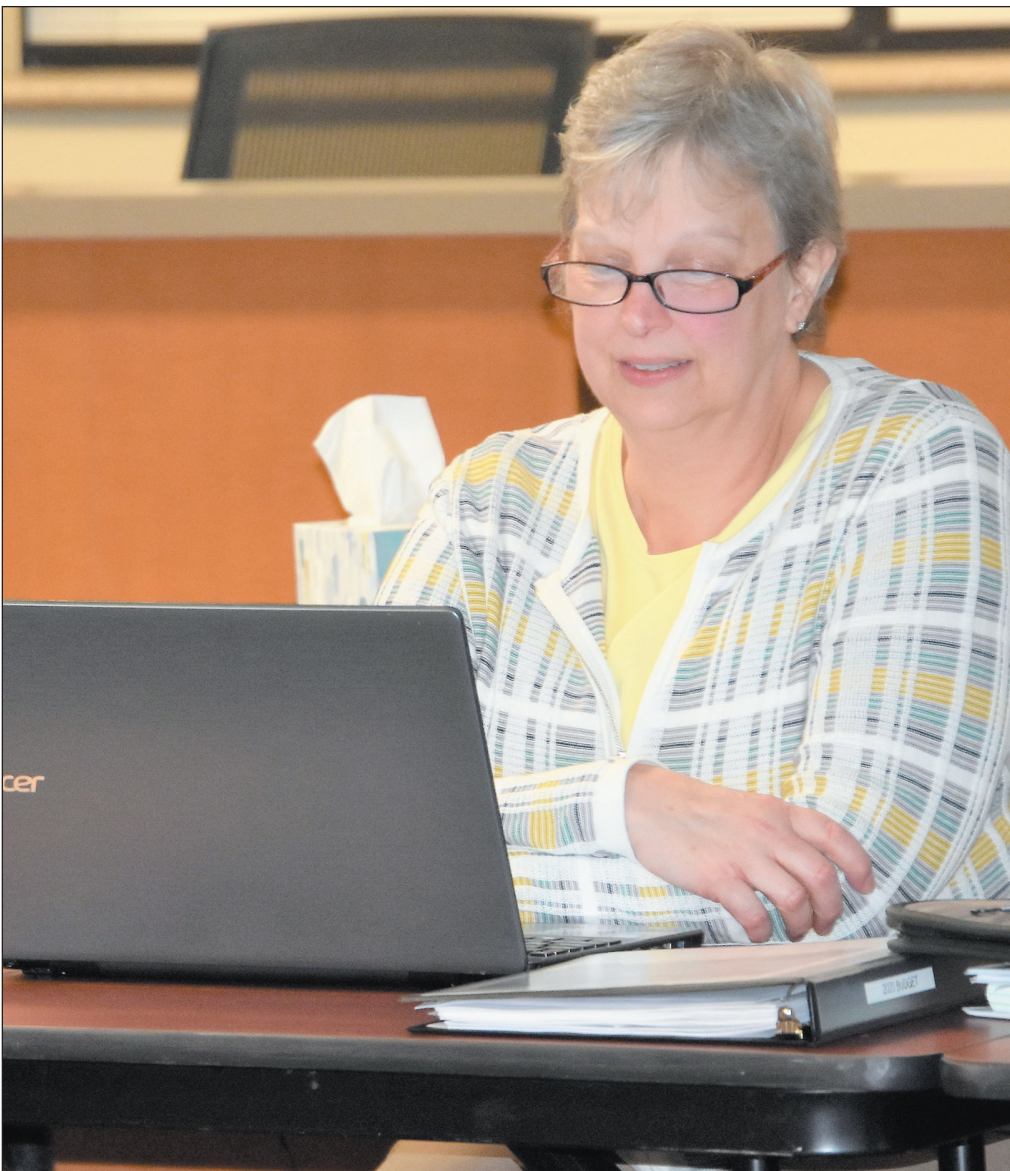
Served city, helped write budget for 17 years

By Kelly Smith
Special to The Freeman
kellysmithlakecountrynews@gmail.com

DELAFIELD — “Marie Williams has been a valuable asset to the city for a long time.”
Delafield Mayor Kent Attwell summarized the career of Finance Officer/Treasurer Marie Williams, who announced her retirement in a Nov. 24 letter to City Administrator Tom Hafner.
“I am excited about my pending retirement but wanted to take this opportunity to thank you and the Common Council for all of the opportunities that I have experienced working for the city. I have genuinely enjoyed my career here and will miss you and my co-workers,” she wrote in the letter.
The retirement is scheduled to be effective on June 1 with her last day at City Hall expected to be April 30.
Williams explained to The Freeman that she is giving the city more than five months’ notice so she can remain on duty for an annual audit conducted by the Public Service Commission of the city’s water utility and be available to help during the

municipal election cycle in February and April.
Williams added she also wanted to give city officials plenty of time to find a replacement who could transition into her position.
Williams joined the city in 2002 as an accountant.
In 2012, she was appointed finance officer/budget analyst and in 2015 the position was changed to finance officer/treasurer.
Attwell said he and Hafner have not yet discussed replacing Williams, who has annually played a key role in the development of the city’s \$14 million budget.
Hafner frequently praised Williams for her work in the budget process, which has won about a half dozen awards of commendations from a national association of municipal finance officers.
Writing the budget
Former Mayor Ed McAleer said Williams “wrote the budget” during some of the six years of his second administration from 2008 to 2012. McAleer also served as mayor from 1994 to 2002.
“When we hired Tom Hafner as City Administrator and Public Works Director (in 2012), we did with the understanding that Marie would take over the budget. She would write the budget under Tom’s auspices,” McAleer explained.
Since then, putting together the budget as become more of a “team effort” as described by Attwell with Williams being responsible

for coordinating budget information provided by various city and regional agencies.
During budget workshops and the Common Council meeting when the final budget votes were cast, Williams was a familiar figure at a table before the council with her laptop computer.
As council members offered amendments adding or subtracting dollars from the budget, she provided calculations for the council on what impact those amendments would have on the amount of the real estate tax levy, the size of the tax rate, the amount of city debt, or the size of the annual capital budget.
When citizens or members of the media asked council members or city officials about budget details, often the response they received was “ask Marie.”
Williams was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2005 and in 2017 was told the cancer was beginning to spread through the rest of her body.
Williams told The Freeman she was attending a retreat of cancer survivors at the Wisconsin Dells in November when she decided she wanted to spend more time enjoying life.
Williams, 56, has two adult sons.
She is a native of Chicago whose parents moved to Wisconsin during her childhood.
She graduated from Brookfield Central High School before earning a degree in accounting from Mt. Mary University.



Kelly Smith/Special to The Freeman
During city budget meetings Delafield Finance Officer Marie Williams kept track of how budget amendments were impacting real estate taxes, capital projects and city debt. She is retiring in June after 17 years with the city.

A tae kwon do instructor’s fight with cancer

By Ian Bergersen
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OCONOMOWOC — Doug Scheerer is no stranger to fighting. The 10-time black belt grand champion has faced all kinds of opponents in various tae kwon do tournaments. Since he was 16 years old, Scheerer has studied numerous martial arts styles, such as jiu jitsu, Filipino eskrima and judo. But he doesn’t just fight opponents that stand in front of him. He currently fights the most dangerous opponent of his life, and it’s one that he can’t see — cancer.
Scheerer has been the senior instructor for the Oconomowoc recreation department’s tae kwon do program since 2010. His competition days are behind him, but the fourth-degree black belt still teaches students of all ages and skill levels.
“I really love what I do,” said Scheerer. “I’ve had a passion for teaching. Over the years I’ve had a lot of good people.”
About 30 years ago, Scheerer and his daughter were students in the program he now teaches. His daughter was the first to enroll upon finding out about the program, but Scheerer was hesitant to resume tae kwon do since he first started it at the age of 18. He was smoking two packs of cigarettes a day and didn’t think that he was still capable.
The senior instructor at the time, Jeff Kessenich, urged him to just give it a try, and Scheerer began to practice the martial art that he left behind years ago. Because of the reasonable

cost of the program, he could afford it for both himself and his daughter.
“I quit smoking cigarettes, and the money that I spent on cigarettes paid for our uniforms, for our first year of testings and for one or two of our competitions,” Scheerer said.
He went from student to instructor, and beginner to black belt. He eventually joined other schools and programs, but he would periodically return to help out with classes or test prospective black belts.
In 2008, Scheerer started up his own tae kwon do school at the First Congregational United Church of Christ. The program ended about two years ago when his wife became extremely ill due to a blood infection caused by back-to-back surgeries. Scheerer was at home watching over her 24/7 and couldn’t maintain the four-days-a-week schedule. But he was able to keep his role as senior instructor for Oconomowoc’s tae kwon do program, and after two months, his wife recovered.
“The specialist said that 90% of people don’t make it,” said Scheerer. “She’s a pretty tough lady.”
While his wife’s health began to improve, Scheerer’s began to decline.

Scheerer’s diagnosis
Last spring, the first thing to deteriorate was Scheerer’s voice. Then he noticed a loss in stamina and energy, which was unusual for someone whose body had been conditioned by decades of martial arts training. He thought that the culprit was old age and previous injuries, but for the next three weeks his condition

worsened. He eventually listened to his wife and took a trip to the doctor’s office.
And on May 22, 2019, Scheerer was diagnosed with stage 4 lung cancer.
Cancer was an all too familiar shadow in Scheerer’s life. Both of his parents had lung cancer; fortunately his mother’s was benign and his father caught his early on and treated it. His grandfather and his grandfather’s brother were also diagnosed with colon cancer and prostate cancer respectively. His father-in-law tragically died from throat cancer around the time Scheerer married his wife.
David “Buck” Dunham, the tae kwon do instructor before Scheerer and one of his friends, died from pancreatic cancer in 2012.
“You put expectations on things that you’ve gone through because you’ve experienced it and you know what it’s about,” said Scheerer. “But if you’re the one sitting outside and looking in the window, you can never really know what it’s about. So not going through this before, I didn’t really know what to expect.”
Three days after the diagnoses, Scheerer “felt the need to feel alive” and went skydiving before starting his treatment. In his previous roofing job, he developed a fear of heights from falling off rooftops. He wanted to do something he had never done before and conquer his fear in the process.

Dedicated to teaching
His treatment has alternated between cycles of chemotherapy and 20 days straight of radiation therapy. The chemotherapy makes him feel sick and the



Ian Bergersen/Special to The Freeman
Doug Scheerer watches as Brian Johnston and Jeff Schifano spar in class.

drugs make him forget muscle movements he’s been doing for decades, but despite it all, he has only missed a single class at Oconomowoc’s Community Center.
“I always made a remark that I wanted to teach until I die,” Scheerer said, “but I never thought that it would come down to that.”
But now doctors say that

Scheerer’s lung cancer is in remission.
“That’s my out because there is no cure for what I have,” said Scheerer. “But they can bring the tumor sizes down and try to make them ‘neutral.’ The only thing that’s really affected is my lungs.”
He said that he is feeling better lately, and he’s grateful that despite past discom-

forts and problems breathing, he was never in horrendous pain. He wants to one day be able to train in tae kwon do again, but for now, he’s happy to teach it.
“I’ve got faith, and I’m going to fight and stick around as long as I can,” said Scheerer. “If I’m around long enough maybe they’ll find a cure.”



THERE’S NO PLACE LIKE HOME

Nearly 500 students in Waukesha County are without a stable home according to local school data.

United Way and community partners have set a goal:

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Please, have a seat: Antique rocker still soothing family



BARBARA EASH
Antiques Appraised

Q. Can you tell us about this chair that belonged to my husband’s ancestors? We had it re-caned 10 years ago.
— *Jeannine, Pewaukee*

A. Although some antique rocking chairs are not comfortable, sentimental value often assigns special placement in homes. You have an American East-lake-style chair that catered to women’s floor-length, bulbous dresses of the late 1900s. The slanted arm braces could receive and support full-skirted garments. The re-caning is particularly good craftsmanship, \$175.

Note: This was an era when a new rocker cost \$5.00. One could order peg posts and “wooden bends” from the catalog. Owners could then convert a straight chair into a rocker for \$.50.

Umbrella stand near perfect

Q. This Roseville pottery had belonged to my husband’s family. It’s too large to be a vase; I really would like to know about it.
— *Marilyn, Brookfield*

A. Umbrella stands were very common in 19th-century America. The best of waterproofing was an umbrella and pair of galoshes in a downpour! This necessitated umbrella stands in both homes and commercial buildings. Zanesville, Ohio, was known as “Clay City” and the Roseville Pottery Works was one of the leading companies manufacturing both utilitarian and artistic wares. To the disappointment of collectors today, Roseville often lacks company ID marks. This green and brown blending with majolica glaze treatment was popular and one of the best sellers.

Your umbrella stand is in nearly perfect condition. **Value is \$260.**

Note: Collectors today often use these stately receptacles to exhibit antique walking sticks and canes.

Park your shoes at the door jack

Al from Waukesha brought this 3-foot-tall “boot jack” to the Antique Mall appraisal event. It was used in his family’s Platteville shoe repair shop in the early 20th century. In that era, business advertising usually consisted of storefront tin signs or painted letters on windows and awnings. Items in the category of

“trade symbols” are self-explanatory to a particular talent.

Boot jack carvings are usually from the Black Forest, Germany, and surrounding areas. The inventiveness of the needlepoint pouch (with the boy holding a boot) makes it endearing and an invitation to park your umbrella.

Similar carved examples have sold for \$400 but this has the historical significance from a specific shop. The Historical Society Museum near Platteville might be able to help discover more information.

Have an item for appraisal?

If you have an item you’d like to be appraised, mail

entries to Waukesha Antique Shop, 1427 E. Racine Ave., Unit E-2, Waukesha, WI 53186.

Send sharp, well-lit photos of front, back and underside of your item, and measurements are important.

List any known history or even hearsay, length of ownership and all markings, even partial ones. Include your name, address and phone number.

No photos can be returned and no purchase of antiques will occur.

(Barbara Eash is a member of the Certified Appraisers Guild of America, specializing in appraisals of antiques and collectibles and has extensive experience writing and speaking about antiques.)



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Study: Washington, Waukesha counties' economies are thriving

Both rate highly among state's 72 counties in economic development

By Joe VanDeLaarschot
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262-306-5054

WEST BEND — According to the results of a recent study, both Washington and Waukesha counties have plenty of arrows in their quivers in promoting and improving economic development.

The study, completed by SmartAsset, used a wide range of information and tools in indicating the economic and investment tools available to counties across the nation and Wisconsin.

According to the study, Waukesha County is ranked third out of Wisconsin's 72 counties as far as economic growth and Washington County is ranked 10th. The report said Waukesha County over the last four years had a growth in the gross domestic product over the previous period of about \$988 million, while Washington County had a growth of about \$252 million.

"This shows that the growth in economic output in these counties has outpaced most of the state over this four-year period," said AJ Smith, vice president of financial education at SmartAsset.

The two top counties for growth in the gross domestic product were Milwaukee (\$1,565,000) and Dane (\$1,110,00).

Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow said it's no surprise that Waukesha County ranks among the top in the state for economic development and growth.

"Economic development is one my top priorities, both as Waukesha County executive and co-chair of the Milwaukee 7 Regional Economic Development Partnership Economic Advisory Council," Farrow said. "In 2020, we expect to see even more growth because we have set up a strong foundation for the future by keeping government small and fostering local and regional partnerships that serve businesses and residents."

Farrow said on the local level, county officials have worked to make it easier to establish and expand businesses in Waukesha County by continuing to support the Waukesha County Center for Growth, a one-stop-shop that offers resources for new and growing businesses.

"An example of that is the new \$2 million GROW fund, a revolving loan fund that supports business expansion and innovative housing solutions in Waukesha County," Farrow said.

Christian Tscheschlok, executive director of Economic Development Washington County, said the SmartAsset study "is telling us that Washington County is a leading county in the country as far as economic development outcomes."

"This is great news because Washington County, its communities and EDWC have been collaborating now for several years on a focused strategy around existing growth-oriented companies in the county. Those companies are very much export-oriented —

which means new money is flowing into the economy," Tscheschlok said.

"That translates into the point that when you have new money flowing into the county that is growing the size of the pie in a way that allows job growth to happen, it expands the tax base, and it's creating new discretionary income for folks."

The study indicated that as far as the number of new building permits granted per thousand homes for the past year Washington County ranks 6th and Waukesha County is not ranked in the top 10. Waukesha County granted 7.4 building permits per thousand homes over the last year compared with Washington County which granted 8.9 building permits per thousand homes. Smith said GDP information was used in the analysis because it is one of the most common indicators used to track the health of a nation's economy.

"When you dig down you find that we rank nationally 763 for the incoming investment index, which is the GDP. That puts the county right at the top quarter of the country," Tscheschlok said. "We also rank 544th of 3,007 counties which puts us in the top quarter of counties across the country in GDP."

Smith said the study also looked at the number of businesses established in each location over a three-year period. The final factor considered in the study was federal funding received by each county.

Polar plunging



Photos by Mary Catanese/Special to The Freeman

University Lake School counselor Peter Humphreys-Loving carries the flag out of the water as Mike Dolan, college counselor emeritus, jumps up after fully emerging in Nagawicka Lake on Dec. 6. To encourage donations for #GivingTuesday, students could vote for who would take a plunge in Nagawicka Lake in Delafield. Humphreys-Loving received the most votes.



Peter Humphreys-Loving, left, and Mike Dolan do a run through for Danielle Nelson, director of advancement, before live-streaming the polar plunge.



Submitted rendering

A new Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin urgent care center will open in Hartland next year.

Ascension Wisconsin opening urgent care center in Hartland

HARTLAND — Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin announced recently that a new urgent care center will be coming to Hartland sometime early next year.

According to a press release, the new center is part of Ascension's multi-year strategy to create more convenient and affordable access points for patients across the state.

The new location will be at 600 Hartbrook Drive, Suite 112.

"By providing patients

with the right care, the right place and the right time, our goal is to increase value for our patients by reducing unnecessary costs, improving the quality of care, delivering an outstanding experience and most importantly, improving the health of Wisconsin's communities," said Bernie Sherry, senior vice president, Ascension, and ministry market executive, Ascension Wisconsin.

The press release explains that urgent care centers are

for patients who need to be seen right away, but do not have an injury.

Some examples of minor illnesses or injuries that might warrant a trip to an urgent care center include: allergic reactions, cuts that may require stitches, a high fever, strep throat, the flu, ear or sinus infections, and pink eye.

The Ascension Medical Group Wisconsin urgent care center in Hartland will have extended hours of availability daily.

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Submitted photos

Fall open house at WCTC

PEWAUKEE — Around 1,000 attendees visited Waukesha County Technical College Nov. 14 to participate in the fall open house. Potential students and their families had opportunities to meet with instructors, faculty and staff; tour the campus; view industry-related projects; and learn more about a technical education.

County strives to open Hwy. 67 bike tunnel next year

By Darryl Enriquez
Special to The Freeman
denriquez@wi.rr.com

WAUKESHA — Work to finish the Lake Country Trail tunnel beneath Highway 67 in Oconomowoc for bicyclists and pedestrians may be back on track.

Waukesha County officials on Nov. 19 approved easement adjustments with Target that are needed to complete the project.

Construction bids have been submitted to the county and are currently being reviewed.

Officials are hoping cost estimates do not exceed the \$1.3 million the county has received in state transportation grants to complete the

tunnel, said Dale Shaver, director of the Waukesha County Department of Parks and Land Use.

When Highway 67 and its Interstate 94 overpass were widened and improved several years ago, the state Department of Transportation built a tunnel beneath the roadway to provide users a safe means of crossing the busy thoroughfare.

But the tunnel went unfinished.

Funding to complete tunnel approaches was not available at the time, leaving Waukesha County and Oconomowoc with the burden of financing the completion. The tunnel was then sealed shut.

The needed work largely

involves removing tunnel seals and building retaining walls on the sides of both entrances.

The first round of bids a few years ago were over budget, Shaver said. The project then underwent design adjustments to lower construction costs, he said.

If work begins in spring, the tunnel should be ready for use in late 2020, Shaver said.

The 15-mile trail connects Oconomowoc with Waukesha, passing through Delafield and Pewaukee. It extends west of Oconomowoc. The tunnel is south of Oconomowoc Parkway, and trail users have crossed Highway 67 at a controlled intersection.

Murphy & Prachthauser, S.C. opens office in Waukesha County

CITY OF PEWAUKEE — Murphy & Prachthauser, S.C. announced the firm has opened a new office location at N14-W23833 Stone Ridge Drive in the City of Pewaukee.

“We are very pleased to

have opened a new Waukesha office on I-94 east of Highway 16,” said Don Prachthauser, Milwaukee personal injury attorney. “We believe this location will be very convenient for our Waukesha clients.”

Legal resources offered in the new location include experienced counsel specializing in personal injury, motor vehicle accidents and more. Murphy and Prachthauser was established over 40 years ago.

Play

From Page 1A

diately got to work restoring the barn’s former smiley face. But the problem was that the smiley was too large under Delafield’s signage ordinance. So the Delafield community gathered over 1,000 signatures to get approval on restoring the smiley face.

“We had so much community support,” Luther said. “People really missed their Smiley Barn. It was gone for 17 years, but everyone remembered it.”

The Delafield Plan Commission deemed the iconic smiley face to be public art, rather than signage, and allowed it to return home.

Getting the iconic smiley face back wasn’t the only challenge; the barn was in rough shape and needed to be dramatically remodeled.

“There were a lot of things that needed to be done that we didn’t recognize when we came in,” Luther said.

The wood that made up the outside walls and floors was rotted out and needed to be replaced. None of the electrical was up to code, the heating and air conditioning was out-



Ian Bergersen/Special to The Freeman

The second-floor playroom at The Smiley Barn features Playmobil toy sets, life-size Playmobil figures and a mural of Playmobil characters.

dated and the parking needed to be redone. The interior was partitioned into display rooms and offices, new bathrooms were put in and everything was repainted.

After constant work on the barn and planning the business, The Smiley Barn held its grand opening on Aug. 25, 2018. Luther said that the local toy shop has been thriving since the day it opened.

“It’s nice not to put so much money into the remodeling and maintenance of the barn, and instead being able to put that more directly into the customer experience,”

Luther said. “We are going to continue to expand as we grow into our space.”

She said that the next step planned for 2020 is to rebuild the dilapidated patio outside of the barn to allow for outdoor seating and events. In the next two years or so, Luther wants to make use of the barn’s silo.

“The outpouring support from the community has been absolutely amazing,” Luther said. “I’ve had over 100 people personally thank me as they walk through the store for bringing the smiley back. They just love it.”



Submitted photo

Blue Collar Coffee Co., 523 Milwaukee St. in Delafield, officially opened for business recently.

Blue Collar Coffee Co. now open in Delafield

DELAFIELD — After making quick work of some interior renovations, Blue Collar Coffee Co. has officially opened a storefront at 523 Milwaukee St.

The business is at the site of the former Milwaukee Street Traders.

After Milwaukee Street Traders shuttered its doors toward the end of September, it was quickly announc-

ed that Blue Collar Coffee would take over and be opened by the end of this year.

Owned and operated by Geronimo Hospitality Group, Blue Collar Coffee Co. in Delafield will offer handcrafted coffee drinks from beans roasted and sourced by Ruby Coffee Roasters, which is based in Nelsonville.

Blue Collar’s menu includes espresso, teas, smoothies, baked goods, breakfast sandwiches and various lunch items including sandwiches and soups.

Hours for the Delafield location are: 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. weekdays, 7 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday.

More information can be found at bluecollarcoffee.net.

Sjoberg Tool & Manufacturing Corp. expanding

Hartland firm adding building addition

HARTLAND — Sjoberg Tool & Manufacturing Corp. is constructing a 14,940-square-foot building addition which is scheduled for completion in early 2020.

The Hartland company is a precision light-gauge sheet metal fabricator and is expanding to accommodate greater output and further expedite production.

According to the announcement, STMC will leverage the addition to increase its investment in state-of-the-art equipment and expand its current fleet to incorporate seven new machines, including three

LAG Rainer turret punches, two Timesaver sanders, one Haeger press and one Roper Whitney folding machine. These investments better position STMC to accommodate increased growth with current and new customers and stimulate the local job market, creating opportunities for skilled applicants to support management and execution of the company’s operations, according to the announcement.

“This expansion presents substantial opportunity, allowing us to better address changing customer needs and providing the resources we need to continue exceeding expectations,” said Jim Sjoberg, president of Sjoberg Tool. “We look forward to leveraging the additional space to not only enhance our ability to deliver high-

quality parts on time and on budget, but to expand our workforce to include even more skilled, experienced team members.”

Following completion, STMC will relocate the majority of its shipping procedures from its headquarters located at 535 S. Industrial Drive to its Sjoberg South inventory warehouse, located at 620 Cardinal Lane in Hartland. This relocation increases STMC’s manufacturing footprint to a total 153,000 square feet. The company’s headquarters will continue to serve as the location for its primary operations, including CNC cutting and punching, forming/bending, folding, welding and quality control.

STMC partnered with MSI General Corporation for design and construction.

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PLAYER PROFILE

Benes takes long road to 1,000-point club

LCL senior missed last year with knee injury

By Dave Radcliffe
dradcliffe@conley.net.com
262-513-2655

HARTLAND — By the time her sophomore season at Lake Country Lutheran had ended, Kate Benes was already on the doorstep of the 1,000-point club. Right then and there, she would have never believed it would take until her senior year to eclipse that mark. Fast-forward to Nov. 26, Benes' second game back from a significant knee injury, when she spotted up for 3 in the second half against Racine Lutheran. It was a familiar sight, with the LCL senior burying the shot from long distance to reach 1,000 career points before LCL coach Kim Hirt called timeout to allow the 5-foot-3 guard to revel in her accomplishment. It was a long time coming for Benes.

"I think it meant more to me than just getting my 1,000th point," Benes said. "I missed all of my junior year, so it was even more special to me that I got it. I wouldn't have been able to do (it) without my teammates and my coaches, of course. They definitely pushed me to become the player that I am today."

What made it even more special for Benes was that her cousin, sophomore Rieleigh Mueller, assisted the milestone basket.

"Honestly I did not even think about getting my 1,000th point," Benes said. "I was just so overjoyed to be on the court, so that was just kind of an extra bonus."

Benes isn't taking anything for granted these days. Her junior season was lost due to an injury sustained while playing soccer for the Lightning in the spring of 2018, when a blow to the knee forced her into surgery.

"At first it was like a torn cartilage thing but my kneecap ran right over where the cartilage tore, so I went in and they fixed the cartilage," Benes said.

Unfortunately, that wasn't the end of it.

"I had to go in a second time and they had to cut my tibia so they could move it over, move the ligaments and regenerate blood flow, so that was the major surgery," Benes said.

The road to recovery was an excruciating process for Benes. She was unable to begin her rehab until about four months after the second surgery, slamming the door on any hopes of returning for her junior year.

"Last year was hard," said LCL girls basketball coach Kim Hirt, who joined the

Get to know ... KATE BENES

School/Sport
Lake Country Lutheran/Basketball

Coach
Kim Hirt

Class In School/Age
Senior/17

Also In My Family Are: my mom, Sara; my dad, Eric; and my brother, Levi.

The Athletic Accomplishment I Am Most Proud Of Is: scoring my 1,000th point.

My Favorite Subject In School Is: science.

My Favorite Teacher Is: Mark Newman.

My Favorite Movie Is: "High School Musical 3."

My Favorite TV Show Is: "Victorious"

My Favorite Recording Artist Is: Juice WRLD.

The Best Meal My Mother Makes Is: mac and cheese.

A Bad Habit I Have Is: procrastinating.

A Pet Peeve I Have Is: when people don't give their hardest.

The Thing I Do Best Outside Of Athletics Is: art.

The Person I'd Most Like To Meet Is: Steph Curry.

The Last Time I Cleaned My Room I Found: money.

Nobody Ever Says I'm: lazy.

My Most Memorable Experience Is: going to Destin, Fla., with family members.

My Most Prized Possession Is: my dog.

One Thing People Might Not Know About Me Is: that I have a really big family.

One Thing I Would Change About Myself Is: not to get frustrated so easily.

One Thing At My School I Would Change Is: the lunches.

I See Myself In 10 Years Being: a physical therapist for a professional sports team.

I Wish Coach Hirt Would: bring all her cats to practice one day.

staff Benes' freshman year. "There were a lot of times we thought we were going to have her back. Coming off her sophomore year, at that point there was no indication of what was going to happen with her knee.

"She's a player you can build a program around. We had her for two years and then her last year was strange. It was difficult, it was disappointing, knowing that basketball was a huge part of her life. It was an enormous growth period for her. As awful as it was not to have her, just in learning who Kate is when Kate doesn't have basketball, for her to be able to go through that ... there were times we had some worries. Is she going to be back? There were days when we'd talk and nobody knew for sure."

That uncertainty took a toll on Benes, who still isn't quite all the way back.

"Mentally, it was very hard. Extremely hard," Benes said. "The physical part was very hard, too, and I'm still recovering, but mentally that was really hard for me to watch people play the game that I loved and have to sit on the sideline. But it made me learn things about the game. I learned a different side of the game. But I definitely would've rather been on the court playing."

And her coaches and teammates would share that sentiment based on the two-year stretch Benes put together after arriving on campus.

She burst onto the scene as a freshman, earning first-team all-conference honors in the Midwest Classic Conference after averaging 18.4 points per game on 52.8%

shooting. As a sophomore, Benes was once again voted first team all-conference and was second in the MCC in scoring for the second straight year, posting 21.9 points a contest.

That would seem to indicate Benes filled it up while playing in the Oconomowoc Youth Basketball program, where she was part of three state championship teams. Except that couldn't be further from the case.

"My role on that team was completely different," Benes said. "My role on the Oconomowoc team was assists, kind of the playmaker of it all. Then at LCL I had to step up and do more of the shooting. Coming in as a freshman, it was really hard to be like, 'Oh, I have to score.' But it definitely was the hard work I put in and the encouragement from my teammates and coaches, that helped a lot and I also got a lot of support from my family."

Benes may not have known she had it in her, but Hirt did.

"She has the ability to find daylight where most people see three defenders," Hirt said. "I have always thought of her as more of a scorer than a playmaker. I think some of that was where she was playing before, that's the role where she was best in. But she stepped into it very easily. We have always thought of her as a go-to."

Basketball has been a part of Benes' life dating all the way back to kindergarten when she participated in drills at St. Paul's in Oconomowoc every weekend until she was in fourth grade. From there, she



Photo courtesy of Kristin Simons

Lake Country Lutheran senior Kate Benes drives to the basket against University School on Nov. 22. Benes eclipsed 1,000 points Nov. 26 against Racine Lutheran despite missing her entire junior season with a knee injury.

joined Oconomowoc Youth Basketball, where she played up until attending LCL, and she was also a member of the Wisconsin Impact AAU team from fifth grade onward.

Another outstanding area senior, Benes played alongside Oconomowoc's Olivia Sobczak from fifth through eighth grade. Both went through the rehabilitation process their junior years, as Sobczak suffered a torn ACL during the summer of 2018.

"We always hang out outside of basketball," Benes said. "When I heard she tore her ACL, it was devastating to me. She is such a great player. We definitely still keep in touch. We were encouraging each other and our parents are super close so still to this day we see how each other's games are going."

Benes, who is already taking college-level courses at Concordia University in government and English, plans to continue playing post-high school and hopes to make a decision by the end of her senior season.

"I'm looking more at around where I live, more NAIA or Division II because I want to be able to come

home and cheer on my cousins and brother when they play," Benes said, as her brother, Levi, is a freshman at LCL.

But she still has unfinished business with the Lightning.

Having already set the program record in steals in a single game — she had 13 against St. Francis in December of 2016 — and the single-season free-throw percentage school record (80% as a sophomore), Benes has her eyes set on the program's all-time scoring mark. That would require her to pass Mary Hirt, Kim's oldest daughter, who scored 1,369 points at LCL.

But it will be hard to replicate the moment Nov. 26 provided Hirt and everyone close to Benes.

"To see that 1,000th point, the culmination of this year, the resilience she showed, the ability to get back out there, in that moment it was more than just 1,000 points," Hirt said. "It was victory in just her maturing and in us being able to see her get back up and dust herself off."

"She's a great kid. She's filled with enthusiasm and passion for the sport and for what she does. She implores herself wholeheartedly into

her role on the team. She's easily the loudest on the bench — on the times when she is on the bench. Whether it's encouraging, celebrating when a teammate is doing well. You don't always see it naturally in girls, a little bit of a swagger. It helps to have somebody who's played basketball for several years. She has the basketball IQ when we are able to make that adjustment, she just locks eyes and says 'I've got it.'"

Not only should Benes garner more individual accolades as the season moves forward, but the team goals are high for a program that's steadily been building with Benes in the mix. LCL finished second in the Midwest Classic when she was a sophomore, and to its credit, repeated that showing without Benes' services in 2018-19.

"We recognize it. We have a special group, a unique combination of talent," Hirt said. "We don't necessarily have the size, but we have the aggressiveness, the scrappiness. This group of girls enjoys each other's company."

"When somebody like Kate is leading that charge, we're optimistic about things to come."

Will winter season bring more success?

Fall season was historic in Waukesha County

The 2019-20 winter sports seasons are finally into full swing. Boys and girls basketball, girls gymnastics, wrestling, boys swimming and diving and boys and girls hockey all will be contested through February and into March. What lies ahead for our Waukesha County teams?

Let's be honest about it. It's going to be next to impossible to repeat the brilliant success our fall sports teams enjoyed. It was a record-setting fall season as the county won an unprecedented nine WIAA state championships. Bringing home gold were the Brookfield East girls swim and dive team, Brookfield Central boys soccer team, Arrowhead girls volleyball team, Catholic Memorial girls tennis team, Brookfield East football, Catholic Memorial football team, Lake Country Lutheran football team, Muskego girls cross country team and the Muskego football team.

But despite those gaudy team accomplishments, the winter could provide more state team success and some brilliant races for conference



CHUCK DESLMAN

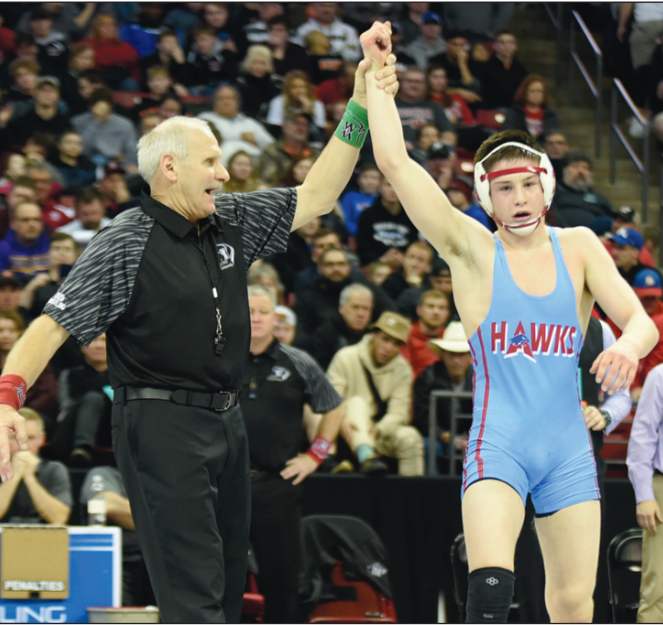
championships. Here's a quick look at some things to keep your eyes on.

■ Perhaps No. 1 among things to watch will come in wrestling as Arrowhead senior Keegan O'Toole attempts to not only make state history but also county history. O'Toole has won state championships his first three years, becoming the first local wrestler ever to do that. If he wins his fourth crown this winter, he'll become the first county wrestler and just the 18th in state history to be a four-time state champion.

Only two other county wrestlers, Eric Swick of Kettle Moraine and Nick Hucke of Arrowhead, have won three consecutive state titles. Swick accomplished that feat in 1994-96 and Hucke did it from 2006-08. It could be a special winter for O'Toole.

■ The county also features arguably the two best boys basketball teams in the state. For the second straight year, Brookfield Central and Hamilton rank with the best Wisconsin has to offer.

Last year the two battled it out for conference honors in the Greater Metro and then met in the sectional champi-



Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

Arrowhead's Keegan O'Toole gets his hand raised after winning the 145-pound championship during the WIAA Division 1 Individual State Wrestling Tournament last season at the Kohl Center in Madison. O'Toole is looking to be the first county wrestler to become a four-time state champion.

onship to determine which team would go to state. Hamilton won the two conference games and then Central stunned the Chargers by winning the sectional game. That win ultimately led the Lancers to the coveted state championship.

What will happen this season? The two conference meetings will most likely determine the league title but perhaps the biggest game ever played by county

teams will take place when they most likely meet in another sectional final.

No gym around here will be big enough to host that game. I'd love to see it moved to the Al McGuire Center. It would be a great venue for maybe the best game of the year. The Chargers are led by Patrick Baldwin Jr., most likely the best player ever to play for a county school.

■ Once again Mukwonago looks to have the best

wrestling team in the county and one of the best in the state. One year ago the Indians, coached by Jon Wierzbiicki, finished second at the prestigious WIAA Division 1 state team tournament, losing to powerhouse Stoughton in the finals, 42-24. Despite that setback, the Indians look loaded once again and should be serious contenders to win the state championship.

First Mukwonago has business to take care of in the highly competitive Classic 8 Conference. The Indians have won the last eight league titles and 13 of the 22 Classic 8 crowns. Can any school challenge Mukwonago? It's going to be tough. But Arrowhead (five league titles) and Muskego won't go down without a fight.

■ Who's the best boys basketball team in the Classic 8 this season? Arrowhead, off to a fast start, figures to be in the favorite's role. The Warhawks are led by UW recruit Carter Gilmore and have some good pieces around him. But they'll have some competition. Kettle Moraine has looked good in its first two wins of the season and Oconomowoc also looks solid. And when Catholic Memorial gets healthy and gets all of its players on the court, the Crusaders will be tough. And you can never fall asleep on any team from Muskego. This race looks to go down to

the wire.

■ In the girls Classic 8 Conference race, Arrowhead came into the season as the favorites but has lost two of its first three games, including a shocking loss at home to Muskego. The Warhawks still figure to be the team to beat. But Mukwonago, winners of eight league titles and three of the last four, is still very solid and won't go down without a fight. With their win over Arrowhead, Muskego figures to have its best year since joining the conference.

Kettle Moraine is off to a fast start, sporting a 5-0 record. The Lasers could be dangerous and Oconomowoc and Waukesha West are two others to keep your eyes on. But in the end, it looks like the title road runs through AHS and Mukwonago.

■ The Midwest Classic Conference boys basketball race once again will be highly competitive, just like one season ago. Look for Brookfield Academy, Lake Country Lutheran and St. John's Northwestern Military Academy to battle it out to the finish line. Those should be some great battles.

So there you have it, a quick peek at some things that could highlight the winter sports seasons in Waukesha County. Is there more gold to be had?

Get to the gym to find out for yourself.