

Lake Country

THIS MONTH

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Starting the day right in Lake Country

From breakfast nooks to brunch bars, area restaurants aim to satisfy

By Kelly Smith
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OCONOMOWOC — Breakfast is often described as the most important meal of the day. In Lake Country, there are a plethora of small, locally owned cafes and coffee shops that offer a wide variety of freshly cooked breakfasts. Here are some of the more iconic ones.

M & M, Sussex

Perhaps the “granddaddy” of them all is the M & M in Sussex. Local historian Fred Keller believes N64-W2336 Main St. has been a restaurant address for more than 50 years. Members of the Babits family have been cooking on the grill and waiting tables since they purchased it in the late 1970s. It is a classic 20th-century Midwest diner where some customers can watch meals being prepared on the grill while sitting at a large counter that stretches across more than half the length of the restaurant. On the opposite wall are booths. There are tables scattered between the booths and the counter. The breakfast menu is classic Americana. The steak and eggs are among the best of the region. It is the ultimate in casual breakfast dining. You can wear your sweats over your pj's and no one at the M & M will notice or care.

S & J Café, Oconomowoc

Despite its small size, the S & J Café at 113 S. Main St. is a big draw in Oconomowoc and, perhaps, the most unique breakfast spot in the region. There is a small counter in the front of this compact establishment where customers sitting on stools are so close to Chef Scott Ames they can practically pick his pockets while he cooks on the grill. His wife, Jennifer, serves the few tables that are squeezed into the back of the café that has won rave reviews for the quality of its food and friendliness. While the breakfast menu includes the usual



The signs of some Lake Country restaurants become landmarks of sorts in their own rights. Photos by Kelly Smith

Midwestern offerings, there are also some unique specials including a breakfast bagel with smoked salmon, cream cheese, red onion and capers called Rolelaks. Opening at 5 a.m. on week day mornings, provides the S & J with an earlier start than most breakfast spots in the region. **Amalia's, Oconomowoc** Down the street and around the corner from the S & J is Amalia's, located in the Avenue Square Mall along Wisconsin Avenue in downtown Oconomowoc. Originally the Mug N Muffin, Theresa and Jose Perez of Watertown took over the establishment about 15 years ago and renamed it Amalia's.

Jose, the chef, “is always creating interesting items for the menu and loves fixing food for our customers,” said his wife Theresa. Cin-A-Bun French Toast covered with a strawberry, blueberry or apple glaze is among the house specialties. In addition to breakfast and lunch, Amalia's also features a dinner menu including a variety of Greek and Italian dishes, unusual offerings for Lake Country breakfast spots. **Lumber Inn, Delafield** Located near the corner of Wells and Genesee streets in downtown Delafield, the Lumber Inn is

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Delafield gets rare Washington portrait

Lang lends
painting to city

By Kelly Smith
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DELAFIELD — Calendar entrepreneur and developer Bob Lang is lending to the city what he has described as a rare, valuable, and very large oil painting of President George Washington.

“I wanted to do something for Delafield,” Lang explained.

The painting dates back to the 1830s, but the artist is unknown, Lang said.

He would not disclose how much he paid for the painting when he purchased it in Washington, D.C., in 2012.

“Let’s just say it is worth numbers in the hundreds of thousands of dollars and it is more than the numbers one and two,” Lang said.

The painting was shipped to Delafield last year along with Lang’s collection of oil portraits of Abraham Lincoln, which were at the Gettysburg National Museum and are now on display at the Delafield History Center.

Lang was instrumental in helping the Hawks Inn Historical Society persuade Gettysburg museum officials to lend to Hawks Inn the Medal of Honor posthumously awarded to Delafield Civil War hero Lt. Alonzo Cushing. The medal will be displayed at Hawks Inn along with the Lincoln collection until August.

Lang said the Washington portrait will also be at City Hall until then.

The challenge for city officials has been deciding where and how to hang the portrait, which, Lang said, is about 7 feet tall. The weight of the painting and its frame is more than 300 pounds.

Two sites, inside the Delafield Public Library or



Kelly Smith/Special to Conley Media

This rare and unique oil portrait of George Washington and his horse Blue Skin is entitled “The Battle of Dorchester Heights,” according to antique art dealers who believe the work was done in the 1830s but do not know the artist, Delafield developer Bob Lang said. He is lending the portrait to the city of Delafield where it will be displayed in City Hall.

above the main floor atrium, have been under consideration, Common Council President Tim Aicher said.

Aicher explained the library, and the atrium between the library and administration offices, are the only locations in City Hall with blank wall space tall enough for the painting.

However, City Clerk Michelle Luedtke told The Freeman the atrium may not be suitable because the painting must be protected from direct sunlight which during the day shines brightly in the atrium.

She said there may be space on a tall wall adjacent to the children’s section of

the library.

Another challenge, she explained, is how to move the painting because of its height and weight from its present undisclosed location to City Hall.

Lang said he has associates who are professional carriers who can help with relocation.



Submitted photo

Four decades after cranking out radio hits like “Tuff Enuff” and “Wrap It Up,” the Fabulous Thunderbirds will headline BluesFest’s Saturday night this year.

Waukesha Rotary names BluesFest headliners

Joanne Shaw Taylor,
Fabulous Thunderbirds
to play Naga-Waukee Aug. 9-10

WAUKESHA —The Waukesha Rotary Club announced recently that Joanne Shaw Taylor and The Fabulous Thunderbirds will headline this year’s Waukesha Rotary BluesFest.

This year’s festival, “An American Music and Art Festival,” will be held Friday and Saturday, Aug. 9 and 10 at Naga-Waukee Park in Delafield.

Gates are slated to open at 12:30 p.m. each day with music entertainment running from 1 to 10 p.m.

Described as “the girl with the big voice from the Black Country in England,” Taylor is expected to headline Friday’s lineup, while The Fabulous Thunderbirds will highlight Saturday’s entertainment.

Best known for their ’80s hits “Tuff Enuff” and “Wrap It Up,” the band has been delivering high-energy Texas blues for close to four decades.

Advance tickets for the Waukesha Rotary BluesFest



Submitted photo

Joanne Shaw Taylor, “the girl with the big voice from the Black Country in England,” will headline BluesFest’s Friday night.

will go on sale April 15 at waukeshabluesfest.com.

Advance tickets will also be available at Almont Gallery, 342 W. Main St. in downtown Waukesha, all Waukesha State Bank locations, and all White House of Music locations. Tickets will also be available at the gate during the festival.

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Local pharmacists discuss evolving industry

Some family-run, independent pharmacies still survive

By Brandon Anderegg
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WAUKESHA — It's no secret old-timey pharmacies with soda fountains, barstools and stained cabinetry have faded away, but some family-run and independent pharmacies have found a way to survive in an industry marked by acquisitions and mergers.

Dave Schultz, owner of Tobin's Pharmacy in Oconomowoc, said it was in the 1970s when he began seeing pharmacies evolve. At that time, Schultz and his brother worked for his parents at the family's Burlington Pharmacy, he said.

This era, Schultz said, was the time that pharmacies became quasi-department stores as they began offering much more than just prescriptions.

"Back in the early '70s when the store became Tobin's, that was the tilt at that time," Schultz said. "It was actually my parents that had the vision that if you're going to compete, you need to have a different angle."

Competition against chains has affected the number of mom and pop pharmacies seen today, but the impact insurance companies have on small pharmacies has been just as challenging, Schultz added.

"Right now, 18.9 percent of our prescriptions are being paid at below our actual cost of the medication," Schultz said. "That's at Tobin's, but this is happening to most pharmacies."

Many insurance companies have contracts with certain pharmacies called Medicare D contracts, which are sometimes advertised by providers as "preferred pharmacies," Schultz said. In other words, an established customer may be driven to a different pharmacy because of their insurance plan and how it affects their co-pay for prescriptions.

"What that is forcing people to do is, your established customer is being forced to go to a different provider," Schultz said.

Washington County is an example of an area in Wisconsin where independent or family-run pharmacies no longer exist.

Rexall in downtown Hartford was one of the last independent pharmacies in the county, said Scott Henke, Hartford Chamber of Commerce executive director. The building is now inhabited by Scoop Deville Ice Cream Shop and Bakery, which Henke said has tried to revive the old pharmacy feel.

"They (Rexall) used to have the soda fountain and the old prescription counters in the back," said Henke. "It's got to be 25-plus years in my opinion since something was anywhere, whether it was in Hartford or West Bend."

Henke, who's lived in the Hartford area for decades, said he's not quite sure why pharmacies in the area have evaporated.

"I think it's a lot like banking with the regulations and different things you have to do," Henke said. "I think it may just be easier to not compete and go with the big guys."

Personal touch

Rick Conner, owner of Hometown Pharmacy in downtown Hartland, own-



Submitted photo

It is believed that a drugstore has been in the Hometown Pharmacy building as far back as 1894. The tall rectangle building can be seen in the photo on the right side of East Capitol Drive in Hartland just beyond an electrical post.

ing an independent pharmacy means going the extra mile for customers. On occasion, Conner will make at-home prescription deliveries as well as administer immunizations at home or in vehicles for those who cannot make it to the pharmacy, he said.

"I've opened up the pharmacy after hours to take care of patients and even given out my personal cell phone," Conner said.

For Conner, independent pharmacies like his take the time to educate their patients on alternatives to medications, such as nutritional supplements and preventative health care plans to avoid certain ailments from becoming long-term, he said.

"You get more personalized care and we have more time to coordinate things with doctors and other health care professionals," Conner said. "With independents, we have a little more time to tailor the services we offer to get the best outcome for the patient."

And that extra time pharmacists spend can mean the difference between life and death. "At least twice last year, we caught two drug interactions that could have potentially killed an individual," Schultz said. "People don't think about that, all they think about is 'what's my co-pay?'"



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Eateries

From Page 1A

one of the region's best-known breakfast spots.

Formerly a lumber yard pay station, it was established in the early 1980s by Dave and Shar Huebner as a smaller version of the classic Midwestern family diner with customers sitting at a counter in front of the cooking grill surrounded by a few tables and booths.

It has tripled in size since Raul Perez took it over in 2002.

Yet, he has kept his

promise that tasty American and Mexican breakfast dishes will be served to customers within 5 minutes after the order is placed in the kitchen.

Perez is the American dream come true.

He crossed the American-Mexican border at the age of 17, began working as a dish washer and cook in northern Illinois, and eventually accomplished his goal of owning a restaurant.

Hartbrook Café, Hartland

Owned by Barbara and David Krumenacher of Delafield, the Hartbrook

Café has survived the ups and downs of decades of economic trends in restaurants and strip malls.

This spacious establishment includes booths and tables along with a large U-shaped counter that gives it the feel of the suburban diners that became popular in the 1950s and early 1960s.

Located in the Sendik's Hartbrook Plaza, formerly Hartbrook Mall, on the north side of Hartland, the Hartbrook Café menu offers the standard Midwestern breakfast fare of bacon, eggs omelets, pancakes and biscuits and gravy.

"Our hash browns have

made us famous," said restaurant manager Sandy Watt.

Pink Mocha, Hartland

The newest, and perhaps "hottest," breakfast landmark in Lake Country is the Pink Mocha.

Heidi Nugent opened the coffee and sandwich cafe in downtown Hartland in 2013.

She moved it in 2016 to its present location in a small strip mall at 418 Merton Ave. near the interchange of Merton Avenue and Highway 16.

It is a casual, compact and intimate venue that

can quickly become crowded during early and mid-morning hours on both weekdays and weekends.

It has a diverse breakfast menu offering a variety of sandwiches, wraps, and cereal and vegetable bowls, in addition to the standard omelets and pancakes.

Among the house specials are the crab cakes Benedict, spinach and feta cheese omelet, and blueberry granola pancakes.

It is one of the few Lake Country breakfast spots where you can order a mixed drink in addition to a wide variety of coffees, teas, and other beverage.



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The keg connoisseur

Wales man turns college hobby into business selling brewing equipment



Brandon Anderegg/Freeman Staff

Spike Brewing welder Jason Meyer points out the difficulties of welding tri-clamps onto a kettle that Keith Lyons is using to practice his welding. Welders will practice on several test kettles before working on customized kettles for clients.

By Brandon Anderegg
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MILWAUKEE — When the dust settles at a college party and the keg is finally tapped, what happens to the keg? Most college students would return the keg to a store and reclaim their deposit while the more forgetful left their investment in the basement of a college house where it embarked on a new journey as a chair or a foot stool.

For Wales native and Spike Brewing owner Ben Caya, the forgotten kegs may have been empty, but they were still filled with opportunities.

Caya, who graduated UW-Milwaukee with a mechanical engineering degree in the mid-2000s, spent many days as a college student collecting kegs from friends and selling them on Craigslist.

“Someone just came to my college basement and gave me 50 bucks,” Caya said.

Caya didn’t at first realize his clients had been cutting off the tops of the kegs and repurposing them into homebrewing equipment.

As demand began to ramp up, fliers posted around campus soliciting kegs from classmates wasn’t enough anymore.

Soon after, a truck loaded with 50 kegs was backing into the alley of his Farwell Avenue college house. Before he knew it, Caya became a keg connoisseur in his own right.

What started as a college hobby turned into Spike Brewing, a nationally recognized brewing equipment business and brand operating out of a 22,000-square-foot facility in Milwaukee’s Riverwest neighborhood.

“I think when I saw the kegs in my basement, I thought ‘Oh, those have to be worth something, put it on Craigslist and see where it goes,’” Caya said. “I never imagined it would turn into this.”

Spike Brewing manufactures brew kettles, conical fermenters, brewing systems and other homebrewing accessories. The company also specializes in custom kettles that are welded in house, Caya said.

The facility houses an engineering lab, showroom, warehouse, a test brewery,

an employee tap room with employee-brewed beers. The company has worked with several local brewers including MobCraft, 1840 Brewing Company, Gathering Place Brewing and New Barons Brewing Co-Op.

“A perfect way to test prototype equipment is to encourage local breweries around town to use it,” Caya said. “Many do and some of these pilot recipes end up being brewed commercially at these breweries.”

Homebrewing fun

Caya sells some of his kettles to commercial companies who would like to test recipes without mucking up their commercial brewing systems. But most of his clientele comprises at-home brewers, adding that many of them are technical and hands-on individuals who enjoy the process of making beer.

“People obsess over this (brewing) so, they are very particular,” Caya said. “I think these people really enjoy the process of making something themselves and sharing it with family, friends and other beer nerds.”

Reaching new heights

Eagle numbers continue to soar across state

By Brandon Anderegg
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WAUKESHA — Wisconsin’s bald eagle population continues to rebound with 1,695 occupied nests in 2018, a record high since the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources began aerial surveys in the early 1970s.

The statewide record was accompanied by another indicator of the raptor’s comeback after Walworth County confirmed its first documented nest in at least half a century, according to results released in the 2018 Wisconsin Bald Eagle Nest survey.

“2018 was another great year for the bald eagles’ remarkable comeback in Wisconsin,” said Laura Jaskiewicz, a Department of Natural Resources research scientist who coordinates the statewide aerial survey.

“The number of nests is still increasing throughout the state and we now have them documented in 71 of 72 counties,” Jaskiewicz said.

Milwaukee is the only county that did not meet the aerial survey criteria, which includes a repaired nest, an incubating adult, eggs or young in the nest. And though eagles have not yet found a home in Milwaukee, it’s not out of the realm of possibility.

“That being said, it’s certainly not impossible. In areas like the Twin Cities metro area of Minnesota, bald eagles are doing quite well, and the Minnesota DNR has documented dozens of active nesting territories,” said Sharon Fandel, a DNR district ecologist with the Natural Heritage Conservation program.

Wisconsin DNR conservation biologists and DNR pilots conducted the 2018 aerial survey in March and April, but the nest documented in Walworth County was reported by a private citizen, according to a DNR press release.

Fandel, who went to the site and confirmed the nest, put out a call last year for residents to report potential bald eagle nests in southeastern Wisconsin.

“Citizen reports were a big help this past year,” Fandel said. “There were a handful of reports that helped confirm new nests while other reports identified nests that we didn’t know about previously.”

For over 100 years, eagles had not been successful nesting in southeastern Wisconsin, said Shawn Graff, American Bird Conservancy vice president for the Great Lakes Region. The first successful nesting pair of bald eagles showed up in 2007 in Mequon, Graff added.

“Donges Bay Gorge was



Photo courtesy of Karl A. Lurvey and the Waukesha County Land Conservancy

A bald eagle overlooks School Section Lake in western Waukesha County.

where those first eaglets were actually born,” Graff said. “That pair was successful for a number of years.”

Graff said the Waukesha County Land Conservancy, the Ozaukee and Washington County Land Trust and the Tall Pines Conservancy have all been instrumental in the soaring eagle population in southeast Wisconsin.

spot, he added.

“I’ve probably seen 50 eagles from there,” Graff said. “Not just bald eagles but golden eagles and dozens of other raptors.”

Eagle statistics and status

Bald eagles were dropped from the state endangered species list in 1997 and the federal list in 2007; eagles and their nests are still federally protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Vilas and Oneida County have the most eagles’ nests in the state with 172 and 154 respectively, according to the survey. These two counties have topped the charts in Wisconsin for several years due to their high concentration of freshwater lakes, which make for great nesting grounds.

Although Waukesha and Washington counties both have several lakes to boast, these counties only have two nests each.

The 2018 survey found a total of 1,695 bald eagle nests occupied by breeding adults, an increase of 105 nests from 2017. This is a 6.6 percent increase and more than 16 times as many nests found in the first detailed surveys in 1974, when bald eagles were listed as state and federally endangered species and only 108 nests were documented, according to the Wisconsin DNR website.

The record number of nests documented this year results from protections under the state and federal endangered species laws, declining levels of DDT in the environment, and DNR and partner efforts to help monitor and aid recovery, according to the Wisconsin DNR website.

Eagle watching

Despite the unseasonably cold weather this winter, there are still several areas that are prime for eagle watching, especially near open water, said Mary Holleback, senior naturalist and educator at the Riveredge Nature Center.

“Usually, they’re a more rural bird,” Holleback said. “So people have been seeing them all along the Milwaukee river in Cedarburg, Port Washington, Grafton, West Bend and up into Kewaskum and Campbellsport.”

In Washington County, some of the best places to see eagles include Glacial Hill Park on Friess Lake, the Kettle Moraine State Forest Northern Unit, Pike Lake and Sandy Knoll Park. In Waukesha County, eagles have been spotted at the Retzer Nature Center and Nagawicka Lake, while the Vernon Marsh has been a hot spot as of late.

While some of the mentioned places make for great bird watching, Graff contends that the Milwaukee River Corridor between West Bend and Newburg is one of the best spots.

“It would be difficult not to see the eagles if you were canoeing the river during the summer months,” Graff said.

The Ozaukee Washington Land Trust observation tower is also another great



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Rx for what ails you

Apothecary records a historical treasure trove; grandmother’s rug a valuable heirloom



BARBARA EASH
Antiques Appraised

Q.: My wife and I are both retired pharmacists. In 1966 we purchased the Hoeveler Drug Store in Waukesha and renamed it Van Elsen’s. In the purchase we obtained miscellaneous stock supplies, both antique and new. Would you consider using some pictures for inclusion in your column?

— Lucien and Karen Van Elsen, Waukesha

A.: Thank you for sharing your wonderful story and photographs. Applause to Karen for being one of the very first female pharmaceutical graduates. Although collecting apothecary supplies is a specialty area, the internet has a plethora of options for a dwindling number of interested buyers.

Early pharmacies not only sold medicine for humans but also animals and household supplies. Mortars and pestles remain the most recognized and iconic symbol for pharmacies. Your mortar and pestle collection includes glass, ceramic, pewter, marble, brass and wood. Eventually, wood was found to absorb ingredients and retired from active use. Storage bottles of all types and sizes, spouts and stoppers and lids come in pressed glass, corks and rubber closures. to name a few. Inverted bottles were provided by the drug companies and used for display only. The Prohibition era mandated all pharmacists to charge a “stamp” tax on any medicine containing alcohol. “Elixir” was the clue key word on the label that inferred alcohol content.

I was thrilled to see the very old and tattered prescription ledger stored among your items that was part of the store purchase. It will take closer examination, but the oldest entry in the back pages is dated June 23, 1862.

This hand-written ledger could be a true gem in Waukesha history. Part of that day’s recorded sales included more than medical remedies. Items listed were:



iodine, sassafras, tobacco, oysters, and sugar. The archival back pages were never destroyed, as was common — ledgers were turned around for new owners use.

Insurance value on your collection (some items not shown) would be **\$3,200.**

Q.: My grandmother Zera was born in Serbia, Yugoslavia, in 1900. As a child I watched her weave rugs in her small workroom. Among other techniques, she boiled and smashed walnuts (including the hulls) to get desired brown and green colors. Her skilled craft was known regionally and beyond. This narrow 3-foot by 7-foot rug was made especially for me; I have it folded away. What is the value?

— Millie, Hartland

A.: Walnuts have a natural oil mordant substance (dye fixative) but it can be difficult to produce level colors like the ones represented here. Fineness of weave and inclusion of vibrant plant-origin dyes have always captured far-reaching attention. Rug buyers wanted decorative but reversible coridorrrugs. Two or more colors were normally used and loom dimensions dictated narrow sizes. The length was normally two or three times the width. Expert weavers required great mental concentration and

were known as rule breakers in use of color and daring designs.

Your grandmother’s eight-color, eye-dazzling pattern is stunning. The strong tones and multidirectional design represent optimism and protection. Hung on the wall it will inspire attention.

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Submit an item for consideration

Do you have an item or collection of items that could be shared in a future newspaper column? Let Barbara Eash hear about it!

To have your item or collection considered send the following information: up to three, sharp, well-lit photos of front & back of the item(s), measurements as well as any history or hearsay, length of ownership and your full name, address and daytime phone number. Mail: Waukesha Antique Shop, ATTN Barbara Eash, 1427 E. Racine, Ave. Unit E-2, Waukesha, WI 53186 or email: beappraisals@gmail.com. If your item(s) are considered for a future column, we will contact you. No photos can be returned and no purchase of items 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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Longtime Pewaukee Realtor Koepp passes away at 95

By Chuck Delsman
Special to Conley Media

PEWAUKEE — The village lost one of its best friends, one of its nicest guys and one of its oldest residents recently.

On Monday, Jan. 28, longtime realtor Jack Koepp died at the age of 95 after a brief stay at the Seasons Hospice in Waukesha.

Koepp made his mark in life in two areas. First and foremost, he was a great husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather. He was married for 58 years to the love of his life, his wife Nancy. Together they had five children, all of who graduated from Pewaukee High School, just like their father.

Professionally, he was very successful in the real estate business, having started his own company, Koepp Realty in downtown Pewaukee, in 1946 at the young age of 23.

He ran that business for more than 70 years and was still active in the business at the end of 2018. Koepp is to be believed to be the longest-tenured realtor in Wisconsin and most likely sold the most properties ever in Waukesha County.

“I’m sure my dad was one of the hardest working realtors ever,” said his son Thomas. “I can remember growing up that he was working all the time. For him it was a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week job. He loved what he did and was very good at it. He had one of the strongest work ethics I’ve ever seen. Selling real estate was his passion.”

While he had a strong circle of friends, his picture was probably seen over the years by more county residents than anyone. For many years, Koepp Realty had one of the most viewed billboards in the county. The large and colorful sign was located off the east side of Highway 16, just one-quarter mile south of Waukesha County Technical College in Pewaukee. Pictured on that sign were Jack himself, along with his son Bob, who now runs the business, and daughter-in-law Debbie.

“That billboard became kind of famous over the years with the pictures,” Thomas said. “Highway 16 has always been a very busy road and it seemed to be the perfect place being in Pewaukee. People would comment on it all the time.”

In 2007, Koepp received his highest real estate award when the National Association of Realtors honored him by giving him the Realtor Emeritus award.

That award was given in recognition for more than fifty cumulative years of membership for his many valuable and lasting contributions to the real estate profession.

Last summer a bridge was constructed over the Pewaukee River near Oakton Avenue and the area was named the HJ Koepp River Parkway.

And that seemed very fitting. As a young kid growing up in the village, Koepp would fish in the river at that same spot all the time, many times catching some nice-sized northerns.

Besides family, Koepp also enjoyed bowling, competing at both alleys in Pewaukee, the Shore Bowl in downtown and Bill Perrigo’s Yacht Club Lanes on the south side of Pewaukee Lake on Highway SS.



Submitted photo

Jack Koepp started Koepp Realty in downtown Pewaukee in 1946 at the age of 23.



Submitted photo

Standing in front of the H.J. Koepp River Parkway sign are from left to right: back row, Tom Koepp, Greg Koepp, Bob Koepp and Mike Koepp; and front row, Nancy Koepp and Jack Koepp (sitting) and daughter Jackie in front of them.



Submitted photo

For many years, Koepp Realty had one of the most viewed billboards in the county. The large and colorful sign was located off the east side of Highway 16, just one-quarter mile south of Waukesha County Technical College in Pewaukee.

Wisecracks, one-liners

While he always was a soft-spoken man, he was quick to deliver some wisecrack jokes and funny one-liners.

“My dad was a quiet guy but he loved telling jokes and one-liners that made everyone laugh,” Thomas added. “He loved having his family over at the house. He enjoyed having everyone over, from us to all of his grandkids. And he always thanked all of us for coming over.”

He was proud of the accomplishments of all of his children and especially enjoyed watching his grandkids grow up and compete in sports, whether on the football field or wrestling mats.

Koepp served in the U.S. Army during World War II and was a member of Pewaukee American Legion Post 71

for 62 years. He also spent time on the Village Board and Plan Commission, always caring about his home town. He was a member of the Queen of Apostles Catholic Church (formerly St. Mary’s) for all of his 95 years.

Thomas Koepp said a conversation he had recently with his dad told you how dedicated a worker he was.

“I asked him what he wished he would have done in his life and he didn’t hesitate for a second in giving me a response. He said, ‘The one thing I wanted to do the most was sell more real estate than anybody else in Waukesha County. And I did that.’”

His son said his dad’s favorite quote was, “Hard work never hurt anybody.” And that’s how Jack Koepp approached his life.

Returning to the wild

Wildlife In Need Center reflects on 25 years of animal rehabilitation

By Brandon Anderegg
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262-513-2657

SUMMIT — The Wildlife in Need Center has been serving the southeastern region of Wisconsin since 1994, when its first patient, a sandhill crane, arrived in their modest one-bedroom home in Waukesha.

Twenty-five years later, the center’s first patient of 2019 was also a sandhill crane, so staff couldn’t help but find the synchronicity somewhat prophetic.

“It was kind of a big coincidence that our logo was also a sandhill crane as well as our first patient in 1994 and in 2019,” said Kim Banach, president of WINC’s board of directors.

As Banach described the organization’s humble beginnings, she recalled that at first, the center had one full-time and a part-time employee, limited resources and operated out of a 1,500-square-foot house with little to no equipment.

“I looked in our books and our opening checking balance was \$30 in June of ’93,” Banach said. “To see what we have now compared to the farmhouse, we use to give our waterfowl baths in a bathtub,” she added with a chuckle.

Now, the nonprofit has several acres of land it rents along with a 6,000-square-foot facility “built with patients in mind,” Banach added. Some of the amenities include a digital X-ray machine that allows for faster care as well as an indoor aquatic aviary — a far more suitable environment for birds on the mend.

A quarter-century of treating animals means a lot of unique stories, some of which end with an extended stay for an animal while others culminate with a perfect ending — a return to the wild.

Wildlife in Need Center staff generally do not name animals so as to avoid becoming attached, but in the case of one great horned owl, volunteers called her Maybelline since the ring around her eyes looked like mascara, said



Submitted photo

After a four-hour operation and months of recovery, a great horned owl nicknamed Maybelline was returned to the wild recently thanks to the efforts of dedicated volunteers at the Wildlife in Need Center.

Mandy Feavel, director of animal care.

Feavel said Maybelline suffered a wing fracture, which landed her in the hands of the nonprofit. However, during her stay, staff was faced with another problem.

“During rehabilitation, she damaged a bunch of her feathers,” Feavel said.

Maybelline would require a complex procedure known as “imping,” a clinical technique that requires taking appropriately sized and shaped feathers from a “donor bird,” and implanting them into the bird in need, Feavel said.

After four hours of surgery and post-surgery preparation, the procedure was successfully completed, Feavel said.

“To see that moment of her flying kind of makes all the long hours worth it,” Feavel said.

For its 25th anniversary, the center is asking its supporters to match an anonymous donor’s \$25,000 donation, Banach said. She added that every year, volunteers contribute 23,000 hours, which they rely on to continue wildlife rehabilita-

Wildlife in Need Center statistics

The nonprofit’s staff members treat up to 540 patients a day and 3,000 a year.

■ WINC staff are familiar with and can treat 140 different species.

■ WINC volunteers contribute 23,000 hours per year.

■ Approximately 25,000 people benefit from WINC’s educational programs each year.

■ The WINC provides wildlife consultation to 10,000 people per year.

tion and community educational programs.

“For those of you who have helped wildlife, whether as a volunteer, staff, donor, foundation, board member or rescued the animal in need, you are the reason we are celebrating this generational milestone,” Banach said.

The WINC offers several volunteer programs for kids ages 12 and up. For more information or to donate, visit helpingwildlife.org or call 262-965-3090.

Delafield wants to end deer sharpshooting, use bow hunters

By Kelly Smith
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715-292-3560

DELAFIELD — The city hopes to stop hiring sharpshooters for deer harvesting within five years, according to the chairman of the city’s deer management program.

Alderman Wayne Dehn said the hired sharpshooters, which have cost the city as much as \$200 per deer, will be eventually replaced by local bow hunters who are licensed by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources but also carry city-issued deer hunting permits.

The local bow hunters have killed 51 deer since Sept. 15, according to Dehn, who told Conley Media the goal is to eradicate about 100 deer per year.

The city has initiated an

aggressive deer management program after residents complained about deer destroying landscaping and posing a health danger through spreading Lyme disease.

Aerial surveys have identified between 35 and 49 deer in a 7.7-acre deer range in the city compared to an estimated 23 deer per square mile in the remainder of Waukesha County.

The program is using municipal permits, allowed by the DNR, which permit local hunters to harvest more deer than permitted by the DNR hunting license during the season that extends from September through January in Waukesha County.

The city has established three hunting sites for the bow hunters, who can also hunt on private property with the permission of the

property owners.

The Common Council on Jan. 20 approved Dehn’s request to transfer \$3,000 from \$12,950 allocated to sharpshooters for the purchase of four freestanding tower hunting stands.

The freestanding tower stands will be in addition to the four tree stands the city is using in Oakwood Park, the Lois Jenson Nature Preserve, and city-owned land near the Delafield-Hartland Water Pollution Control facility.

The advantages of the freestanding stands, which are mounted on tripod-style legs, are that they are enclosed and can be used in open spaces, Dehn said. He said there are several locations with large open spaces where deer congregate. Dehn said the city has not decided where the freestanding stands will be located.

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Submitted photo
Delafield native Hayley Rozman is currently a “hotdogger” for Oscar Mayer. Here, she sits atop the famous Wienermobile in front of the iconic “Hollywood” sign.

Cruising the hot dog highways — with relish

Delafield native scores dream job touring U.S. in Wienermobile

By Ashley Haynes
ahaynes@conley.net.com
262-513-2681

WAUKESHA — Chances are, you’ve seen the iconic Wienermobile parked outside your local grocer and been pretty excited. The branded vehicle is constantly on the move throughout the country. Delafield native Hayley Rozman, 23, is one of many who’ve had this chance encounter but unlike others, she wanted to take her experience to the next level. Rozman is one of a select few who have been chosen to represent the brand as “hotdoggers.”

These ambassadors for Oscar Mayer travel coast to coast on the 27-foot-long hot dog, sharing swag and smiles with everyday people.

“We’re pretty much on the move 52 weeks a year just traveling to these cities and making lots of people happy,” said Rozman.

She first encountered the Wienermobile during her freshman year of college. Her mother was the one who told her that people can actually get jobs driving the vehi-

cle across the country. While it seemed like a shot in the dark at the time, Rozman began sharing her dream job of driving the Wienermobile with whoever would listen. She then began making connections with people who know “hotdogger” alumni.

“For all of my time in college, I would tell people ‘I want to drive the Wienermobile when I graduate,’” said Rozman. “I just think it’s such a surreal position to have after years of dreaming to do this. I’m thrilled to be here right now and I’m just enjoying every interaction I have.”

Rozman graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison with a degree in marketing and a certificate in Spanish last year. She immediately decided to apply for a “hotdogger” position. At the end of March, she learned that she was hired. Rozman then had to complete her classes at “Hot Dog High,” where students learn everything they need to know for their American road trip, including how to drive the Wienermobile.

“It’s surprising, (but) you

don’t need anything but a regular driver’s license,” said Rozman. “We follow everything truck drivers would do except needing the CDL.”

Right now, she and her partner have started the second leg of their road trip in the southeastern portion of the U.S. The “hotdogger” position is a one-year gig that will end this June. A typical week consists of driving to a new city on one day and four work days. Each of those days, the team is at a different location or event.

“You’re just given a ton of responsibility to be the face of such a renowned company,” said Rozman.

At the end of her year-long trip, she says, she’s confident she’ll have made plenty of friends for life, including other Oscar Mayer alumni who might be able to help her out with her next job.

“I don’t really want to do anything normal. I want to keep on doing crazy, fun things. This job has shown me when you’re working a job you love, it doesn’t feel like work at all,” said Rozman.

Oscar Mayer is searching for the next round of hotdoggers. To apply, visit: www.oscarmayer.com/wienermobile.

Lang envisions ‘New Delafield’

Eyes land at I-94, Highway C for development



Courtesy of Robert Lang Company
This sketch by Bob Lang illustrates one of the possibly seven multiuse buildings that he plans to build on 28 acres of land near the interchange of Interstate 94 and Highway C if he can obtain options on the land and approvals from the city for the development.

By Kelly Smith
kellysmithlakecountrynews@gmail.com
715-292-3560

DELAFIELD — Calendar entrepreneur and developer Bob Lang is planning a complex of seven multiuse buildings that he has dubbed “New Delafield” on 28 acres he is trying to acquire near the interchange of Interstate 94 and Highway C, south of the downtown business district.

Lang said he is seeking a 10-month option from Ixonia Bank on the controversial parcel of land that he once owned.

Numerous attempts during the past two decades to commercially develop the land have failed as a result of well-orchestrated opposition from neighbors who live in the woodlands adjacent to the land abutting the Lapham Peak Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest.

Ixonia Bank CEO Daniel Westrope confirmed the bank has been in discussions with Lang about an option, but said no decision has been made.

Lang admits he has no capital or financing backing for the land option.

However, Westrope acknowledged that Lang’s development resume, familiarity with the property, and the issues associated with developing it, are advantages the bank would be willing to weigh while considering whether to grant the option.

Lang said the center piece of the development would be the Abraham Lincoln Art Gallery and Civil War Museum that would be the home of his collection of 72 rare Civil War artifacts and original oil paintings of President Abraham Lincoln which he wants to sell to a local benefactor.

In addition, “New Delafield” would include a series of residential and commercial buildings that would enable its residents to “live, work and eat” at the complex, according to Lang.

Possible planning, zoning issues

However, the proposed development might face some major planning and zoning issues including changing the city’s comprehensive land use plan and rezoning the property, according to City Planner Roger Dupler.

Most of the land is zoned for commercial office space and research park, according to Dupler.

Dupler said restaurants and residential condomini-

ums are not permitted in the zoning district, unless associated with a commercial senior living facility, and he is uncertain whether a museum would be permitted.

In addition, the city code requires all commercial properties to be served by municipal sewer and there is presently no sewer service located north of Interstate 94.

Nearby homeowners have vowed to block any attempts by developers to change the zoning on the land.

However, they have also said they would not oppose a development that complied with existing zoning requirements.

Lang expressed confidence he could overcome the issues related to developing the land and added he will meet with neighbors to persuade them his plans are beneficial to the neighborhood and the city.

He said he decided to develop the property south of the interstate because he could not acquire land in downtown Delafield to implement his plans to continue the commercial development he began nearly 30 years ago when his gift card and calendar publishing company was a national phenomenon.



Chips off the cold block

DELAFIELD — Ryder Satula, 5, tries his hand at sculpting part of a woolly mammoth. Ice sculptor Andy Haas of Delafield, let people watching have a turn carving the sculpture during the inaugural Delafreeze in downtown Delafield Jan. 12.



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PREP PROFILE

Change of scenery great for Woida

Arrowhead senior is defending all-around champ

By Chuck Delsman
Freeman Correspondent

TOWN OF MERTON — Hard work and determination are just two of the many attributes that have elevated Alexis Woida to elite status when it comes to high school girls gymnastics in Wisconsin.

The Arrowhead senior has enjoyed a lot of success in the sport and that comes as no surprise to her coach and teammates who have watched her climb to the top of the mountain in the WIAA sanctioned sport.

“No matter how much success she’s had already and will have in the future comes from her hard work ethic,” said longtime Arrowhead girls gymnastics coach Bob Pulkowski. “She’s a special athlete, the kind of competitor that doesn’t come around that often. What makes Alex is so special is that she’s always hungry, always ready to take on more hard work. And in this sport, she understands what her body is telling her.”

All of that hard work and dedication came to a head last winter when she captured the prestigious all-around championship at the state meet in Wisconsin Rapids with a score of 37.767. By winning the state title, she became just the second Arrowhead girls gymnast to win the all-around title in school history. Jorin Fredman was the first in 2014.

The year before, Woida, then a sophomore, also took part in the state meet where she finished 15th in the all-around with a score of 35.933. She admitted she was totally

Get to know ... ALEXIS WOIDA

School/Sport
Arrowhead/Gymnastics

Coach
Bob Pulkowski

Class In School/Age
Senior/17

Also In My Family Are: my dad, Scott; my mom, Gina; my sisters, Gianna and Gabriella; and my brothers Jacob, Joey, Benjamin and Nicholas.

The Athletic Accomplishment I Am Most Proud Of Is: winning the All-Around last year and finishing third at state in diving this year.

My Favorite Subject In School Is: math.

My Favorite Teacher Is: Mr. Hessler.

My Favorite Movie Is: “The Greatest Showman.”

My Favorite TV Show Is: “Grey’s Anatomy.”

My Favorite Recording Artist Is: Post Malone.

The Best Meal My Mother Makes Is: chicken Parmesan.

A Bad Habit I Have Is: taking too long to do tests.

A Pet Peeve I Have Is: people that don’t work hard.

The Thing I Do Best Outside Of Athletics Is: school work and tutoring.

The Person I’d Most Like To Meet Is: Laurie Hernandez.

The Last Time I Cleaned My Room I Found: clothes that don’t fit any more.

Nobody Ever Says I’m: sad.

My Most Memorable Experience Is: family trip to Hawaii.

My Most Prized Possession Is: my family.

One Thing People Might Not Know About Me Is: I don’t wake up to the alarm.

One Thing I Would Change About Myself Is: being OK not doing things perfectly.

One Thing At My School I Would Change Is: more parking.

I See Myself In 10 Years Being: a doctor.

I Wish Coach Pulkowski Would: wear more of his Christmas sweaters.



Robert F. Borkowski/Special to The Freeman
Arrowhead senior Alexis Woida competes on the parallel bars in a Classic 8/SEC meet Dec. 20 at Waukesha West.

disappointed with that performance.

“I knew right after that state meet that I wasn’t at my best,” Woida said. “I wasn’t happy about it at all. I knew I had to come back more motivated and more determined. I had that first state meet appearance under my belt and I wanted more.”

And that she got. She got a lot more.

Woida was rock-solid in every event at the state meet last year. In winning the all-around, she was third on the balance beam (9.483), third on the uneven bars (9.500), third in vault (9.450) and eighth in floor exercise (9.333).

But something changed for Woida prior to the start of last season that seemed to change her fate. In the mid-

dle of her sophomore year, just after the Christmas break, she decided to quit her club gymnastics team and join her Arrowhead team. She didn’t compete at AHS as a freshman or sophomore before making perhaps her career-changing decision.

“I had been in club gymnastics since I was 5 years old,” Woida said. “I wasn’t sure I wanted to stay in the sport the first couple of years and I told my mom I wanted to quit. She told me to give it one more year. I did that and suddenly, I liked being in gymnastics. I stayed with it the rest of the time and had some success, winning some state championships and competing at some regionals and sectionals. I got to level 10. But I suffered a ruptured

disc in my back as a sophomore and decided to leave the club.”

But she wasn’t out of the sport long. One month later she joined the Arrowhead team in the middle of the season and that turned out to be the best decision she’s ever made.

“Suddenly the pressure of being with the club team was gone and I was just having a lot of fun competing for my school team,” Woida said. “I was back competing with the kids I went to school with. It was just so much fun. And even though I didn’t do as well as I had hoped to do at state two years ago, I knew it was the right decision to join my high school team.”

And while winning the state championship last year was special, she’s got a great outlook for what the final two months of this season might bring.

“I know there’s pressure about trying to win again,” the 17-year-old Woida said. “And more stress comes with being the defending champion. But that’s not how I’m looking at things this season. I told myself at the start of the year that it’s not about last year, but this year. It’s about working hard and enjoying the experience. If I go out, work hard and do the best I can, everything will fall into place.”

So far that positive attitude and hard work is paying dividends. In four meets so far, Woida has been perfect, winning all four all-around titles.

“It has been so much fun this season,” Woida said. “The girls on the team are great. We all cheer for each other and push each other to be the best we can be. Sometimes coach Bob puts me last in events and after watching my teammates perform, it fires me up to do the best I can and score as many points as I can for the team. I’m just having a lot of fun this season. It’s been great.”

And the smile on her face after each event she competes in tells her real story.

Spectators’ conduct impacting basketball officials in area

Statistics show refs leave profession because of hecklers

By Dave Radcliffe
dradcliffe@conleynet.com
262-513-2655

WAUKESHA — Everyone’s been there.

Whether as a parent, a student, a coach or a normal bystander, everyone who has attended a high school sporting event has been there. An official makes a call that goes against the team or player one’s supporting, and complaining — or even worse — ensues. It’s commonplace now and has been for a number of years, almost universally accepted.

It might seem like all fun and games. Except for the officials.

It’s part of what prompted an opinion editorial on Jan. 10 from Karissa Niehoff, the executive director of the National Federation of State High School Associations, and David Anderson, executive director of the WIAA.

The piece was called “Dear Mom and Dad: Cool It,” a message imploring parents that attend high school games to stop berating offi-

cials, as it has directly led to a shortage not only statewide, but nationwide of youth-level referees for the sport of basketball.

“When I started officiating this wasn’t an issue,” said longtime Wisconsin basketball official Ken Ristow. “As we know, kids stay the same age and officials get older and the game has turned into a much faster style than sometimes legs or mind can keep up with, and my feeling is sometimes parents live through their kids and sometimes if things don’t go right, it’s taken out on officials.”

That’s not Ristow making excuses. The level of athleticism displayed on the hardwood is higher than ever before, leading to a breakneck pace at many varsity-level contests.

Whether or not that has resulted in an increase in missed calls is up for debate. But it’s another statistic that should alarm anyone who loves prep sports.

According to a recent survey by the National Association of Sports Officials, more

than 75 percent of all high school officials say adult behavior is the primary reason they quit, while 80 percent of all young officials give up the profession after just two years.

“On Dec. 29 I was ready to quit myself because of a freshman boys game,” Ristow said. “We were taught many years ago how to listen to stuff and develop thick skin. But nowadays things are so out of line. Many new officials are 16, 17 years old, early 20s. When they get into these situations, they quit. They say, ‘I didn’t sign up for this. I’m not going to take this day after day,’ and their keys are on the desk the next day.”

This directly impacts Ristow, who along with officiating is one of the main schedulers of youth and high school games when it comes to assigning referees.

“I do a lot of youth tournaments and youth leagues around the area and also schedule high schools,” Ristow said. “At some point it’s going to affect me to be able to do my job. We have the

same people but we’re not getting new people into the pool. Eventually they’ll be old enough where we need a new generation.

“I figure for me to do my job as an assigner, if I need 300 people in the next three years to replace those who are injured, retire, or pass away, I only have 25 of those 300 people. I do worry behavior deters new officials from staying in the craft, and it also causes veteran officials to not do it anymore.”

And it doesn’t end with the parents and spectators, either.

“What’s not mentioned in the article, coach behavior is also a detriment to officials,” Ristow said. “There are ways for coaches to work with officials to coexist on the court, but we’re supposed to be professionals. There are times when coaches say really bad things at the youth level and high school level. Many times we dismiss them because they’re just comments, but sometimes they are so out of line that we have to draw a line in the sand. We can’t

have this anymore.”

Of course, there are many coaches who go about it the right way. But with competitive basketball beginning at a younger age than ever before, problems have arisen with parents who also coach and act out of line.

“We have coaches getting kicked out of tournaments at third and fourth grade, threatening officials on a personal level,” Ristow said. “Kids probably don’t understand the game as well as a high school player does. The skill level is different. We as officials understand that, but coaches expect the state tournament or NBA Finals to be called at a third-grade level.”

Ristow asks for perspective from spectators, to take a step back and understand the bigger picture.

“Officials are here for the kids,” Ristow said. “We help kids become better players by talking to them based on what the rule book is. People take offense and forget that’s what the purpose is. Over the last 10 years it’s gotten worse and worse. Things said to us are so disrespectful and rude that it’s actually mentally abusing. You go home from

games and ask, ‘Why are we doing this?’ We’re paid \$25 to work our tails off and do our job.”

Ristow’s message is simple — he wants people to be part of the solution, not part of the problem.

“When people think we’re not calling stuff, the perception is we ignore it or don’t know the rules,” Ristow said. “In basketball, we have to make decisions in split seconds. We make mistakes because officials are human. An official that understands their mistake will learn from it and do a better job next time, or even tell the coach, ‘You’re probably right, I was incorrect.’

“For me, officiating is fun and what makes it fun is when I’m officiating a player in fifth grade and now I’m officiating them in a varsity contest and I’ve seen them grow up. It can take somebody 15 seconds to belittle me and that takes all the fun away that we just had for the last 45 minutes.

“Until people understand what we’re here for, understand how we officiate and why, this stuff’s probably never going to stop.”

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