

# Brookfield & Elm Grove

## THIS MONTH

MARCH 2019

## Building people one Lego at a time

### Library's Lego Club fuels imagination

By Royce Podeszwa  
Special to The Freeman

**BROOKFIELD** — The doors opened and in walked little Brock Woppert with his mom, Kelly, and baby sister, Bree.

Plastic tubs filled to the brim with Legos dotted the landscape. Brock made a beeline straight for the largest bin he could find and proceeded to dump all of its contents on the floor around him. He repeated this step two more times before he decided the small mountain of Lego pieces in front of him was enough to get started on the day's masterpiece. This was Brock's third time at the Brookfield Public Library's monthly Lego Club.

The Lego Club meets in the library's community room on the second Saturday of every month from 10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and again on the last Tuesday of every month from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. Sue Brown, the library's manager on duty, said the Lego Club has been going on for years. Nobody at the library seemed quite sure exactly when it got started.

"It's open to all ages to come and play and get social skills and make messes," Brown said.

The library offers a collection of different

Lego instruction books for kids and future engineers. Brown said the most popular categories are "Star Wars" and Ninjago instruction books. But there's no need to follow the instructions. The only requirement for the kids to start building is an imagination.

Sophi Hoitink and her cousin, Abe Tomasik, visited the club and immediately got to work. Sophi wanted to build a rocket ship, while Abe wanted to build a boat filled with dinosaurs. After they finished their own projects, Sophi said she'd like to work with Abe to build a house.

"I think they really enjoy it," said Abby Hoitink, Sophi's mom, who has brought the pair to the club to nearly every session for nearly a year now.

The library boasts a massive amount of assorted Lego pieces from many different kits and styles. Brown said the library purchased some Lego kits over the years and also received many, many donations.

Brock's mom called the club a fun place to bring her kids now that it's winter. She said they don't have nearly this many Legos to play with at home.

"We'll go whenever they have it," Woppert said.



Brock Woppert works on his latest masterpiece with his mom, Kelly, and baby sister, Bree, during a recent Lego Club session at the Brookfield Public Library.



Sophi Hoitink and her cousin Abe Tomasik share a bin as they build their creations at a recent Lego Club session at the Brookfield Public Library.

» **Inside:** Library director Schaefer living her passion

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# Hard seltzer sales continue to sparkle

Area liquor stores see more consumers buying low-cal option

By Katherine Michalets  
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MENOMONEE FALLS — Area liquor dealers admit they underestimated the salability of hard seltzer, but have found even die-hard beer drinkers are getting into the low-carb, low-calorie alcoholic beverage trend.

Tim Berger, president of Toto's Incorporated, which owns several area Otto's Wine & Spirits stores in the area, said alcoholic seltzers are refreshing and can be used as mixers or drunk right from the can. He said there are several brands on the market with different flavor varieties.

White Claw helped to launch the beverage into the mainstream when it hit the market in the spring of 2016.

And while it was marketed at first as a perfect-for-summer beverage, Berger said sales have remained strong during the winter.

Besides its refreshing taste, other attributes of alcoholic seltzers that have made them a top seller are that they are low-calorie and low-carb.

Berger admits he was a skeptic at first.

"Have you ever had someone ask you for something and you wonder to yourself, 'What are you talking about, is that really a thing?' That was my first response the first time I was asked for a hard seltzer, yes, hard, alcoholic seltzer. This oxymoron is the newest category to hit the alcohol industry, and believe it or not, they are selling quite well," Berger wrote in a blog on Otto's website.

He said he knew times were changing when his brother-in-law, a die-hard Pabst drinker, went on a low-carb diet and was drinking hard seltzer.

"I thought Hell froze over," he said.

Frank Greguska Jr., one of the owners of Discount Liquor with locations in Waukesha and Milwaukee, said all brands of hard seltzer are doing well, with three main ones being Henry's, Smirnoff and White Claw.

He said since the category of liquor was created, more companies have entered the hard seltzer market, as well.

## A wide appeal

The flavors also appeal to different people, such as the not-sweet grapefruit and lime, said Bryan Szukalski, manager of Jeff's Spirits on Main in West Bend.

And with the taste of seltzer, he said it's a good alternative to beer or other alcoholic beverages.

Greguska described the consumers of hard seltzer as "a little more of a younger crowd and not necessarily male or female."

"The younger group is looking for something different. Craft beer is also doing well with that same age group."

Berger said the prime demographic tends to be women in their mid-20s to 50, but he said the age range is wide and it appeals to people who are conscious of their caloric or carb consumption.

"People are conscious of drinking beer, or more calories or more sugar," Szukalski said. "This is supposedly healthier for



Katherine Michalets/Freeman Staff

Hard seltzer lines shelves at Discount Liquor in downtown Waukesha that once mostly contained wine coolers.

you or less calories at least. ... This is the alternative form for them to stay on their diets."

Not only is it popular at liquor stores, Greguska said, but a lot of bars and restaurants are now carrying it, and even golf courses stock it because it comes in a can.

At Discount Liquor, sales of hard seltzer remain strong year round so the product maintains a floor display and is not just in the coolers.

"We sell more of them every year. It's still a little bit more seasonal," Greguska said. "People tend to pick them up year round."

Berger said hard seltzers have been known to sell out. "It's a nationwide craze

## By the numbers

**\$117 million** — Sales of White Claw in 2018.

**\$336 million** — U.S. sales of hard seltzers in retail stores in the 12 months ending Aug. 11, 2018.

**20 percent** — Sales increase for Mike's Hard, largely due to White Claw, which launched in May 2016.

Source: Tribune News Service

and I thought it was just going to be a flash in the pan craze, but it looks like something that will stick in the pan," he said. "I don't foresee it declining."



Submitted photo

White Claw, a low-carb and low-calorie hard seltzer, is one of the leading brands in the category.

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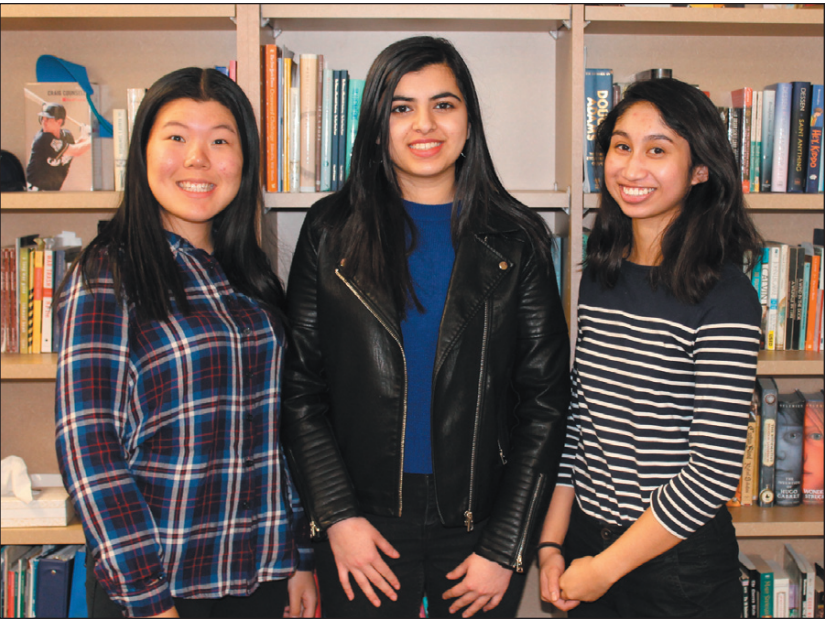


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Brookfield Academy students garner statewide awards for writing

BROOKFIELD — Three students in Brookfield Academy’s Upper School have been recognized for their writing talents as part of a statewide competition. Upper School students Mishaal Omer and Ziyen Wu both earned Silver Keys from the Scholastic Writing Awards-Wisconsin. Omer earned three in the areas of Sci-fi/Fantasy, Personal Essay/Memoir and Poetry. Wu earned one Silver Key in the Personal Essay/Memoir category and three Honorable Mentions in the Short Story, Poetry and Personal Essay/Memoir categories. Both students will be acknowledged at an awards ceremony in April. Upper School student Serena Suson has been recognized by the Wisconsin Fellowship of Poets with her poem “Papillon,” which won first place. Suson’s poem will be published in the 2020 Wisconsin Poets’ Calendar.

School Board votes to do away with dues

BROOKFIELD — The School District of Elmbrook’s Board of Education voted unanimously on Jan. 15 to eliminate course fees beginning in the 2019-20 school year. Student fees for the upcoming school year are reviewed every November by the Finance and Operation Committee. A recommendation is then brought to the school board sometime within December or January for action. District administrators say the elimination of course fees is a strategy to minimize the financial burden for district families. “I know it’s small, but it’s money that can go back into the pockets of these families,” said board member Allison Malnar at the Jan. 15 meeting. Several changes will be phased in over the next several years. Course fees will be eliminated; however, “resale” items needed for classes such as goggles or assignment notebooks will still come at a cost.

Band, orchestra and chorus “User Fees” have also been eliminated. A one-time, \$20 middle school club fee has been put in place. The middle school is the only level that does not have a club fee, which will not be charged to students who don’t take part in an extracurricular activity. In 2017-18, middle school students were charged \$45 to take part in music contests and \$45 as part of the Music/Drama Club. The maximum amount of club fees at the middle school level was \$90. “I am thankful that we are in a financial position to sustain our programs without course fees, and am thankful to the Finance and Operations Committee for recommending these changes on behalf of our families,” said school board President Kathryn Wilson. The overall reduction in fees is estimated to save Elmbrook families \$191,000 each year.

Brookfield Academy seniors advance as National Merit finalists



From left: Isabel Thomas, Cecelia Youso, Andrew Laeuger and Austin Cherian are Brookfield Academy’s National Merit finalists.

BROOKFIELD — Four Brookfield Academy seniors have been named National Merit finalists and one has earned the additional distinction of being selected as a U.S. Presidential Scholar candidate. After being named National Merit semifinalists in September, students Isabel Thomas, Cecelia Youso, Andrew Laeuger and Austin Cherian have advanced to finalist standing and will be considered for National Merit Scholarships to be offered later this spring. Merit Scholar designees are selected on the basis of their skills, accomplishments and potential for success in rigorous college studies. In addition to this honor, Andrew Laeuger was recently named as one of 116 Wisconsin candidates in the running for the U.S. Presidential Scholars Program. The program was established to recognize and honor some of the nation’s most distinguished graduating high school seniors. Application to the program is by invitation only. Semifinalists are selected in April and finalists are announced in May.

EBHS announces spring gala

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — The Elmbrook Humane Society has announced its spring gala, “There’s No Place Like Home,” will take place on March 16. The public is invited to an evening of cocktails, dinner, wine pull, silent and live and dessert auctions, Irish liquor and a gift card tree raffle. The event will take place at 5 p.m. March 16 at the Marriott West, W231-N1600 Corporate Court in the City of Pewaukee. Attire is business formal or feel free to have a little fun and dress in your best St. Paddy’s Day attire. The EBHS care for about 1,500 animals a year and bills itself as the county’s only no-kill humane society. Early registration with discounted rates is available through Thursday. For more information, visit [www.ebhs.org/index.php/events/event/spring-gala](http://www.ebhs.org/index.php/events/event/spring-gala).

  
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Library director Schaefer lives her passion

**By Royce Podeszwa**  
Special to The Freeman

BROOKFIELD — Edell Schaefer wanted to be a librarian almost her entire life. As a child, she walked most days nearly a mile to the old Milwaukee Public Library branch on 43rd Street and Forest Home Ave. She would check out a copy of her favorite book, Hal Borland’s “The Dog Who Came to Stay,” so many times that the librarians eventually refused to lend it to her so it could stay on the shelves for other readers. “My name is probably the only one written on that library card,” Schaefer said. Schaefer’s first job was at a public library in high school. Although she graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a bachelor’s degree in physical anthropology and geology, her passion always seemed to drift her back to libraries. Schaefer is now the director of Brookfield Public Library and has been since 1997. “Everything kinda fell into place,” Schaefer said. She is responsible for many of the library’s achievements over the years, including the first switch in the county to an automated database and the widely successful Café data-sharing program among Waukesha County libraries. The law dictates that a public library cannot charge for its services. Schaefer sees the role of a library as a community hub. She believes it is the responsibility of a library to meet the municipality’s knowledge needs, whatever they may be. The Brookfield library’s slogan reads, “Where you go when you want to know.” And she believes it.

The veteran librarian oversaw the tremendous shift of libraries from local physical papers and books, to much more audiobooks, movies and a seemingly endless online database of information. “The buck stops with me,” Schaefer said. Schaefer would like to dispel the myth that all librarians do is read all day. She said they also are into socializing with their friends and organizing programs. She said her work keeps her busy all day, every day. That said, her current favorite read is “Krakatoa” by Simon Winchester, which follows the global impact of the devastating volcanic eruption in the 19th century. 2020 will be the Brookfield Public Library’s 60th anniversary. Schaefer plans to hold a yearlong celebration of the library’s achievements.

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# The changing face of retail: Is retail apocalypse upon us?

**By Dave Fidlin**  
Special to Conley Media

If you've kept a watchful eye on retail-related headlines this past year, the headlines can seem ominous — particularly for traditional brick-and-mortar retailers. The growing list of shuttering stores has even brought a phrase into our cultural vernacular: the retail apocalypse.

Last year claimed the lives of two big-box chains — Toys R Us and Bon Stores Inc., parent company of Boston Store — each one-time goliaths of the industry. There have been talks of trying to resuscitate both storied brands, but firm plans have yet to crystallize.

We're only a month into 2019, and there has been plenty of buzz about the fate of a number of other regional and national retailers that could leave more hollowed-out, emptied storefronts as the year continues to unfold.

This week, the ultimate fate of deeply-rooted department store chains Sears and Kmart could be decided in bankruptcy court as a judge decides if former Sears Holdings Corp. CEO Eddie Lampert's bid to continue operating 425 stores across the U.S. is sufficient.

Regardless of what happens in bankruptcy court, the judge's decision will have no further impact on our

immediate area. The last full-line Sears store closed at Brookfield Square nearly a year ago; a lone store in Madison is the last store standing in this state.

The same goes for Kmart — where the blue light special became a part of our cultural lexicon. The one-time discount behemoth, which was the nation's No. 2 retailer (behind only Sears) throughout the 1970s and 1980s, closed its longtime Cudahy store Jan. 27, and the Oconomowoc location is set to close its doors next month. Five locations remain in scattered areas of the state.

And then there's Shopko — which, like Kmart, got its start in 1962 (alongside heavyweights Target and Walmart). The financial cracks of this Green Bay-headquartered chain began showing late last year and reached a breaking point last month as the company filed for bankruptcy, hopeful to reorganize around a stronger base of stores.

Whatever becomes of Shopko, its absence also will be felt locally. Stores in Grafton, Sussex and West Bend are in the process of winding down operations and will be closing in the months ahead.

Other retailers with smaller footprints are also facing possible extinction or a reduced footprint. This is especially true of mall-based



Katherine Michalets/Conley Media  
A shopper leaves Kmart in Oconomowoc on Feb 2, as the store held a closing sale, offering 20 to 60 percent off items.



Dave Fidlin/Special to Conley Media

retailers.

Among the examples are women's clothier Charlotte Russe, which announced Monday it is filing for bankruptcy, shuttering nearly 100 stores, including ones at Brookfield Square and in the Bayshore Town Center in Glendale.

Last month, children's clothier Gymboree announced plans to close all of its namesake stores, leaving yet another vacancy within Brookfield Square and Southridge Mall in Greendale. There's also reports of specialty retailer Things Remembered closing stores as it struggles to keep pace with changes in the marketplace.

All of this news — especially the post mortems — is enough to make the 1980s-era Toys R Us kid embedded within me cry in the name of nostalgia.

So, what gives? Are we entering an age where online shopping has toppled traditional brick-and-mortar retail? Does Amazon receive all of the credit for this recent series of store closures?

Yes and no.

While Amazon has made inroads in a number of areas — retail being just one of them — the company still commands a relatively small piece of the overall retail pie. According to analytics provider One Click Retail,

Journalist and retail history enthusiast Dave Fidlin recently purchased a Kmart blue light special pole as the Cudahy store was closing.

Amazon holds about 4 percent of the U.S. retail sales and 44 percent of all online activity.

Statista, another analytics firm, estimates 11.1 percent of this year's retail activity in the U.S. will take place online.

So, Amazon and the Internet are playing a role in the erosion of the brick and mortar landscape, but they haven't toppled it.

In reality, many of today's struggling retailers face several characteristics. In some instances, leadership has been credited with not evolving with changing

consumer tastes.

In other cases, private equity has been criticized for not putting enough investment into store operations — or placing a heavy debt-load onto the retailer's capital structure. This scenario was especially true of Toys R Us, which was lumbering with \$5 billion in debt when it filed for bankruptcy in fall 2017.

I remain bullish on the future of brick-and-mortar retail, and there is plenty of reason to have optimism as we scan the area.

The Town of Brookfield's 2-year-old mixed-use development The Corners continues to grow with an ongoing roster of new tenants, while West Bend's Main Street thoroughfare has grown, netting such retailers as Meijer. And Grafton's Interstate 43 corridor has thrived in the past decade-plus after village leaders shifted their focus on where the community's main commercial hub should be concentrated.

The times they might be a-changing, but that doesn't mean we will stop stepping foot into retail stores anytime soon.

*(Dave Fidlin is a freelance journalist and a retail history enthusiast. He is the proud owner of a flashing Kmart blue light, which he purchased during a fixture sale before the Cudahy store closed.)*



Photo courtesy of Dan Beck  
Having sat empty for nearly a decade, the Fun World building off Bluemound Road in the Town of Brookfield has been bought by Stefans Soccer, a soccer specialty store.

## Specialty soccer store buys former Fun World site

**By Katherine Michalets**  
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TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — A building known for housing fun activities for the whole family will once again bring smiles to faces when Stefans Soccer takes over the former Fun World location off of Bluemound Road.

Stefans Soccer, a soccer specialty store, announced the acquisition of the 25,000-square-foot building at 620 Elizabeth Court on Feb. 22. Previous occupant, Fun World, an entertainment center with laser tag, mini golf and video games, closed almost a decade ago.

This will be a move down the street for Stefans Soccer, which leases 3,200 square feet of retail space in the Best Buy plaza on Bluemound Road and owns a 10,500-square-foot complex

for corporate office and warehouse space in New Berlin.

The move to the new location is expected to happen by the end of May.

Also the new location will be the corporate offices and warehouse space for Stefans Soccer, which has been in business since 1965.

"This is an exciting milestone for Stefans Soccer," said Anne Nowakowski, president and owner of Stefans Soccer, in a statement. "Our new space will allow for us to continue to serve our loyal customers and create unique retail experiences for the growing number of soccer players, fans and enthusiasts — of all ages — throughout the state."

Stefans Soccer carries Wisconsin's largest selection of soccer equipment and apparel for all ages, according to the announce-

ment.

The new store will offer an expanded "boot room" for players to shop and try on shoes; a customization "bar" where customers can personalize apparel and goalkeeper gloves; and interactive experiences not available at other soccer equipment retailers in the area. The store will also offer a community room that local soccer teams and clubs can use for meetings and small events.

Approximately 30 employees will work out of the new facility, with that number growing to more than 50 during peak uniform production season in the summer months. Stefans Soccer currently employs approximately 45 to 70 employees, depending on the season, across three store locations and their corporate offices. Other store locations are in Milwaukee and Madison.

## Next phase of The Mayfair Collection approved



Submitted rendering  
Chicago-based HSA Commercial Real Estate and the city of Wauwatosa announced a new development agreement to help pave the way for a new office development (pictured in rendering) and residential phases of The Mayfair Collection mixed-use development.

WAUWATOSA — The terms of a development agreement allowing for the creation of seven development pad sites that can accommodate up to 750 additional residential units and 360,000 square feet of corporate space has been approved by the city of Wauwatosa.

HSA Commercial Real Estate, a Chicago-based full-service real estate firm, plans to demolish existing warehouse building on the site near Highway 41/45 and Burleigh Street.

The Mayfair Collection is a 69-acre mixed-use project that includes 500,000 square feet of retail space anchored by Whole Foods Market and Nordstrom Rack, as well as a Hilton Homewood Suites and a 269-unit luxury apartment building called Synergy at

The Mayfair Collection.

"We have always shared a vision with the city of Wauwatosa to transform the 'Burleigh Triangle' from an underutilized warehouse complex into a vibrant, dense and walkable mixed-use community," said Tim Blum, executive vice president with HSA Commercial Real Estate, in a statement.

"With the support of city leadership and staff, we've gone a long way in terms of achieving that vision through the opening of the initial retail, hospitality and apartment components; but this development agreement offers the road map to completely fulfill that common goal over the next several years."

The terms of the agreement between Wauwatosa and HSA Commercial Real

Estate provide for the demolition and environmental remediation of the remaining warehouse buildings on the interior of the 69-acre site as well as the extension of roads and infrastructure necessary to support the development of future residential and office buildings.

"The Mayfair Collection development in Wauwatosa has been very successful," said Wauwatosa Mayor Kathleen Ehley in a statement. "We are pleased to support the future expansion of this project and add more residents and employees to one of our most vibrant mixed-use developments."

Demolition and site work are scheduled to begin this summer; with the development sites available as soon as spring 2020.

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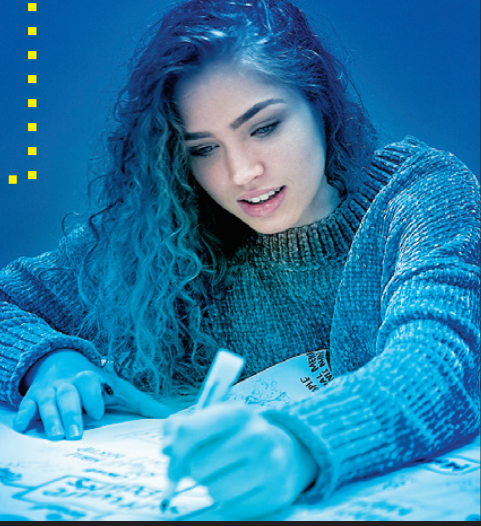
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# A global classroom

## Online schools provide a flexible, yet ‘authentic’ experience for families

By Ashley Haynes  
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WAUKESHA — When then first-grade student Frederick Biebert and third-grade student Sydney Biebert started their first day of school three years ago, they didn’t need to worry about gathering up their backpacks and lunch boxes in time to catch a school bus. In fact, they weren’t even in the country.

The two were in Paris for their first day. Frederick and Sydney are a part of the eAchieve Academy, offered by the School District of Waukesha. The Biebert family owns a local video production company that requires them to travel across the globe for filming. The kids are now in their third year at eAchieve, and mother Jennifer Biebert says the school is the perfect fit for them.

“We travel so much for our work and it’s just been amazing to be able to take them with us because otherwise, I think we’d miss their childhood,” said Jennifer Biebert.

She explained that the flexibility provided by an online school, as well as the ability to truly individualize each student’s learning, has been invaluable.

Every Monday, students get their individualized learning plan for the week. If there’s a certain subject they excel at, they can advance right away. If they need more help with a subject, they can take things slower. They can also go back and work on certain lessons.

Jennifer explained that there are several components to online schooling that help support her son, who was diagnosed in first grade with

dyslexia. Online resources and videos are particularly helpful, as well as text-to-speech components on the computer.

“We knew that a traditional classroom setting is not the best for children that have dyslexia. They kind of need to be taught a different way and need to have other tools or resources,” said Jennifer Biebert.

Online schools have become an increasingly popular option over the last several years, with many expanding their grade levels to encompass elementary and even kindergarten-aged kids. Rick Nettesheim, principal of the eAchieve Academy, says the 65 elementary students currently enrolled in eAchieve get a unique experience facilitated by their parents, teachers and the school.

“They (families) tell us it’s the best of both worlds because they still get to remain very close to the educational process and they get to work very closely with their child, but they no longer have to do the heavy lifting,” said Nettesheim. He explained that while the teachers set everything up from lessons to activities, a good portion of the learning happens with the parents, especially at the elementary level, with the guidance of instructors.

Every week, eAchieve teachers create the individualized plans for each student.

Families are able to leave notes on the plan for teachers to provide feedback.

Web conferences are held every week in each of the core subject areas, as well as in music.



Submitted photo

For eAchieve Academy students Sydney Biebert (left) and Frederick Biebert (right), online schooling allows them the freedom to learn all over the globe. Here, they work on their homework in Austria.

### Nontraditional socialization

Having students removed from a traditional classroom setting can cause some apprehension. Families must pay close attention and make sure students are getting enough time with their peers in alternative social settings.

“They’ve made it very clear to us that (teaching) socialization is the responsibility of the parents, not the school,” said Nettesheim, adding that most students are involved in extracurriculars.

Once a month, the eAchieve elementary school also holds a planned family outing.

For the Bieberts, a discussion on quality versus quantity when it comes to friends took place.

“I think what we realized through this is school really isn’t socialization, it’s forced association. You don’t get to choose the people that you’re with,” said Jennifer Biebert.

She says both Frederick and Sydney choose one sport to play per season. They have also gained cultural skills that will serve them well through life as they’ve traveled to 28 different countries and been exposed to different ways of living.

### An authentic experience

Shawna Stueck, a K-5 team leader for the Wisconsin Virtual Academy (WIVA), says

it’s particularly telling when a family opts to enroll their student in an online school at the start of their educational journey. Stueck says while they’re making a conscious choice to forgo some of the traditional school markers, like a first day of school photo or walk to the school bus, families are finding their own ways to commemorate special milestones.

“A lot of the things we do are just as rich and just as authentic as if they were done in a classroom with other students,” said Stueck. “It just looks a little bit differently.”

Stueck says students use a lot of the same concepts and tools that their peers in brick-and-mortar schools do.

WIVA students are responsible for both a daily lesson and Class Connect session each day. Class Connect sessions require them to log in and interact with peers and their teacher.

Daily lessons can happen whenever, while each Class Connect session is at a set time.

Getting younger students started with all this tech can be a big undertaking for new families.

“It can be seven hours each day in supporting that learning and working with the teacher,” said Stueck.

Once they learn the technology and tools, Stueck says, that time decreases.

WIVA teachers are available every day during



School District of Waukesha eAchieve Academy student Temperance Schmidt, grade two, works on her allotted school work for the day.

instructional times almost instantaneously. Parents can click a button within a lesson to ask for help from a teacher.

As for socialization, WIVA also hosts a face-to-face outing for students.

“The family is really in the driver seat of what may look like,” said Stueck.

### Lifelong skills

While students who learn online may be giving up some of the more traditional components of learning, the consensus among their families and educators is that they gain a different skill set that will serve them well for years to come.

Stueck says it takes a special kind of bravery for

WIVA students to get online, hook up a microphone and start interacting with people they’ve never met before.

She says her students also walk away understanding tech in a way their parents never would have expected.

For the Biebert family, eAchieve has allowed them to remain closely knit without sacrificing school work.

As of right now, the family is leaning towards having Frederick and Sydney go to a traditional high school, but are not ruling out continuing with eAchieve.

“It’s just been the perfect learning environment for us,” said Jennifer Biebert.



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# Air of history remains around perfume set

## Canteen a piece of military history; easel stands on its own

### Vanity perfume set

**Q.:** I was lucky enough to inherit my grandmother Mary's perfume set. I admired it even as a small child. What kind of value does it have?

— Sharon, Brookfield

**A.:** Irving W. Rice Importers introduced reasonably priced merchandise mostly in the 1930s and 1940s. It was a time when pressed glass items were delivered in shipping crates via rail boxcars from many places. Some examples found today still have the importer's foil label attached. Your Czechoslovakian 5-inch-tall scent bottles and mirrored oval tray could be ordered separately. Accounting for one damaged, fern-shaped finial, the value of this sweet set is **\$140**.

Tip for cleaning framed mirrors or pictures: Spray the cleaning cloth, never spray the mirror directly.

\*\*\*

### Spanish-American War canteen

**Q.:** I follow your column in the Enterprise newspaper. I'd be interested in your take and a value of this unique U.S. Army canteen.

— Brian, Oconomowoc

**A.:** Although, I appraise some military items, Jerry is the expert to take this inquiry. He is from the Military Collectibles Shop in West Allis and knew immediately about your canteen.

"It is an M-18-78 canteen Company 'B' of the 25th Infantry, from the Spanish-American War, 1898 era. Then reissued to the 26th Infantry regiment, which was not formed until 1901. The value is **\$100**, if it has the original leather strap with two brass hooks, add \$50."

\*\*\*

### Easel connected to opera house?

**Q.:** I found this wooden easel over 20 years ago in an old farmhouse attic. I heard it might have come from an opera house. Could you give me a value and any information?

— Jerry, Schofield

**A.:** This elongated oak easel, circa 1885, has heightened artistic design. Including brass elements it was labor-intensive to create and has excellent restoration. With Schofield being in close proximity to Wausau, it could have come from the Wausau Grand Opera House. Wausau was well-known for extravagant, operatic stage performances. The railroad circuit brought theatrical cast members and opera attendees from across America.

Following the fire catastrophic of 1892, the rebuilt venue became known as the Grand Theater. The Wausau Historical Society might have archival photos confirming any significance to



BARBARA EASH

### Antiques Appraised

this triangular stand. Today's value of **\$175** would increase if that Grand connection could be verified.

### 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.)



Photo courtesy of Waukesha County Business Alliance

## Elm Grove Travel joins Business Alliance

ELM GROVE — Locally owned and family run Elm Grove Travel recently joined the Waukesha County Business Alliance. Jenny Cagle and Tracie Harter of Elm Grove Travel hold their membership plaque.



Submitted photo

## Ascension Elmbrook hosts heart care event

BROOKFIELD — Bill and Mary Jean Haslam examine a coronary stent, which both have implanted in their hearts, at Ascension Elmbrook at Ascension Elmbrook's Heart Care Reunion and Open House. The event helped raise awareness about heart disease and provided prevention strategies for patients and the community, in support of American Heart Month. Attendees received blood pressure and glucose checks, attended cooking and nutrition demonstrations, met with members of the Ascension Heart Care Team and received information on fitness, sleep, relaxation, and aromatherapy.

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WIAA INDIVIDUAL STATE WRESTLING

# Central’s Somlai backs up bold prediction

## Senior goes 4-for-4 with pins

By Dave Radcliffe  
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262-513-2655

MADISON — Jacob Somlai called his shot. Then he knocked it out of the park.

The Brookfield Central senior ran roughshod through his competition all season long and the WIAA Individual State Wrestling Tournament was no different. Somlai completed an undefeated season and made it 4-for-4 on pins at the Kohl Center when he finished off Wauwaukee senior Reed Ryan at 3 minutes, 56 seconds in the Division 1 220-pound title match Feb. 23.

Somlai finished his senior year 48-0, and Ryan was no pushover himself, coming in with a 45-2 record. Far and away the top two competitors in their weight class, there was a buzz amongst wrestling aficionados leading up to this clash.

Somlai added some fuel to the fire, himself, guaranteeing a pin of Ryan after his semifinal victory Feb. 22 and vowing revenge after losing to him as a sophomore.

He backed up that big talk in a big way, but not after a first-period scare.

Somlai picked up two early points for a takedown, but a reversal by Ryan put the Wauwaukee senior up 3-2 heading into the second two minutes.

“I realized I can’t be doing anything stupid, don’t take any pins for granted,” Somlai said. “Taking what you can get but also forcing stuff you know you can do. I knew I couldn’t do that cradle. I went for it too early.”

That slip-up helped Somlai refocus and flat out dominate Ryan, who is also a defensive end committed to North Dakota State. Ryan started down in the second and got his escape, but from there it was all Somlai, getting a takedown and nearfall before prompting the referee to slap his hand to the mat with four seconds to spare.

“I got back into my game, set it up, put him to his back off that takedown,” Somlai said. “Second time went with that crossfire butcher, he gave up.”

Somlai was prepared to ride out Ryan into the third period if need be with a lead in hand, but saved himself some energy by ending it right then and there in the second.

“Honestly through my

head, I was pretty much thinking, ‘Hey, let’s ride this out.’” Somlai said. “I had my choice in that third period. If we can get one you’ve got an 8-4 lead, keep trying to score points, but you know you can hold that lead and keep grinding.”

After hearing the whistle, Somlai did his best Nick Collins Super Bowl 45 impersonation, looking to the sky on his knees with his arms raised.

Somlai refocused and re-dedicated himself after taking fourth at last year’s state meet. Over the summer he won the 220-pound title at the Junior WWF Freestyle State Championships. Then after playing varsity football at BC for the first time in the fall — and knocking off Ryan’s Wauwaukee Warriors in the state semifinals — Somlai got to work on the mat and made the inevitable a reality, becoming the first Lancer ever to win a wrestling state championship.

Somlai got emotional thinking of the accomplishment.

“It feels great,” Somlai said. “I am so proud to become my coach’s first state champ and just to be part of this awesome, awesome group of people that have pushed me so far in my wrestling abilities.”



Brookfield Central senior Jacob Somlai gets his hand raised after winning the 220-pound championship during the WIAA Division 1 Individual State Wrestling Tournament on Feb. 23 at the Kohl Center in Madison.

# Medora perfect again as he wins second state title

## SJNMA/BA junior gets pin in final

By Dave Radcliffe  
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262-513-2655

MADISON — Greatness was expected of Aidan Medora, and he delivered once again.

Representing the St. John’s Northwestern/Brookfield Academy co-op, Medora made it back-to-back state titles when he pinned West Salem/Bangor’s Dalton Schams after 5 minutes, 19 seconds in the 138-pound finals of the WIAA Division 2 Individual State Wrestling Tournament Feb. 23 at the Kohl Center.

That capped a perfect 33-0 season for Medora, who hasn’t lost a match since the 126-pound final his freshman year.

“I just felt that winning state again was just expected of me, having put in all the work I had over the summer up at Askren, stuff like that, so I’m just doing my job out there and having fun with it,” Medora said.

Medora took a 4-1 lead into the second period after a pair of successive takedowns. That grew to a 9-2 advantage through four minutes, and his final takedown set up the championship-clinching pin with 41 seconds remaining in the match.

“I wasn’t really strategizing or game-planning that much,” Medora said. “I was just flowing with it. And when the opportunity presented itself, I took it, and that’s how it ended.”

Medora won by major decision in his previous two state matches, as racking up points has become his staple. A chance to become a



LEFT: Brookfield Academy junior Aidan Medora gets his hand raised after winning the 138-pound championship during the WIAA Division 2 Individual State Wrestling Tournament on Feb. 23 at the Kohl Center in Madison.



RIGHT: Brookfield East sophomore Connor Thorpe stands on the podium after taking third at 132 pounds.

three-time state champ awaits next February, but first Medora has his sights set on Junior Nationals in Fargo.

“The next big thing is Fargo,” Medora said. “Trying to get that Fargo title so I’ve just got to keep working from here. Still got to get better.”

\* \* \*

Despite having a program-record 11 wrestlers at the Individual State Wrestling Tournament, it was far from a guarantee that Mukwonago would feature any competitors in the final of their respective weight class.

Tyler Goebel made sure to give the Indians a represen-

tative.

The sophomore reached the Division 1 113-pound championship bout by way of a first-round pin and two decision victories, setting up a showdown with Ashwaubenon junior Cody Minor on Saturday night.

Goebel (42-7) came moments away from swiping the gold medal right out from under him.

A match largely controlled by Minor, Goebel trailed 12-4 early in the third period, needing a miracle. Suddenly, he found an opening, taking Minor down to the mat and then turning him onto his back.

“I was kind of down by a lot, so I didn’t really have any other options,” Goebel

said.

The referee was counting, but eventually, Minor rolled through. The three points for a nearfall made it 12-9, but Goebel wouldn’t get any closer as he fell to Minor, 13-10.

“My goal was just to place, but I don’t know,” Goebel said. “(I thought) it was definitely possible (to reach the finals before the season), but I didn’t think I’d get there.”

Five Mukwonago wrestlers in all were able to place and hope to ride that momentum into the UW Field House.

“It’s a lot of fun,” Goebel said. “Hopefully we can keep it going into team state, knowing it’s in their

head.”

\* \* \*

Several other Waukesha County wrestlers were able to stand on the podium Feb. 23, many for the first time.

Third-place finishers were Arrowhead freshman Mitchell Mesenbrink (120 pounds), Mukwonago senior Luke Eliszewski (126), Brookfield East sophomore Connor Thorpe (132) and Mukwonago junior Nate Stokhaug (145). Mesenbrink, Thorpe and Stokhaug each lost to the eventual champion in their respective classes, while Eliszewski fell to runner-up Edward Wilkowski of Watertown. It was the second consecutive bronze medal for

Thorpe, who took third at 126 pounds as a freshman.

Mukwonago senior Justin Eichler closed out his high school career by finishing fourth at 195 pounds.

Also placing at 126 pounds was Menomonee Falls junior Ethan Pogorzelski, who was awarded a fifth-place medal via forfeit. Arrowhead sophomore Jack Ganos reached the podium for the second straight year by finishing fifth at 138 pounds. He was runner-up last winter at 113.

Oconomowoc senior Keagan Lazar placed sixth at 152 pounds. In Division 2, Catholic Memorial senior Brian Flanagan won by pin in the 182-pound fifth-place match.



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