

Brookfield & Elm Grove

THIS MONTH

OCTOBER 2019

From Olives to Oil celebrates 1-year anniversary

Brookfield store owner follows passion for olive oils

BROOKFIELD — With a decade of experience under her belt, Lori Hass opened From Olives to Oil, which celebrated its one-year anniversary in September in Brookfield.

The shop offers “try before you buy” olive oils and balsamic vinegars, which have many applications.

“People are seeking healthier options for their cooking and diets in general. Our products fit the bill, offering lower-calorie and lower-fat alternatives for almost any dish or bakery. Plus, with more than 40 flavors of olive oils and balsamics, everyone can find something they like,” Hass said.

The Brookfield store at 17125C W. Bluemound Road celebrated its one-year anniversary on Sept. 21.

“The local community has warmly welcomed From

Olives to Oil, and we are thrilled to celebrate a wonderfully successful first year with our customers and business supporters,” Hass, a Brookfield resident, said. “We have received tremendous positive feedback, which guided us to expand our selections of oils, balsamics and foods. We strive to offer products not typically available in other stores, and instruction on using them to enjoy a more flavorful life.”

Most of the products sold at From Olives to Oil, balsamic vinegars, EVOOs and nut oils, are from a fourth-generation producer in Lazzio, Italy. The store carries many locally-produced food and health products, as well.

From Olives to Oil occupies space that formerly housed The Oilerie Brookfield. Hass worked at the business during its entire 10-year run, finishing as manager. Betsy Belongia, another longtime employee who has authored dozens of recipes using EVOOs and balsamic vinegars, continues to serve customers at From Olives to Oil.

From Olives to Oil has



From Olives to Oil owner Lori Hass, right, assists customer Janelle Kreidler at the Brookfield store.

more than 40 tasting tanks.

Hass says she focuses on making the experience personal for her customers.

“Being a small store, we enjoy personal interaction with our customers, which is especially important when they want to know how our products can be used, and the health benefits of doing so,” she said. “Everyone on our team is passionate about good cooking and great food. We don’t mind when people call with questions, for example – we want our customers to be educated, and comfortable with putting new ingredients and flavors to use.”

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INSIDE



State to fund more prosecutors

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Appraiser judges antiques at fair

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Area men part of first ESPN game

Sports 4B

Movie theater food fight leads to charges

By Brandon Anderegg
banderegg@conley.net.com
262-513-2657

WAUKESHA — A popcorn-and-beverage fight at the Majestic Cinema in the Town of Brookfield turned into criminal charges for one woman who allegedly attacked another woman while appearing in municipal court for citations issued in connection with the incident.

Yolanda M. Cruz, 38, was

charged with obstructing an officer, two counts of misdemeanor battery, resisting an officer and disorderly conduct, according to a Waukesha County Circuit Court criminal complaint.

Cruz was watching a movie at the theater on July 9 when she was allegedly hit by popcorn because she pulled out her cellphone to look at the time, according to the complaint. Cruz allegedly turned around and said to the alleged popcorn thrower,

“Are you really throwing popcorn at me, you fat (expletive)?” according to the complaint.

Following the comment, both the popcorn thrower and Cruz threw their drinks at each other. Cruz then grabbed nearby drinks and poured them on the popcorn thrower, who was later identified as Saraya Harris, according to the complaint.

Cruz and Harris were issued municipal citations for disorderly conduct.

Both Cruz and Harris appeared in court Sept. 19 and as Cruz left her attorney’s office, multiple witnesses observed Cruz approach Harris, grab her by the hair and pull her to the floor, according to the complaint. Cruz allegedly struck Harris in the face with a closed fist and an officer reported hearing a loud thud each time Cruz struck Harris in the face, according to the complaint.

Another witness in the

courtroom attempted to intervene, and Cruz allegedly struck him in the forehead during the altercation. An officer then jumped over chairs to reach Cruz before putting her in handcuffs.

As Cruz was being handcuffed, she yelled something to the effect of “Harris got what she deserved,” according to the complaint. Another officer noticed clumps of hair on the courtroom floor as well as blood in Harris’ mouth.




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More than 60 new prosecutor positions added throughout state

Equivalent of 2.5 positions added in Waukesha County

By Brandon Anderegg
banderegg@conley.net.com
262-513-2657

WAUKESHA — More than 60 new assistant district attorney positions will be added to 56 counties across Wisconsin, Governor Tony Evers announced Sept. 17.

Evers touted the measure as the largest state investment in the district attorney program in Wisconsin's history. For the first time in 10 years, money drawn from the General Purpose Fund will be used to fund full-time positions added to the program, Evers said at a press conference held outside the Waukesha County Courthouse.

The 64.95 positions added throughout the state were based on requests made by county district attorneys, according to a press release. A total of 2.5 positions were added to Waukesha County.

Evers said district attorneys are on the front-line of the criminal justice system, adding that critical changes needed to reform the criminal justice system cannot be made if county district attorney offices are overworked and understaffed.

"For far too long our county district attorney offices have been doing more with less," Evers said. "This historic investment will enable our county officials to improve victim services, enhance diversion and treatment options for those struggling with substance use disorders and address backlogs that are standing in the way of justice."

Evers was joined at the press conference by State Rep. Robyn Vining, D-Wauwatosa, The Women's Center Executive Director Angela Mancuso and Waukesha County Assistant District Attorney Mike Thurston.

"It's a big day for criminal justice reform," Thurston said. "Today the governor's office put the finishing touches on a criminal justice reform bill that is apolitical, that was widely supported by both parties and that addresses so many of our local



Brandon Anderegg/Freeman Staff

Governor Tony Evers announces at a press conference that 64.95 assistant district attorney positions will be added to various district attorney's offices throughout Wisconsin. From left: State Rep. Robyn Vining, D-Wauwatosa; The Women's Center Executive Director Angela Mancuso; Waukesha County Assistant District Attorney Mike Thurston; Evers.

challenges."

Thurston said the new positions will allow for district attorney's offices and law enforcement agencies across the state to more effectively address issues such as the opioid crisis, a spike in mental illness and the primary and secondary trauma of children.

"For prosecutors especially, we couldn't be more grateful for a fully-funded pay progression and those 65 positions that will allow us to address chronic shortages, be more responsive to victims and law enforcement to help us make more judicious decisions," Thurston said.

In 2003, Waukesha County lost three prosecutors and since then, the District Attorney's office hasn't recovered, Thurston said. Thurston, who is president of the Wisconsin District Attorneys Association, said Wisconsin district

"It's a big day for criminal justice reform. Today the governor's office put the finishing touches on a criminal justice reform bill that is apolitical, that was widely supported by both parties and that addresses so many of our local challenges."

— Mike Thurston,
Waukesha County assistant district attorney and
Wisconsin District Attorneys Association president

attorneys along with the DAA requested a total of 130 positions.

"This was a compromise to reach 65 which we are extremely grateful for," Thurston said. "But we do hope to reach levels that are adequate as far as staffing is concerned over the long haul."



Submitted rendering

Construction on Elm Grove Heights, a 75-unit senior living facility, has begun.

Construction of senior living facility begins

Project expected to stimulate economic activity in Elm Grove

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

ELM GROVE — The first stages of construction on a new senior living facility in Elm Grove are now taking place.

The 75-unit independent living facility called Elm Grove Heights was first proposed last winter and will be for those age 62 and older.

Initial site preparation, including partial removal of vegetation and mobilization of the needed on-site equipment, as well as excavation of the building foundation and underground parking garage, began in late August.

In order to make Elm Grove Heights a reality, the parcel of land at 13040 W.

Bluemound Road, needed to be rezoned from B-3 Mid-Rise Office and Professional District to the Rm-2 Multiple-Family Residential District.

According to the formal zoning request submitted to the village last December by Horizon Development Group, Inc., Elm Grove Heights will help stimulate the village's next economic cycle by keeping higher income seniors in the village and promoting turnover of existing homes.

Horizon also said that senior housing will likely have a lower impact on Bluemound Road traffic when compared to other businesses allowed under the B-3 designation, such as a hotel.

"Amending the Comprehensive Plan to accommodate Elm Grove Heights will help meet the housing demand for the Village's rapidly expanding senior population," wrote Horizon Managing Partner Philip Schulz in the request.

Elm Grove's Comprehensive Plan explains that as of 2000, over 34% of residents will be over the age of 64.



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Schools battle against student vaping

Local school districts combating epidemic by providing information to parents

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

WAUKESHA — Local school districts are doing more than educating students in the traditional areas of study. As the number of students vaping has climbed to epidemic numbers, according to the Food and Drug Administration, several Waukesha County school districts are battling both misinformation and a lack of information regarding the modern trend.

The Elmbrook School District has decided to utilize the public service announcement method.

“Last year, we saw a pretty sharp rise in the number of students who we were getting social media posts (from) of vaping happening or vaping that was happening on school property or kids who were in possession of the vaping materials,” said Director of Student Services Tanya Fredrich. “As we talked with parents, they were really clear that they didn’t know what to be looking for. It was kind of a foreign language for families.”

Last month, Elmbrook released the first in a series of three vaping PSAs aimed at educating students and families on not only what vaping is and its potential dangers, but what signs to look for.

Fredrich explained the district had tried emailing information out, but was searching for a better way to reach families.

“There were kids that were telling their parents it was just flavored water and we were seeing a lack of information or misinformation,” Fredrich said.

She said vaping is the opposite of everything students have grown up hearing about tobacco — vaping cartridges often smell good

and taste sweet and come in a variety of youthful flavors.

Fredrich added that most families associate vaping with only nicotine and are just now learning about THC cartridges that can be purchased.

The first PSA, “What is Vaping?,” is available now online at elmbrookschoools.org/vaping with additional segments coming in October and November.

“Many parents said it gave them the opportunity to watch it with their kids and have a conversation, which is always what we’re looking for,” Fredrich said.

Be The Majority

In the School District of Waukesha, a group of community organizations are trying to educate families where they’ll already be gathered.

Recently, during the Waukesha West versus Waukesha North football game, a resource fair on vaping prevention was open to families.

Drug Free Communities of Waukesha County, Elevate Community Resource Center, Peers 4 Peers, and the School District of Waukesha all partnered to provide information.

“Because there’s so many different kinds and manufacturers, nobody really knows what they’re putting into their bodies and that’s the biggest hurdle or obstacle in education is that there’s not enough resources for educators to be able to say ‘this is what it is’ or ‘this is what it does to you,’” said Jody Ebbinger-Bentley, school social worker at Waukesha East Alternative High School.

In addition to the resource fair, there will also be free giveaways throughout the evening, posters, wristbands and rally towels.

The theme of the evening is #BeTheMajority to highlight the majority of students who aren’t vaping, explained Ebbinger-Bentley.

She added that there has already been some skepticism toward the trend from students who know someone who has gotten sick from vaping or who have read the recent health reports.

“I think the word is starting to get out more,” Ebbinger-Bentley said.

The district is also working on scheduling some parent information nights later in the year at the middle and high schools.

Vaping curriculum

The Oconomowoc Area School District is expanding its health curriculum to include a program called Vape Educate.

Students go online to learn about what vaping is, the related health and addiction risks, and how marketing has reportedly targeted today’s youth. The curriculum consists of five chapters that includes tests after students finish each one. The tests measure student understanding of the concepts taught.

The program also monitors any changes in student knowledge around the risks associated with using vaping and nicotine products.

Vape Educate is funded via an Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (AODA) that was awarded to OASD.

The district also teams up with Your Choice Prevention Education to educate students on current drug trends and vaping.

Two upcoming vaping forums are scheduled on Oct. 8 and Oct. 10.

For more information, visit the “Your Choice-Live Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program” Facebook page and search under “Events.”



Submitted photo

Homecoming high fives

Brookfield Academy football players greet arriving Primary School students with a high-five line during Homecoming week festivities.



Mary Catanese/Special to Conley Media

Tails wagging at Wagfest in Brookfield

BROOKFIELD — One-year-old Tootsie, left, Floyd Brown and Lulu, 10, watch dogs run the lure course at the Elmbrook Humane Society’s Wagfest on Sept. 7.

St. Joseph’s Medical Clinic Haunted Carnival set for Oct. 26

WAUKESHA – St. Joseph’s Medical Clinic will hold haunted carnival on Oct. 26.

The fundraising event will include carnival games, a silent auction and a live auction. There will also be a Halloween costume contest.

Tickets will be \$125 per person or \$1,000 for a table for 10.

St. Joseph’s Medical Clinic has been offering free medical care to residents of Waukesha County for 42 years. The location is mov-

ing and changing names to Waukesha Free Clinic at Carroll University.

The event will be held at the Marriott West hotel in Pewaukee. To register go to hauntedcarnival.giveasmart.com.



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4

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5

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6

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7

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Judging antiques at a county fair

Last month I judged the antiques competition at the Walworth County Fair in Elkhorn. It was a two-day event with over — believe it or not — 1,100 items and an extremely attentive crowd. The judging criteria included authenticity, condition, rarity, historical significance, comparison to a standard and scope of local, regional, national and/or global interest. County fair judges never assign a value.

A small army of dedicated fair volunteers cataloged and numbered each item; no personal information was revealed. The team expedited a proven check-in method and synchronized the process like a Henry Ford assembly line.

Today's column exhibits a small sample of division ribbon winners. It was a wonderful privilege to be immersed in rural history and to taste heavenly homemade lemon pie!

George Washington is always the winner

Silk souvenir bookmarks were products during the centennial celebration of America's Independence. Woven on Jacquard looms at the Philadelphia Centennial Exhibition in 1876. Sentimental keepsakes have been discovered folded away in sewing tables, baskets and drawers of great-grandmothers' iron seamstress (treadle sewing machine). A family member discovered this memorial ribbon in such a place and had it framed. Some antiques give up their secrets more readily than others. Visual clues on silk are naturally occurring split edges, shredding and uneven color fading. The interest in patriotic items continues to this day.

A pecking order

Roosters became a symbol of service way before the 20th century. High-



BARBARA EASH

Antiques Appraised

pitched, harsh crowing at the break of dawn was more reliable than clocks. Tin silhouettes tacked over the henhouse door were viewed as architectural novelties in rural communities. Many of these tin signs were made by a traveling tinsmith (tinnier) at a cost of 15 cents and supper. The yellow reflective paint on the arched feathers — a penny more. Most simple-cut rooster signs were eaten by rust then discarded, but today are favored by folk art collectors. Following the judging competition, the owners of this strutting rooster introduced themselves and gave permission to be featured. Steve and Darlene Pinnow are now fourth-generation farmers at Wisconsin Lamb Farms. As a small boy when visiting his grandparents' farm, Steve pelted the 15-inch-by-15-inch sign with stones.

Stitching horse

In farm and city communities, highly skilled men would be sought out for the making and repair of leather goods, including harness and saddles. Workers would set facing the upright clamp-jaws that was controlled by a foot pedal. Assorted vise sizes were used for precision stretching and stitching. The proud owner of this antique entry attached the below family history to the bench. Good idea — write down your family history!

"Great, great grandpa immigrated from Prussia in the 1830's. He settled in Waterford, Wisconsin working as a harness maker for 50 years. I salvaged this from the old



granary on the homestead."

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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Photo courtesy of Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce

Orange Theory joins Brookfield chamber

BROOKFIELD — The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony to welcome Orange Theory to its new location at Brookfield Square. Orange Theory offers a science-backed, technology-tracked, coach-inspired group workout with personalized results. Pictured from left to right are: front row, Stephanie Fong/Primerica and Brookfield chamber engagement partner; Jackson Buboltz/Elevated Insurance; Angela Genzel, Jana Zeman, Angela Krueger, and Jenna Schoemann, all of Orange Theory; Carol White/president Brookfield chamber; and Lori Choiniski/Gerald Nell and Brookfield chamber board member.

County releases long-range \$103M capital projects plan

Plan calls for new trail, courthouse upgrades, and Moorland Road improvements

By Darryl Enriquez
Special to Conley Media
denriquez@wi.rr.com

WAUKESHA — Court- house security, road improvements and a trail linking Pewaukee and Brookfield to downtown Milwaukee are included in a five-year capital projects plan released last month by Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow to improve quality of life here and “set the county up for success,” he wrote.

The projects plan “invests responsibly in infrastruc- ture vital to public safety and economic development while leveraging partner- ships and alternative fund- ing sources to improve qual- ity of life and maintain exist- ing services at a low cost to taxpayers,” Farrow wrote in a cover letter to the Wauke- sha County Board of Super- visors.

The plan’s gross expendi- tures over five years are about \$103 million. With expected revenues of \$20.3 million figured in, the net expenditure figure drops to \$83.3 million, according to the capital budget summary.

Capital projects are mostly paid through borrowing and contributions from federal, state and local governments.

At the top of the list are courthouse projects to improve security and address aging and out-of- date systems.

“Upgraded systems and streamlined operations are expected to offset some of the costs of the project in the long term,” Farrow wrote.

Construction of a court tower has begun. The old intake court was demolished to make way for a new jail holding facility, and the old jail space will be demolished later in 2019 to make way for the new 62,000-square-foot, four-story, eight-courtroom building,” he wrote. Construction is expected to be complete in 2021.

The new secure courtroom will be adjacent to the jail to

improve security, prisoner transport and public access. Project cost is set at \$38.5 million, according to the budget summary.

Renovation of the 1959 courthouse is expected to enhance business operations through efficient office lay- outs and improved public accesses, he wrote. Construc- tion will take place from 2022 to 2026. Project cost is set at \$58.6 million, according to the budget summary.

Transportation

The plan includes five pro- jects to improve one of the busiest roads in the county, Moorland Road, a thorough- fare between Interstate 43 and Bluemound Road, which serves shopping centers, such as Brookfield Square mall, Farrow wrote.

Planned improvements include replacing existing pavement, reconfiguring intersections to improve safety, replacing older traffic signals and adding side- walks and stormwater improvements. Federal funds will offset most design and construction costs, accord- ing to the budget summary.

The intersection at Moor- land and Beloit roads in New Berlin will be reconstructed to meet traffic volume demands. Construction is planned for 2020. Projected cost is almost \$3.6 million. About \$2.2 million if federal dollars will offset the cost, according to the budget sum- mary.

Moorland Road improve- ments between Interstate 94 and Bluemound Road in Brookfield are planned for 2022. Project cost is \$8 mil- lion, and about \$6.4 million in federal money will offset the cost, according to the budget summary.

Another major plan is widening from two to four lanes the three-mile stretch of North Avenue between 124th Street and Calhoun Road. Construction begins in 2020. Project cost is \$27.5 million. Federal funding and local contributions will pick

up \$16.5 million of the cost.

Parks

The project plan contains a Pewaukee to Brookfield Trail, “which would create local economic benefits by connecting residents in several densely populated areas with business and employ- ment centers,” Farrow wrote.

It’s a 3.5-mile trail from a proposed trail access on North Avenue, south of Watertown Road, in the City of Pewaukee to a proposed trailhead near River and Brookfield roads in Brook- field. Construction is planned for 2021. Much of the cost will be paid through federal funding and contri- butions from Brookfield.

“The trail connects to 26 miles of established on- and off-road trails in the City of Brookfield, as well as connecting with trails and park- ways throughout Milwaukee County, including the State of Wisconsin Hank Aaron Trail and Milwaukee County Oak Leaf Trail,” Farrow wrote.

Project costs are set at \$2.5 million. Federal and state dollars will pick up \$2 mil- lion of the cost. Brookfield will contribute \$254,000, according to the budget sum- mary.

Plans call for the new trail to ultimately connect with Frame Park in Waukesha.

A Menomonee Park Dog Exercise Area in partner- ships with the villages of Sussex and Menomonee Falls is planned to serve northeast Waukesha County.

“The plan is anticipated to generate new park revenues through increased rentals and park sticker sales,” Far- row wrote. The project will be completed in 2020.

Project costs are set at \$500,000. Menomonee Falls and Sussex are each expected to contribute \$125,000 toward the cost and reserve fund for park improvements will pay for the rest of the costs, according to the bud- get summary.

raSmith adds staff to Construction Services Division

BROOKFIELD — Seth Keller and Liam Cimaglia have joined raSmith as civil engineers, and Hannah Muckerheide and Matt Henry have joined raSmith as construction representa- tives. The new staff mem- bers will each support the construction services divi- sion and provide services to the firm’s municipal clients.

Cimaglia recently earned his bache- lor’s degree in civil engi- neering from Marquette University. He has gained project experience in traf- fic analysis, data collection and inter- section design for local municipalities such as West Allis. Cimaglia’s expe- rience also includes design services for the reconstruc- tion of Drex- el Avenue in Oak Creek.



Cimaglia



Keller



Muckerheide

Henry has over four years of experience in construction observation and materials testing for the Wisconsin Department of Transportation as well as municipal, corporate and residential projects. His services in the field include the removal and replacement of existing soil subgrades, curb and gutter, storm and sanitary sewer, and as-built redlin- ing. Henry holds a bache- lor’s degree in civil engi- neering from the Universi- ty of South Carolina.



Henry

The LAK Group names Milsted and Grubich as presidents

BROOKFIELD — The LAK Group (formerly Lawrence, Allen and Kolbe), a leading manage- ment consulting firm, announced that Mike Mil- sted and Michael Grubich have been named presi- dents and partners, and have assumed ownership of the organization.

According to the announcement, Milsted has a strong desire to help people find meaningful involvement in what they do, because aligning peo- ple and business is his passion. He works as a business adviser and cre- ates solutions to align clients’ talent and busi- ness strategies.



Milsted



Grubich

Milsted holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. He began his career working as a social worker at a women’s shelter, is currently an adult leader and committee member with the Boy Scouts of America and volunteers with the National Kidney Foundation and has devel- oped a pro- fessional career dedi- cated to helping peo- ple to reach their poten- tial.

Outside of work, Milst- ed enjoys spending time with his family.

Grubich brings more than 25 years of global leadership experience that enhances the perfor- mance of the organiza- tions, individuals, teams and leaders he serves to his new role, according to the announcement.

He provides consulta- tion and coaching to senior leaders in order to help them move their businesses forward through an integrated approach of aligning talent, culture and business objectives.

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Local softball standouts blazed trail on ESPN

Wagner, Graser played in network’s first live telecast

By Mark Hutchinson
mhutchinson@conley.net.com
262-513-2693

WAUKESHA – Greg Wagner and Dennis Graser were prominent diggers in a ground-breaking event 40 years ago.

That historic feat was just commemorated on a world-wide forum.

The two Waukesha County men occupied the top two spots in the batting order of the Milwaukee Schlitz professional softball team, which hosted the Kentucky Bourbon in the very first live sporting event telecast by the fledgling Entertainment and Sports Programming Network, aka ESPN, on Sept. 7, 1979.

The premiere wasn’t a smash hit for the Milwaukee team, which dropped the opening game of the American Professional Slow-Pitch League’s World Series 15-5 before a partisan audience at Lannon’s Joecks Field.

But Schlitz discovered its gusto to win the second game of the evening doubleheader 12-2, then split another twin bill the next night to even the best-of-nine series at 2-2 and send it to Kentucky the following weekend.

Louisville became the most hostile environment Milwaukee’s pro softballers experienced during the sport’s six-year run. But they brought their brooms with them on this road trip and swept two doubleheaders in unfriendly confines to capture their first of three World Series championships.

After Milwaukee won the 1982 United Professional Slow-pitch League World Series, pro softball became a thing of the past, referenced only occasionally by ESPN anchors for its place in the network’s programming history.

Recently, though, another ESPN trailer traveled to Lannon, where members of the Schlitz team, its ownership and administration gathered to reminisce and film a retrospective. The E:60 segment debuted on the network Sept. 10, featuring the stories told from both the Wisconsin and Kentucky perspectives.

There was no way any of the combatants in that 1979 APSPL World Series could have fathomed what a mas-

sive network ESPN would become ... or that they would be recognized 40 years later for launching it.

“I remember seeing that ESPN trailer parked behind the bleachers at Lannon and thinking, ‘What the heck is that?’” Wagner said. “Whenever the anniversary of our game came up — 10 years, 20 years — ESPN always mentioned it. They never had any footage or did anything more until now.”

That is because only a few people knew what became of the game footage until just recently. John Korinek, who founded and owned the Milwaukee franchise, had it.

“What happened right after the World Series ended is John approached ESPN and said, ‘I’d like to buy all of the film,’” Graser said. “ESPN, being the fledgling company that it was at the time — nobody knew what it was going to grow into — said, ‘OK.’”

“So John bought the tapes for \$750 right after the World Series ended. He had them under wraps, and nobody knew that.”

There was justice in the fact that the historic tapes wound up in Korinek’s possession, because he was the visionary who elevated Milwaukee’s rich softball tradition from amateur to professional status.

Korinek played on and managed the Cooper Hearth team in Milwaukee’s Big Eight Classic League, which became renowned as one of the premier amateur softball hotbeds in the country. Korinek built the foundation of Milwaukee’s flagship pro softball team with Big Eight players, and it was known as Copper Hearth for one season before the Schlitz Brewing Company took over sponsorship.

Big Eight products such as Phil Higgins, Paul Wenzel, Derek Gallagher and Kenny Parker and others gave Milwaukee instant credibility in the new pro league because of the success they enjoyed on the national amateur circuit.

But Milwaukee didn’t become a championship-caliber pro team until the league transitioned from being a home-run derby contested on 300-foot fences into more spacious ballparks with 70-foot basepaths where directional



Submitted photo

Greg Wagner, left, and Dennis Graser reunite at Waukesha’s Saratoga Complex this summer prior to ESPN’s E:60 special marking the 40th anniversary of their appearance in the network’s first live sportscast. Wagner and Graser helped the Milwaukee Schlitz professional softball team win three World Series titles.

hitting, speed and defense became paramount.

By the time Schlitz relocated from Milwaukee’s Wilson Stadium to Lannon Field in 1979, the makeup of the team’s nucleus had changed to include two interlopers from Waukesha County.

In 1972, Wagner and Graser graduated from high school — Wagner from Waukesha and Graser from New Berlin — with aspirations of playing professional baseball. Their pursuits of those aspirations took them to the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire and UW-Stout, respectively, and both excelled during the summer months on the local amateur circuit.

Both players had reached crossroads in their careers, and they elected to follow the same avenue.

“I was released in the middle of August and went back to school,” Graser said. “My freshman coach at Stout had a sister who was John Korinek’s secretary. They were just getting this pro softball league organized and were going to have tryouts.”

“He said, ‘Dennis, why don’t you go and try out?’”

“I said, ‘Why would I? I don’t play softball.’ I think I had played in four or five beer games in college, but that was it.”

Wagner began playing competitive softball before his

baseball career reached the finish line. A Waukesha resident for 59 years of his life, he was aware of the slow-pitch game’s rich tradition at Saratoga Complex, and he experienced it while still in his teens.

“I started playing at Saratoga right out of high school,” Wagner said. “We were Dean’s Barbers in our first year; then Pete’s Place in our second. Our Pete’s Place team played in what they called the major league on Mondays and Thursdays.”

“Then we were sponsored by Billy D’s and won the city title in 1976. We had a good young team.”

Wagner didn’t delve fully into softball until later.

“When I started playing, I did not want to take any batting practice,” he said. “Baseball was still my focus since I was playing for Waukesha in the Land O’ Lakes League. I did not want to ruin my baseball swing.”

“I had a mechanism to wait long enough for the pitch. A lot of hardball players can’t make that adjustment. It seems like it would be a logical transition, but it’s not.”

Wagner mastered the transition and soon followed in Graser’s footsteps to a Schlitz tryout.

“I went to a tryout they had in ’78,” Wagner said. “They had a lot of guys there hitting

and fielding. They kept two or three of us and had us play with Copper Hearth’s Wednesday night team to start the 1978 season in what used to be known as the Big Eight.

“I started out playing there. In the middle of June, they brought me up to play for Schlitz.”

“Going to Lannon to play was huge for our team,” Wagner said. “We had some guys with power, but we had speed and great defense. Our infield was superb. We turned a lot of double plays and took teams out of a lot of innings.”

“They moved the bases from 60 to 70 feet, which made defense more important. The left-field fence at Lannon Field was 328 feet, and it went out from there. It had to be 360 in center — a good poke.

“Once we moved out of the smaller parks — the other cities did the same type of thing — that was a big key for us. We had every facet of the game covered. We had guys with power and we could also hit line drives and hit the ball into gaps as well as over the fence.”

Milwaukee won the APSPL’s Mid Western Division by a half-game over Detroit, then swept past Cleveland and Detroit in the play-offs to earn its first World Series berth. Kentucky lost only one game on its side of the bracket, setting up a championship showdown between rivals.

“The rivalry was built up from years of amateur ball,” Graser said. “A lot of the Kentucky players played for a team called Jiffy Club, so they knew all of our guys who had played for Copper Hearth. There was a lot of competitiveness there.”

“You didn’t have to get yourself worked up to play in those games. You were always worked up and excited to get out there and beat them, and they felt the same way about playing us. That rivalry was strong.”

As intense as the teams’ rivalry was, they didn’t simply collide and slug it out.

“We were hoping to win three out of four here, because it was hard to go down to Kentucky and win,” Wagner said. “When we reached that level, we talked about what we wanted to do strategy-wise against every player. It was almost like the shifting they’re doing now in baseball.”

“We strategized how to play different guys.”

Schlitz had to change its plan after losing Game 1 of the Series.

“In the first game, Kentucky just wore out the middle against Rick,” Graser said. “They had base hit after base hit after base hit. Between games, some of our veterans went up to (manager) Mike Basile and said, ‘Hey, we’ve got to stop this.’”

“So we went to a five-man infield, and that was a huge difference in the second game and for the rest of the series. We hadn’t played much five-man up to that point. We tried to take them out of their comfort zone. They might still beat us going another way, but we had to make them try.”

The impact of the strategic shift was immediate and eventually decisive.

Milwaukee won two of the next three games at Lannon, then took three of four in front of hostile crowds in Louisville to bring home the championship.

“Kentucky always had big crowds,” Graser said. “There was a building out beyond the outfield fence and people would sit on top of it and watch the games.”

“There was one time where we needed a police escort to get out of there. After we won the Series, we had a pretty good party that night.”

Milwaukee’s championship conquest, though, was a team effort. Doug Czaplewski batted .571, James Dillard hit .500 with six homers and 13 RBIs, Graser drove in 11 runs, Wenzel knocked in 10, and Higgins launched a pivotal grand slam during Game 7 and totaled nine RBIs.

Graser and Wagner helped Milwaukee win the North American Softball League championship in 1980 and the United Professional Slow-Pitch League title in 1982, giving them a combined six World Series rings.

Graser, who went on to win multiple national amateur softball titles with such teams as Steele’s Sports, Elite Coatings and Ritch’s Superior in the ensuing years, discovered during the filming of the ESPN E:60 special that he had another claim to fame.

“When I did my interview, the interviewer said, ‘Did you know that you hit the first home run on ESPN? You hit one out foul and complained about the call, but then you hit one out in the seventh inning of the first game. What do you think about that?’”

“I said, ‘I never knew. That’s pretty cool.’”

Brookfield Central-Kettle Moraine playoff was a beauty

Lasers barely beat Lancers on third extra hole



CHUCK DELSMAN

highest-scoring player on each team, they were still deadlocked.

And that’s when things got interesting, as all five players from both teams headed for the 10th tee with a large crowd of other players, coaches, fans and parents looking on, adding a little more pressure to the already anxious sudden-death playoff scene.

Playing the par-4, 307-yard 10th hole, both teams were solid as the two tied with a four-player total of 1-over-par 17. That forced a second playoff hole at the par-4, 284-yard 11th hole. Once again, the same result, another tie as each team recorded four pars. While Central appeared to rate the edge when everyone was on the green, KM got back into picture when Isabelle Gaudion drained a downhill 20-foot putt to send the playoff to a third hole.

After a brief meeting of the coaches and players at the par-3, 146-yard 12th hole and severe darkness setting in, it was decided that this was going to be the final hole. Another tie would mean the two teams would be crowned co-champions.

Five of the 10 players found the sloping green with their tee shots. Four others were next to the green, either in the

sand traps or in the first cut of rough next to the green. One player, Kyler Whipper of BC, was in trouble, in the trees plenty short and right of the green.

Well, as things played out, Central won the hole and the playoff, winning by a score of 13-14. Sami Krutz, the medalist for the day with a round of 2-over-par 73, parred the hole for Central, as did teammates Erin Rosencrantz and CJ Romero. But KM did not go down without a fight, getting pars from Julia Schilling and Jenna Anderson.

But while the par-shooters came up big for the Lancers, it was the play of Whipper that probably won it for BC. In trouble in the trees, Whipper chipped her ball low between a group of trees and branches and the ball scooted across the green to the back fringe. From there she got down in two shots, giving her a four, good enough for the bogey and giving her team the one-shot victory.

As darkness set quickly as everyone was returning to the clubhouse for the awards ceremony, a special day had just been completed. Seven hours of golf, finishing with an epic team playoff, believed to be the longest in Waukesha County history and one of the longest and most competitive ever in the state.

The record says Central won the county championship for the second straight year. Besides Krutz, Rosencrantz and Romero, the title was shared by Sarah Balding

and Whipper. Romero was outstanding in the playoff, recording three pars.

Kettle Moraine also performed well under the pressure-packed conditions. They got three pars from Schilling and solid play from Anderson, Madeline Fiebig, Regan Stuke and Gaudion. The Lasers might have lost but did themselves proud as well.

Here’s what I liked. Despite all of the pressure and the big crowd watching, all 10 of the girls played well, never cracking. There were only a few missed shots and each time those players rallied back to make par or bogey. The golf and the sportsmanship was brilliant. It was an outstanding scene.

While the scorecard showed Central winning the championship, there were no losers that day. The way those 10 girls played, there was only winners.



Kenny Yoo/Special to Conley Media

Brookfield Central’s Sami Krutz looks down range on hole 11 during the Waukesha County Girls Golf Championships at Wanaki Golf Course.



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