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Locals rally to aid Michael's House of Prime after 'devastating' fire

GoFundMe created to help restaurant staff

By Jake Ekdahl
jekdahl@conley.net.com
262-513-2657

CITY OF PEWAUKEE — After a fire the early morning of Dec. 9 destroyed longtime restaurant and local landmark Michael's House of Prime, the community is coming together to offer help.

A GoFundMe set up by local resident Charlotte Peterson and with permission from Michael's House of Prime's owners raised \$16,940 from 203 donors a day after the fire. The funds will be used to support the restaurant's employees.

"When I drove over there yesterday and saw it, my heart just immediately went out to the people that work there," Peterson said. "I started thinking about the valet guy (and) Sarah the bartender... Those people just got blindsided."

Waukesha County Sheriff's Lt. Nicholas Ollinger said the cause of the fire remains under investigation. No one was injured in the blaze.

On Facebook, Michael's House of Prime owners Rick and David Buckley said they appreciate efforts made to save the building, the support from the community and are grateful for all their staff, but will still need some time to process the event.

"We are devastated at the loss of our beloved neighborhood establishment," they said. "We've had an amazing outpouring of support from the community and cannot thank you all enough."

Other local establishments are offering a helping hand. The Butler Inn of Pewaukee said they'd "like to offer any help or assistance during this devastating time." Peterson said finding work for Michael's House of Prime staff could go a long way.

Thirsty Duck Sussex hosted a mini-bowling fundraiser.



Only the very front of the main building is left standing after the fire Dec. 9.

Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff

"The proceeds from every hour of bowling booked on Saturday (will) go directly to their employees," they said. "The bowling is mini, so it is perfect for all ages, young and old. Let's come together and support the community. You can book at Reserveyourlane.com."

There will also be a benefit at Sun-

set Grill in the City of Pewaukee Dec. 19 with funds going to support Michael's House of Prime staff.

On Facebook, the Wisconsin Restaurant Association called Michael's House of Prime an "iconic member of our Wisconsin restaurant family."

Peterson said she's not sure how

long she will keep the GoFundMe open, but donations continue to come in.

"I don't know whether that will be another day or another week, or until Christmas," she said.

Those interested in making their own donations can visit the GoFundMe at <https://bit.ly/343OPOy>.

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Pewaukee choir teacher keeps the show going through COVID-19

Virtual hurdles create new opportunities

By Jake Ekdahl
jekdahl@conley.net
262-513-2657

PEWAUKEE — Teaching is a challenging job under any circumstances, but finding a way to teach choir during COVID-19 — with some students learning virtually and in-person settings altered due to precautions — is a daunting task. Yet, that's exactly what Pewaukee High School Choir Teacher Tasha Igielski is tackling head on.

Igielski was showcased by the district as this month's educator for "Behind the Scenes of Virtual Learning," an ongoing series.

The series highlights an educator who's gotten creative with their subject material and created exciting learning experiences for both their in-person and virtual students.

Pewaukee School District Mar-

keting and Communications Manager Miranda Kozlik previously told The Freeman the goal of the video series is to showcase "unsung heroes and impactful moments and behind-the-scenes efforts that need to be highlighted ... In general, we are so lucky to have the teachers that we do in our district."

The less-than-ideal circumstances have spurred some innovation for Igielski and her class.

"What we've done so far is create videos to share out (and) that's something I think we'll continue regardless," she said. She's also considering doing some live-streaming.

"I would love to do a live performance in some capacity but it will probably look different than what we typically do," Igielski said.

Igielski said students wear masks and socially distance, and they spent time practicing outdoors while weather allowed. COVID-19 rules limit the time they spend singing in the auditorium — which is used over the traditional room to allow students to space out — to 30 minutes at a time.

For virtual students, Igielski has been making practice tracks so they can practice their music inde-

pendently at home and make recordings, which she can assess for each of them personally. The virtual students and hybrid students sometimes join class via Zoom, but so far synchronizing virtual audio adequately for a choir practice or performance is not within grasp.

"The technology just won't allow it," Igielski said.

Despite all the challenges, Igielski said her students are doing well. "I'm really proud of them, how they're handling everything," she said. "It would be really easy to have this attitude of 'well, it's not the same so I don't want to do it.'"

Igielski said some of the older students have taken the initiative to help the younger ones. "I think they sort of understand that if they want to get anything out of choir they have to put the work in out of class," she said. "I've seen that student leadership come out this year."

Preserving the experience of choir and music, despite the pandemic, has been important for the students.

"So many of them have expressed gratitude for being able to sing at all," Igielski said. "I think singing is so important for that



Submitted photo
Pewaukee High School Choir Teacher Tasha Igielski warms up the varsity choir outside.

social emotional part of things ... getting to create music with people who share the same passion as you."



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Fresh Baked opening new location in Brookfield

Bakery specializing in croissants, pastries, to open in Galleria West

By Alex Nemec
anemec@conley.net
262-513-2661

BROOKFIELD — After first opening Fresh Baked in Oconomowoc in April 2019, owner Jennifer Betances is opening a second location in the Galleria West in Brookfield.

Betances said she always had an idea to expand but wanted to make sure she could handle running one location before running two.

"(We) started with a small location that we could manage that we could learn and grow because every day is a new experience, we learned things every day," Betances said.

During the first year and a half, Betances said she used that time to grow as a business.

"We have a small kitchen where we are with a tight space but it works for us," she said. "We would also like to participate in weddings and functions and many other avenues and in order to do that we have to grow."

The new location will be run with the help of Jennifer's team including her children, general manager Christina Childers and shop manager Gene Michael Betances. In addition, assistant chef Brice Mazzetto — also known as Captain Croissant — helps Jennifer with the baking



Submitted photo
Croissants just like these will soon be available in Brookfield as Fresh Baked aims to open their new cafe in the Galleria West sometime this month.

and cooking.

Mazzetto, who is a French immigrant, said the location in Brookfield started the same way as the location in Oconomowoc — by utilizing local farmers markets.

"(We) saw good feedback and pleasantly surprised and like everybody we wanted to grow in life," Mazzetto said. " ... people knew us

already from the Oconomowoc location and word of mouth. It went very well."

Betances said the new location was a gift because the new space was already built out and the Fresh Baked team didn't need to start from scratch like they did at the Oconomowoc location.

"The transition was less impactful financially," she said. "That's what made the opportunity available for us. Had we had to start from an empty box, we would not have been able to do it."

Betances said a lot of her customers in Oconomowoc don't actually come from the area and instead travel from surrounding Midwest cities.

"We have customers that come from Chicago and Lake Geneva and people have come on a regular basis from Appleton," Betances said.

"We're very happy. It's not just all the hard work that goes into it, but it's the feedback and what comes back from all of the effort."

Betances said she is in midst of getting city approvals on the space, but that she hopes to open some time this month. She said the announcement of when they will officially be open will be made on their Facebook page, Fresh Baked — Oconomowoc, WI.



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Kwik Trip completes acquisition of area Stop-N-Gos

Stores to retain Stop-N-Go name

By Cara Spoto
cspoto@conley.net
262-513-2653

WAUKESHA COUNTY — Convenience store giant Kwik Trip has finalized its purchase of Stop-N-Go stores in Wisconsin, with the official acquisition of four Stop-N-Go locations in the area.

The stores, three of which are in Waukesha County with one in nearby Hartford, are making the official shift the week of Dec. 7.

But chances are you won't notice much. Although the stores are now owned by Kwik Trip, they will be retaining the Stop-N-Go name. The Waukesha County stores are located at 405 Ryan Road in Pewaukee, 101 E. Capitol Drive in Hartland, and 910 W. St. Paul Ave. in Waukesha. The Hartford location sits at 806 Grand Ave.

When Kwik Trip announced its plans to acquire all of the Madison-based Stop-N-Go stores, company officials said the company planned to continue operating many of the stores under the existing Stop-N-Go banner, with some of the larger stores being remodeled and rebranded as Kwik Trips.

Speaking Wednesday, Kwik Trip spokesman Steve Wrobel said the four stores in and around Waukesha County were simply too small to become Kwik Trip locations.

Stop-N-Go last operated 36 convenience stores in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois, including in Waukesha and Washington counties. Duane and Olympia Bowman founded the company in 1963.



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Kettle Moraine Health Sciences students restoring local habitat

Removal of invasive species clears way for oak savanna

By Jake Ekdahl
jekdahl@conley.net.com
262-513-2657

WALES — Kettle Moraine's High School of Health Sciences has had students and faculty busy at work on a unique project: restoring a wooded hill near campus to its natural habitat.

Since last year, students have been clearing out buckthorn, an invasive plant species, so the natural oak savanna habitat can return to the area. "What we've been working on is removing the buckthorn from the campus," said science teacher Kelly Beck.

Beck said buckthorn, an invasive species, was introduced to the United States many years ago and has been used as a hedge or wind-breaker for farmland. The plant produces berries, which are carried — along with seeds — by birds to new areas.

"There's some buckthorn that's really old on that hill," Beck said. "It just chokes out the native vegetation and it reduces the species diversity in the area."

The school's environmental science and physical education students have been participating in the restoration. Beck said the project ties in well with topics covered in class, such as biodiversity. "They're able to directly apply the concepts that they're learning in the textbook," she said. "(They) see how they can benefit the area and positively change the environment themselves."



Submitted photo

Kettle Moraine School of Health Sciences student Chloe Racine helps to restore a wooded hill near campus to its natural habitat.

The students and the school aren't on their own tackling the task. Beck said maintenance staff help by applying herbicide to cleared areas to prevent the buckthorn from returning, and the school has had help from master naturalist Holly Schmaling, who has done buckthorn removal work at Lapham Peak State Park. "We had a lot of guidance from her," she said.

On Facebook, the Kettle Moraine School District said the project hasn't needed the same kind of COVID-19-related adaptation as others

in school.

"Since many activities have been canceled or postponed for our students, this outdoor project is still allowing them to contribute to the community through service learning," the district said.

The project will take several years, but the restored area will have oak, cherry and hickory trees as well as grasses and native woodland plants. Progress is already visible.

"The students are really proud when they step back (and) see how different the area looks," Beck said.

Tapping into the Christmas spirit



Photos by Alex Nemeo/Freeman Staff

TOWN OF OCONOMOWOC — Christmas in Okauchee was held the weekend after Thanksgiving in Okauchee Lions Park, N49-W34400 E. Wisconsin Ave. Vendors sold a variety of German wares including beer, pretzels and schnitzel. Above, members of the Okauchee Lions Club say a toast with their steins full of beer.



Gabe Carlson, 3, takes a big bite out of an even bigger pretzel.



Mary Brandt of Sinter Klausen Christmas Market sets up her stand.

ProHealth Care opens urgent care clinic in Pewaukee

PEWAUKEE — A new urgent care clinic operated by ProHealth Care has opened in Pewaukee at 1279 Capitol Drive.

The clinic is ProHealth's first free-standing urgent care and the second urgent care location in the Pewaukee area.

The Capitol Drive location is on the north side of Capitol, a short distance west of Pewaukee Road. It will be open from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays and from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on weekends. Online reservations are available at ProHealthCare.org/Urgent-

Care. Walk-in visits also are welcome.

ProHealth also has urgent care centers within ProHealth Medical Group clinics on Riverwood Drive in the City of Pewaukee, and in Brookfield, Delafield, Mukwonago, New Berlin,

Oconomowoc, Waukesha and Watertown.

Urgent care provides offers same-day care for minor conditions, such as: allergy and asthma symptoms; cold and flu; cuts and scrapes, including those that need stitches; earaches and ear

infections; pink eye; and urinary tract infections (UTIs).

Urgent care patients with online reservations can remain comfortably at home until they need to arrive for care. If the medical team experiences unexpected

delays, patients who make reservations will receive text messages to notify them and offer alternate times, if necessary.

To check wait times at any ProHealth Urgent Care location, visit ProHealthCare.org/UrgentCare.

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WIAA STATE BOYS VOLLEYBALL: Kettle Moraine 3, Marquette 1

Lasers unfazed by stage, win state championship

KM wins program’s first boys volleyball title

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

BURLINGTON — Chalk dominated the quarterfinals and semifinals of Nov. 7’s WIAA State Boys Volleyball Tournament as the teams with superior seeds won all but one of the matches.

When the tourney reached the championship round, though, second-seeded Kettle Moraine flipped the script against top-seeded Marquette.

The Lasers broke out a hammer and chisel and etched out their program’s first state title with a convincing 25-20, 25-13, 21-25, 25-14 victory over the previously undefeated Hilltoppers.

KM extended its record to 17-2 with its seventh consecutive victory, while Marquette wound up 16-1.

The Hilltoppers, appearing in their 19th straight state tourney, were going after their 10th WIAA championship, but the Lasers refused to be intimidated by their swagger and their vocal following.

“We approached this as being just another game,” said KM senior setter Brandon Morton, who led everyone with 32 assists. “We know we can beat anybody we want as long as we put our minds to it.

“We all wanted this really badly. This is our first state championship in school history, and it feels amazing.”

KM coach Tom Gulak, who has guided the Lasers on all of their seven state trips, knew his team wouldn’t back down.

“During the hour we had off in-between, we watched Marquette play its semifinal in the lobby,” Gulak said. “They saw a very good team out there, but there was no big kill guy.

“I said, ‘Guys, you have some more pop on what you do than what they have, but they’re going to make you play.’ We just pushed, right from the service line, and made them feel uncomfortable. We got some big kills, but we just played well over-all.”

KM senior libero Nathan Dishaw, who made a team-best 13 digs, credited the Lasers’ preparation.

“At practice, we looked at their offense, figured it out and figured out how we were going to do our defense and blocking,” Dishaw said. “We just took it from there and got it done.”

That mission required a complete performance.

“It was an all-around effort, a team effort,” said senior middle blocker Matthew Schopf, who had 12 kills. “We had Nathan running our defense and Brandon running our offense, and it all comes together when we block.”

The opening set was tied 10 times — for the final time at 19 — before Gulak called time out and the Lasers finished the set with a 6-1 run.

Dishaw gave KM a commanding 11-2 lead during an eight-point service run in the second set. The Lasers stretched their advantage into double digits as the Hilltoppers became visibly rattled.

“Without being in situa-

tions like that all year — they were 16-0 — you don’t know how to figure out adversity,” Gulak said. “We were in situations like when we lost to CMH where we had to stop and say, ‘Hey, we have to look this over here, guys.’ Sometimes you learn more from losing than winning.”

Marquette didn’t go down without a fight, though, winning the third set 25-21.

The Hilltoppers scored the first point of the fourth set, but that marked their last lead of the night.

KM junior Mason Frohna contributed a five-point service run during which the Lasers took a 14-5 lead, and they never allowed Marquette back into the match.

“We get our own energy,” Dishaw said. “That’s how we turn our sets around. We get as many touches as we can on defense and play scrappy, then just get our offense going again.”

The championship conquest was a grand finale for KM seniors Jacob Malak, who totaled a match-high 18 kills; Morton, Dishaw, Schopf, Sam Vodenlich and Reese Weber.

Gulak was thrilled to see his seniors rewarded.

“They’re special,” the coach said. “I think getting to state last year with our big upset win over Middleton was a big deal. They knew how much focus they had to have just to get to state. Then we saw Kimberly, which was just head-and-shoulders above everyone else.

“But our seniors knew how to get here, and all six of them got to play a lot of volleyball in the state champi-



Kenny Yoo/Special to The Freeman
Kettle Moraine’s Brandon Morton blocks the spike of Marquette University player Ben Kaser during a WIAA Division 1 State volleyball match Nov. 7 in Burlington.

onship match.”

Those seniors will cherish the legacy they’ll leave their school.

“Being able to go back to school and see a memory that’s always going to be there will be just phenomenal,” Dishaw said.

Morton agreed.

“We all had the same goal since sixth grade,” he said. “Now that we’ve actually completed it, when we’re walking past that trophy case, we’ll have great memories of doing this with our friends.”

KM sweeps New Berlin to get to final

BURLINGTON — Kettle Moraine reached the championship match by virtue of a 25-19, 25-23, 25-15 semifinal triumph over New Berlin United (19-5).

The Lasers’ statistical leaders in that match were Schopf with 18 kills and Malak with 11, Morton with 31 assists, Dishaw with 18 digs and Malak with four aces.

New Berlin United got 18 kills from senior Wil Gottschalk, 27 assists from senior Jake Berenz, 16 digs from junior Jackson Heuer and three blocks from junior Noah Daniels.

The third-seeded United advanced to the semifinals with a 25-12, 25-19, 18-25, 25-11 quarterfinal victory over sixth-seeded Muskego (9-11).

New Berlin’s leaders in that contest were senior Sam Ludwig with 14 kills and

Gottschalk with 13 and Berenz with 39 assists, 10 digs and two aces.

The Warriors got 22 kills from junior Ryan Barts, 33 assists from junior Nathan Geiger, eight digs from senior Nick Gardner and 10 kills and two aces from junior Eli Seitz.

Marquette defeated Arrowhead 25-22, 25-18, 25-12 in its semifinal after the fifth-seeded Warhawks (11-8) scored a 25-22, 25-17, 26-24 quarterfinal win over fourth-seeded West- osha Central (10-1).

Arrowhead got 14 kills from senior Jake Davis, 31 assists from senior Cameron Gohde, two aces and two blocks from sophomore Ben- net Adams and 13 digs from senior Connor Murphy in its quarterfinal victory.

WIAA GIRLS STATE SWIMMING AND DIVING CHAMPIONSHIPS

Campbell Stoll claims two titles; Arrowhead takes 2nd at state

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

WAUKESHA — After watching her older sister, Sydney, win a state title and narrowly missing out on her own last year at the UW Natatorium, Arrowhead sophomore Campbell Stoll was prepared to break through this time around.

She did just that, and then did her older sis one better.

Campbell Stoll became a two-time state champion on Nov. 15 at the Waukesha South Natatorium, finishing first in the 200-yard individual medley and 100 butterfly while also helping lift a pair of relays to runner-up show- ings as Arrowhead took second for the second straight year at the WIAA Division 1 State Swimming and Diving Championships.

“Really, I just wanted to do it for the team,” Campbell Stoll said. “So instead of thinking about my mental- ity, I wanted to think about for the team, so it just pushed me to leave it all in the pool.”

The sophomore was seed- ed first in both of her indi- vidual events but had to go out and prove it. She stepped up in a big way, claiming the 200 IM — an event she finished second in last fall — by over two sec- onds with a time of 2 min- utes, 0.60 seconds before leading the 100 fly wire-to- wire and out-touching Muskego senior Erin Szczu- pakiewicz for a winning time of 53.99 seconds.

Stoll’s familiarity with Waukesha South was an added bonus.

“I liked how I knew how this pool worked rather than

Madison, I only went there once a year, so it was really nice having like a home pool, it felt like,” Campbell Stoll said.

Campbell was also a part of the runner-up 200 medley relay team along with sophomore Hailey Tierney, senior Samantha DeVillers and senior Megan Lucyshyn (1:43.60). To cap the day, she’d get to team up with Sydney, a senior, one last time. The Stoll sisters, sophomore Francesca Smith and senior Emmaleigh Zietlow took second in the 400 freestyle relay at 3:26.29.

The elder Stoll rallied to win a state title in the 500 free last season, but settled for fourth in this year’s installment of the race.

“I was really happy for her, so it was really nice,” Campbell Stoll said.

Arrowhead, like last year, came in with the most pro- jected points based on seeds, but it was simply Brookfield East’s day. Still, the Warhawks put forth several strong performances.

Junior Sydney Nelson was runner-up in diving for the

second straight year with a score of 422, and she was joined on the podium by senior Julia Moore (fifth, 395.05). Zietlow also medaled in the 500 free (third, 4:58.46) and 200 IM (fourth, 2:05.39), while Smith added two more medals in the 50 free (fourth,

23.46) and 100 free (fifth, 51.59) and Tierney took fourth in the 100 backstroke (55.59).

“I’m really happy for both of the teams,” Campbell Stoll said. “I think we both swam our hearts out and we just both did really well.”



Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff
Arrowhead sophomore Campbell Stoll swims the backstroke leg of the 200-yard individual medley during the WIAA Division 1 State Swimming and Diving Championships on Nov. 15 at Waukesha South.




Everything can be taken ... except the freedom to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way.

~ Viktor Frankl

Dawn R. Nelson, Psy.D., M.Div.
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