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THIS MONTH

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Lorleberg’s celebrates 150 years

Store’s Oconomowoc roots run deep

By Mark Hutchinson
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OCONOMOWOC — When Jeff Burchardt shows up for work each day, his labor is one of love.

He and his staff at Lorleberg True Value & Just Ask Rental carry on an esteemed tradition. And they build upon a foundation that was established a century-and-a-half ago and relocated nearly 55 years ago.

“It all started with Hugo Lorleberg in 1869,” Burchardt said. “He and another fellow owned a greenery and hardware store down in Mukwonago. Hugo saw what was going on up here in Oconomowoc with the barons and everything.

“He and the other fellow split, and Hugo came up here to open the hardware store on Main Street, near The German Bar and what used to be Jim’s Sporting Goods. The building right to the north — Schulte Heating — is where we were.”

There’s a photograph that was taken of North Main Street picturing a number of carriages lined up. Shortly before that photo was taken, the block consisted of all wooden buildings.

Half of them — including the Lorleberg Hardware store — burned down in a fire in April 1879.

“Hugo, about six months to a year before he rebuilt his store to stone, gave a

super deal,” Burchardt said. “You had to show up on a certain date to pick up your hay mower for a super cheap price, but you had to hang around for a picture. That’s why the whole street is lined with carriages with hay mowers in them. That was our grand reopening for our new building. It’s similar to what you see now, which has been modified and has a building that’s been added on.

“You can see a water tower behind the store, and Fowler Lake is right there. It was a swamp back then.”

Hugo Lorleberg was glad he moved his business to Oconomowoc.

“Hugo liked business much more up here than in Mukwonago,” Burchardt said. “During the fire, there was a picture taken from the Episcopal church back toward the west where the library was. You can see stores, Summit Bank and us. You can see a spinning wheel and other household items. That’s where he was temporarily while the store was being rebuilt across the street.

“It must’ve been right about the time that they were remaking Fowler into a lake. You can see the water is still kind of mucky and the street being worked on. It’s been a long history.”

The landscape changed.

“There was the original hardware building downtown,” Burchardt said. “For a period of time, we had another store across the street where the ’50s power



Freeman photo

Lorleberg True-Value has been a fixture in Oconomowoc for 150 years. The store is also connected to a legacy of community involvement and philanthropy.

equipment started becoming popular. We had a spot there where we sold all of the mowers, tractors and other equipment.”

The business continued to thrive under the supervision of Hilbert Scherffius, the last member of the Lorleberg family to oversee it.

“My father was born in Alderley and grew up in the Ashippun area before our family moved to Oconomowoc — on Fowler Street,” Burchardt said. “He started working for ‘Scherf’ downtown when he was 15. When ‘Scherf’ decided to retire, he sold the business to my dad.”

“When they announced the bypass in 1966 or ’67, Hilbert bought this land (where the current store stands at 900 E. Wisconsin Ave.), knowing that the bypass would be right here. He was quite a visionary for Oconomowoc. For a period of time, this was the largest hardware store in the Midwest, right here in little old Oconomowoc. A



Submitted photo

Lorleberg’s grand re-opening roughly around 1890. Lorleberg’s burnt down in 1879 along with half of the block. Hugo Lorleberg ran promotion to sell a hay mower at a reduced price so long as the customer stayed for the photo.

year or two later, Menard’s and places like that sprang up, but before that, there was nowhere else this big.”

Burchardt had vivid memories of Lorleberg’s growth.

“This store was finished

in 1970,” he said. “I remember being in here as a little kid. Back then, it looked absolutely huge. It was just a concrete floor and barren. Every shelf in the store was

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TOWN OF DELAFIELD

Fate of skatepark remains uncertain

Town residents urge board to save park, say they'll fundraise if needed

By Cara Spoto
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TOWN OF DELAFIELD — The future of the Delafield Skatepark may remain uncertain, but on May 28, close to a dozen town residents made it clear to the Town Board just how important the skateboarding haven has been to them, their families and their friends.

Of 11 people who addressed the board during the public comment period, only one person suggested that the town take any money it would use to fix the park and spend it elsewhere. The rest spoke overwhelmingly in favor of saving the park.

Located at the corner of Maple Avenue and Silvernail Road in the shadow of Town Hall, the aging skatepark needs \$35,000 to \$50,000 in repairs, officials say. A push to permanently remove the structures has

been supported by Town Chairman Ron Troy and others who say the town shouldn't be paying to maintain a park that they claim is mostly used by people from outside it.

Despite its usage by residents from outside the community, town residents made it clear that they value the park themselves.

"I just want to speak for everybody not in attendance. There are many skaters throughout the southeastern Wisconsin area that use that park," said skater Reese Slobodianuk, referencing that the board had asked only town residents to attend the meeting. He added that a petition to save the park had already gotten more than 10,000 signatures.

"Skateboarding if nothing else is community and a culture of patience and practice and delayed gratification, and there are hundreds of videos on YouTube and social media

accounts that do nothing but speak volumes of that skatepark and the creativity that has happened here," Slobodianuk said.

Other speakers including mothers of local skateboarders, like Marcia Kester-Sperber, who said she purchased their home in 2006 in part because of the skatepark.

"My sons were not into traditional sports. This park gave them a chance to pursue board sports. One son is just graduating from college, and both still enjoy skateboarding," Kester-Sperber said. "With the passion the community has for this skatepark, and if the other alternatives mentioned don't work, let the community fundraise to save the park ... if there is a will there is a way, and there is definitely a will."

Selling the park to Oconomowoc?

After close to an hour of public comments and discussion, the board ultimately voted to table the proposal to close the park, but not without Troy putting in his pitch that the park be closed,



Cara Spoto/Freeman Staff

The fate of the Delafield Skatepark remains in limbo after the Delafield Town Board voted last Thursday to table a proposal to permanently close it. Located at Maple Avenue and Silvernail Road, the park has been a popular attraction for skateboarders throughout the region.

and perhaps even sold to the city of Oconomowoc. He said he had made a pitch to Oconomowoc officials, and their Common Council was slated to discuss the idea next month. A motion for the board to discuss selling the park ultimately failed, however.

"I am not opposed to skateboarders. At the

same time, we are fiduciaries for the Town of Delafield, and part of that responsibility is to be good stewards of the tax dollars," Troy said. "In my estimation it does not make sense to use that money, to benefit that less than one percent of actual taxpaying residents of the town."

Anniversary

From Page 1

only 4 feet high. You could see from the front of the store to the back.

"The selection of products that people want and you have to have on hand has grown so much. Right now, our shelves are at 7 feet everywhere."

Since Lorieberg's inception, it has taken its status as a community partner seriously. In 1989, Hilbert Scherfius left his estate to the Greater Milwaukee Foundation and directed that it be used it to support projects in Oconomowoc. The foundation is a way for individuals, families and groups to help the Oconomowoc-area community today and for many generations to come. The support over the years has made the work of the Oconomowoc Scholarship Fund possible.

"Hilbert gave back about a million dollars, and my dad (Jerry), who passed away about three years ago, left a chunk of money with the Oconomowoc Area Foundation," Burchardt said.

"Giving back to this community is a big part of us being here."

Highway 83 bridge work to disrupt life in Delafield

Mayor: Road construction 'a necessary evil'

By Katherine Beck
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DELAFIELD — Work on the Highway 83 bridge over Highway 16, like most road work, will be an "inconvenience, but a necessary evil," said Delafield Mayor Kent Attwell.

On May 27, the bridge closed for a period expected to last for about two months while the Wisconsin Department of Transportation does a deck replacement.

As part of the project, crews performed milling operations in late May and removed the bridge's existing deck last week.

Attwell said there were several public input meetings held over the course of years and mailings were sent out to residents and business owners who would be affected. He said there is also proper signage alerting people to the situation.

"With there being two months of a detour, people are going to feel it," Attwell said. "I use that intersection all of the time."

After the bridge reopens to traffic in mid-to-late August, construction activities are expected to continue at the location, but that construction

is expected to be performed adjacent to traffic with a final completion date in late September, according to WisDOT.

Both of Highway 16's eastbound and westbound on- and off-ramps will be opened to traffic during the bridge closure.

Motorists on the north end of the bridge who want to go eastbound on Highway 16 will be detoured westbound on Highway 16 to Highway C, and then back around to eastbound Highway 16. Those on the south side of the bridge wishing to head westbound on Highway 16 will be detoured eastbound Highway 16 to Highway KE and then back around to westbound Highway 16.



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Photo from Mary Smith

Rambo takes a quick dip in the pool to cool off in Summit. Submit your happy photos. Include your name, community name and a little bit of information about the photo. If people or pets are pictured, please include their names too. And help us share some reasons to smile every day! Email to Katherine Beck at kbeck@conley.net.



Alex Nemec/Freeman Staff

The Rhodee Memorial Band Shell in Oconomowoc sits empty, as it will most of the summer as the American Legion Band canceled its 2020 season.

Oconomowoc Legion
Band concerts
canceled for summer
9/11 remembrance concert
still possible

By Alex Nemec
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OCONOMOWOC — The Oconomowoc Legion Band 2020 concert season has been canceled due to not having enough time to prepare to put on a proper season as a result of the pandemic, Don Gust with the legion band said.

“We thought a month and then because of the way things are going, we didn’t think we would have time to prepare and put on much of a season in mid-July so we just decided to cancel the entire season,” he said.

In normal summers, the legion band would host weekly concerts at the Rhodee Memorial Band Shell in Oconomowoc.

Gust said this season would have been the legion band’s 97th consecutive season of hosting concerts.

“It was a very difficult decision,” Gust said. “To push the send button to let the membership know wasn’t very much fun.”

The legion band concerts are just the latest victim in cancellations in Oconomowoc after the Memorial Day Parade was canceled recently and the German Christmas Market and the Festival of the Arts were canceled months ahead of their scheduled festival dates.

Gust said he sent out a survey to the membership to see who would be willing to play and he said surprisingly two-thirds of the members said they would. However, Gust said the criteria the legion band had established weren’t satisfied.

“It was close, we had most of the sections covered for instruments,” Gust said. “We had no real commitment that every person would be at every concert, so if a half-dozen fell off the list we would have a band that would be too small.”

Even though the summer series is canceled, Gust said there is a possibility the legion band will perform its one concert for 9/11. Last year the concert was rained out.

Despite the difficult decision, Gust said people have been disappointed, but understanding that the season was canceled. “Hopefully people will come more next year because they miss it so much and we will put on a good show regardless,” Gust said. “We’ll see ya in 2021.”

Hartland will
hold fireworks,
Hometown
Celebration

Will take place as scheduled
on June 26 and 28

By Cara Spoto
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HARTLAND — Taking the community’s low infection rate into account, the Hartland Village Board settled on the side of tradition, voting unanimously that the country’s ongoing coronavirus pandemic would not stop its Independence Day celebrations.

The village’s annual fireworks display and many elements of the Hometown Celebration will take place as scheduled on June 26 and June 28, respectively.

The fireworks are scheduled for dusk on Friday, June 26 at Nixon Park, and the two bands the village has scheduled for that evening are still slated to play. The Hometown Celebration parade is expected to start at 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, June 28.

Arts, craft and food sales will not take place that Friday afternoon at Nixon Park, however. And it remains to be seen whether a 5K planned for Saturday, June 27 will occur, or whether the Lake Country Beer Garden will be open during the event.

Speaking about the decision to hold the parade and fireworks, Village President Jeff Pfannerstill said the board decided that the village’s 0.043% infection rate wasn’t enough to break tradition.

“As we speak we have four active cases (of COVID-19) in the village,” Pfannerstill said May 27. “Obviously all eyes have been on the village’s and county’s infection rate, but we looked at the facts, and there was nothing there that indicated that a village of 9,000 people can’t celebrate their hometown or the independence of their nation. We just didn’t believe that four cases necessitated shutting it down.”

Although Hartland isn’t planning on making any major changes to its events, Pfannerstill said officials are encouraging residents to use precautions. The only formal request the village has made, he said, is to ask that parade participants not throw candy or other items.

“I want to stress that COVID is real and we want people to be smart. If you’re in a group, try to stay within your group, and if you have symptoms, stay home,” Pfannerstill said.

Pewaukee cancels July 4th celebrations

PEWAUKEE — Fearing the event could endanger the health of residents and become a magnet for people from communities where fireworks had been scrapped, the Pewaukee Village Board joined officials from across the region in canceling their July 4th celebrations.

Village President Jeff Knutson said he and other village officials, including Police Chief Timothy Heier and Fire Chief Kevin Bierce, had been discussing what to do over the past few months. Hoping to limit the amount of people heading to the lakefront that night, trustees also voted to post sign letting potential revelers know that the fireworks will not be taking place.



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Submitted photo

Piper Yde, a freshman at Arrowhead, was named the 2020 Long Track Junior Development Skater of the Year by US Speedskating.

Yde in pursuit of greatness

Arrowhead freshman named Long Track Junior Development Skater of the Year

By Dave Radcliffe
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TOWN OF MERTON — Fortunately for Piper Yde, the speedskating season was just about wrapped up before the coronavirus pandemic hit.

By then, the Arrowhead freshman had already laid the groundwork for winning one of her sport's top honors.

Yde was one of two athletes selected as the 2020 Long Track Junior Development Skater of the Year by US Speedskating, an award given out based on age, improvement and results from the season by the team's High Performance Department.

"I was very happy to get it because last year I made the Junior Developmental Team, which was great, and I always wanted to get that Junior Skater of the Year award ever since I was like 9 or 10 and I found out about it," Yde said. "I'm just happy I'm getting recognized. It proves that I worked hard and had great results."

That she did. Yde, who is a member of the Wisconsin Speedskating Club, won both Junior Nationals and Pack style Nationals for her age group this season. Last year, Yde also obtained the Pack style 500 record for her age group.

That was despite dealing with some struggles when the season began in August.

"I was doing well but I wasn't getting the results I really wanted," Yde said. "I was more focused on competitors. So come November or December I tried focusing on myself, focus on school, focus on your workout, and do it the best you possibly can. Even if I'm having a bad day, work the hardest you can. That's where true athletes show through."

The turnaround began when Yde flew out to Canada for an event and had some issues walking.

"It was kind of weird, my knee went crazy on me," Yde said. In spite of that, she went out and had a strong showing, then participated in an outdoor meet in Minnesota the following weekend.

"I had like the best race I've had all season," Yde said.



Submitted photo

Arrowhead freshman Piper Yde smiles during a practice.

"But then we had Junior Nationals during Christmas break and I won my age group."

While Yde said it was a good moment, it wasn't even one of her goals.

"My goal was to make the Junior World team and I fell short by a spot or two," Yde said. "Then I won Pack style Nationals. That was different because I had to change my style of skating in a way. I'm most known for jumping out with one lap to go and sprinting. I decided to play it safe and change things up a bit."

When Yde was younger, she got her start in hockey and also participated in inline speed skating, as her mother, Tracy, also competed in the sport. One day during a practice, Yde's coach brought in a skater from the West Allis speed skating club. He recommended that Yde give ice a try.

"I said, 'Sure, why not?'" That was when I was 9," Yde said. "The first year was just normal trying to get used to it. The second year I won Nationals. That was the moment where I was like, 'I want to be good.'"

Since then, Yde's drive has been what's gotten her to this level.

"I've heard this could be possibly an OCD-type thing, but I get this, 'If you don't do

this, you'll never make it' type of mindset," Yde said. "I just try to work my hardest. I have a really great coach. I try to be the best I can. I just try to think of other competitors and what they might be doing, and I have to do more. I want to be the best I can possibly be."

Yde was just getting started with her first high school track season at Arrowhead before it was postponed, and eventually canceled. Her final speedskating race was in the first week of March, as national races were also called off for the remainder of the month.

She'll look to continue climbing the US Speedskating ladder this summer. Until then, Yde has been doing track workouts and some biking on the side while finishing up her freshman year online.

"Next season is post-Olympic Trials year," Yde said. "I would love to make the Junior World team. I feel like I let a lot of negative thoughts go into my head. I just want to focus on my technique and myself and try to race better overall. I would love to get more of my Olympics Trials time so I can compete there because that would be very fun to do. Just try to come down in my races overall."

Schultz heading back to bench

Longtime West coach hired to lead KM's boys basketball program

By Dave Radcliffe
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WALES — Dave Schultz is back in the Classic 8.

This time, he's just a little further west.

The longtime Waukesha West boys basketball coach was hired to take over the varsity program at Kettle Moraine. It will be the first coaching job for Schultz since the 2014-15 season, which was the final campaign of his second stint leading the Wolverines.

"I wasn't necessarily looking for anything in particular. It just kind of came my way," Schultz said. "Talking to people in and around the program, I know they were real positive. It's just a unique situation for sure."

Unique in the fact that Schultz is taking over a program that's already established. One way or another, his previous three jobs required a rebuild. That included literally starting from scratch at Waukesha West when he became the school's first boys basketball coach in the early '90s.

"Dave was somebody I've known since my high school days," KM Activities and Athletic Director Ryan Tomczyk said. "I graduated from Mukwonago and played against his Waukesha West teams. I was lucky enough when I went to Carroll, I spent a couple years a graduate assistant and assistant coach."

Before making the move to Carroll University to become the men's basketball coach, Schultz helped build the Wolverines into a state power. Over his first nine-year stint at the school, Schultz amassed a 153-55 record, winning five conference championships and leading West to its first and only state berth in 1998.

He took over at Carroll in



Freeman file photo

Dave Schultz was hired to take over as the Kettle Moraine boys basketball coach. Schultz was a longtime coach for Waukesha West.

2002, inheriting a 2-21 team and finishing with a 93-56 record, qualifying for the league tournament five times over seven seasons before high school ball came calling once again.

Schultz experienced a high level of success upon his return to West. It improved from a last-place team in 2009 to finishing 18-7 in the first season of Schultz's second run. By the time he resigned before the 2015-16 season, his overall high school record had improved to 238-112.

"I think it's a lot like what he had when he was at Waukesha West when the cupboards weren't bare," Tomczyk said. "He had some talent that was coming through and he was able to maximize what he had on the court. At Carroll it was a straight rebuild coming off a 2-21 season into what he built it into, and then going back to West, that was another rebuild, so this is more like his first round at West."

The Lasers achieved their most successful season in program history in 2018, sharing the Classic 8 title and reaching the sectional final. Last season, a balanced, deep roster resulted in a 15-9 record and a tie for fourth in the Classic 8 under Brad Bestor, who stepped down after 14 seasons at the helm on March 12.

Two months later, Tomczyk settled on Schultz as his replacement.

"Dave reached out to me

and said he'd be really interested in the position," Tomczyk said. "We felt he was the perfect fit for our program. Coach Bestor spent a lot of time making us a top program in the Classic 8. With what coach Schultz has done in the past, this is a good opportunity to take what Brad has done and take us to the next level."

As for the on-court product, the Lasers are slated to bring back three of their top four scorers. And while Schultz wants to tailor his coaching style to his team's strengths, defense will come first should they want to contend for state gold.

"Ideally I want to have a team that can play pressure defense and pressure offense, pushing the ball and creating tempo," Schultz said. "I did see them play last season and liked a lot of things that they were doing."

For a coach with well over 300 wins to his name, Schultz is prepared to do what he's always done as he embarks on his first season at Kettle Moraine, and that's lead a successful basketball operation.

"They've got winning in their program at all the different levels," Schultz said. "I can go in there and concentrate on coaching. The youth program is in good shape. There are a lot of positive things going on, so hopefully I can help keep those things moving in that positive direction."

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