

Brookfield & Elm Grove

THIS MONTH

MARCH 2020

Careers on display

Milwaukee Tool hosts expo showcasing careers in the trades

By Jake Ekdahl
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BROOKFIELD — Simulators, sledgehammers, Lego bricks and more showed students what a job in the trades is like Feb. 6. Milwaukee Tool's campus in Brookfield hosted dozens of construction businesses and more than 1,100 middle school students for the second Waukesha area Kids Building Wisconsin.

The event is meant to engage students and get them to consider a career in the trades.

New Berlin West students Theron Alfors and Josh Jackelen were the first of many to test out a mock demolition room, made especially popular by the prospect of smashing a wall of blocks with sledgehammers.

Chad Ferguson, Tri-North vice president of business development, said the hands-on approach of his company's mock demolition room was to get kids excited about what careers like theirs have to offer. "It's a fun thing," he said.

"When you look at this event, it gives kids the opportunity to see what the future could be," said Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow. "We can talk about coding, we can talk about engineering (but) when you come into a location like (this for the kids,) it's a whole new world for them."

The exposure is especially helpful for the children of lawyers, doctors, bankers and other none-trade professionals, who might not otherwise find themselves asking a construction professional about their work.

"If we give kids an understanding that they can start making money while they're in school, that is the key," Farrow said. A technical college graduate himself, he worked while pursuing his college degrees and said the choice offers appealing flexibility.

Cory Leist of Wisconsin Operating Engineers offered students the chance to experience operating an excavator using a simulator, which is used to train new workers. Leist said, in his own experience, it took some experimenting to find the right career path. He spent a year in college before realizing it wasn't for him. Now he works for a contractor in Milwaukee and as an instructor at Wisconsin Operating Engineers.

He actually helped build the Milwaukee Tool campus that hosted the event.

The opportunities for jobs like his will be plentiful, Leist said. "Guys are retiring and we're going to need the younger generation to start."

Lindsay Parks of Otis Elevator Company used Lego elevators to demonstrate how real ones work; along with segments of real elevator rope. Kids in the trades "can start making money right away and learning life skills at the same time," she said.

State Rep. Scott Allen, R-Waukesha said young people should also consider the possibility of going to college later in life.

See CAREERS, PAGE 2A



Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff

New Berlin West students Josh Jackelen and Theron Alfors take sledgehammers to blocks in a simulated demolition experience at Kids Building Wisconsin.



Jake Ekdahl/Freeman Staff

Waukesha area students meet with construction professionals at Milwaukee Tool on Feb. 6.

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INSIDE

Wilson Center names 2 leaders

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Seltzer drinks changing industry

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Packers CEO Murphy reflects on season

Sports/4B



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Auto body repair a family affair for the McPherson family

Mander Collision and Glass celebrates two decades in business, second location

By Dave Fidlin
Special to The Freeman

BROOKFIELD — For the McPherson family, the year ahead has multiple symbolic meanings for Mander Collision and Glass, an intergenerational, family-owned business that has been a Waukesha mainstay the past two decades.

When he first opened the garage doors to the flagship service center at 1604 Manhattan Drive in 2000, founder and CEO Randy McPherson chose to name the business after someone who inspired him growing up — his father, Mander, who also worked in several areas of the automotive industry before retiring.

Much has changed in the world of vehicles and business since McPherson first set up shop on Waukesha's east side, but he emphasizes the company's core mission statement — people come first — has been an unwavering philosophy.

"We like to say our family takes care of other families," McPherson said. "We don't see people as numbers."

In more recent years, McPherson's son, Nathan, has been named president of the company, and Randy is quick to point out Nathan's children, Emma and Ethan, have also taken



Submitted photo

Generations of McPherson family members have operated Mander Collision and Glass. From left to right, are: (front) Emma, Mander and Ethan McPherson, (back) Nathan and Randy McPherson. Emma and Ethan are Nathan's children.

a keen interest in the business at their young ages.

As 2020 gets underway, the McPherson family is celebrating a new chapter for Mander Collision and Glass. A second location, in Brookfield, opened at 13170 W. Capitol Drive in October. "We'd been looking to expand," McPherson said. "But it really was driven by a desire to better serve our customers. Some of them had been going to (the Waukesha location) at a long distance, and we wanted to make it convenient for them."

A third location is planned for Hartland, but is still in the municipal approval process.

As with any major market, McPherson said he is aware the greater Milwaukee area has a number of body shops. From the get-

go, however, he said he aspired to set Mander Collision and Glass apart by emphasizing the personal, community-based connections.

"Everything's being consolidated," McPherson said. "The corporate world is snapping up a lot of local businesses. But we believe we offer something different — something at a personal level. We know people usually come to us when they've had an unpleasant experience."

In addition to adopting a people-first mantra with customer service, McPherson said the philosophy carries over to its employees. With the Brookfield location now up and running, McPherson said the company's staff roster exceeds 30 people. And, he said, the employee count

will continue to increase alongside growth plans.

"We are looking for qualified people — not just with experience, but in aptitude," McPherson said. The strategy, McPherson said, is cyclical, pointing out, "If we take really good care of our employees, they take good care of our customers."

As he looks to a new decade for the family business, McPherson said he retains as much enthusiasm today as he did when the shop first opened.

"I like the feeling of helping people," he said. "The most important asset we have with this business is our integrity. If you're able to build trust, as a business owner, that's a good accomplishment."

"I love earning people's trust."



Submitted photo

Brookfield Academy alum celebrates Super Bowl victory

MIAMI — It's a good day at work when you get to end the day with holding and kissing the Vince Lombardi Trophy. Brookfield Academy graduate Daniel Ricci was able to celebrate with the Kansas City Chiefs after their Super Bowl victory.

This is Ricci's third season with the Chiefs as the player personnel assistant.

Ricci grew up in the Brookfield area and graduated from Brookfield Academy in 2010. While at BA, Ricci was a three-sport athlete and then went on to play four years of football at Macalester College in Minnesota.

Ricci says he is a Chiefs fan, but he had this to say about the Packers: "I still want the Packers to do well for my family and friends' sake but I don't lose sleep if they lose!"

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Brooks Brothers coming to The Corners

Bonness to expand, family space to be added

By Katherine Beck
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TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — The offerings for shoppers keeps increasing at The Corners of Brookfield with the latest business addition coming this spring being Brooks Brothers.

Brooks Brothers, America's oldest retailer, will open a 3,800-square-foot space on the southwest corner of High and Union streets across from Goddess & The Baker and L.L. Bean.

The retailer offers classic clothing styles for men and women.

Expanding in the retail center will be Bonness Skincare, which has been a tenant since fall 2017. Bonness will move to a larger location on the west

side of the town center on Lord Street, next to Anthony Vince Nail Spa and Lash Lounge.

The move, which should be complete by May, will allow the renamed Bonness Body and Face Med Spa to offer an array of non-invasive cosmetic services on-site, including Botox, dermal fillers, medical grade facials, CoolSculpt, Cooitone and more.

As The Corners enters its third year of operation, the center announced it's investing in guest amenities, including a 1,300-square-foot indoor Family Lounge and Mothers Room. The new space will be located on the east side of Von Maur and will open later this year.

The Corners also recently opened Pop, an additional community space on the

east side of the Town Center that is available for tenant and community events, including workout classes, DIY programming, meeting or party space, and more.

Other new or expanded tenants are expected to debut by mid-summer, including Improv which is currently under construction, Le Macaron which is beginning construction, and BelAir, which is finalizing its expansion plans. Tempur-Pedic recently opened its first Wisconsin standalone store at The Corners along High Street on Feb. 7.

"It will be a great spring and summer as we welcome our newest tenants, including the first Improv comedy club in Wisconsin," said Robert Gould, CEO of Brookfield Corners LLC, in a statement.



File photo

Retailer Brooks Brothers will soon join the offerings at The Corners of Brookfield, which also announced it will add a 1,300-square-foot indoor Family Lounge and Mothers Room.

"These expansions and additions add even more diversity to our unique tenant mix and provide space and amenities to support family experiences and programming that our community is seeking,"

The Corners of Brook-

field is a 750,000-square-foot town center, comprising 400,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space, 244 luxury apartment homes and parking for more than 1,700 cars. For more information visit www.TheCornersofBrookfield.com or Facebook.

Waukesha County gets high ranking for employee benefits

By Jake Ekdahl
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WAUKESHA — A survey of employment and health data ranking each of Wisconsin's 72 counties determined Waukesha, Ozaukee and Washington counties to be in the state's top 10.

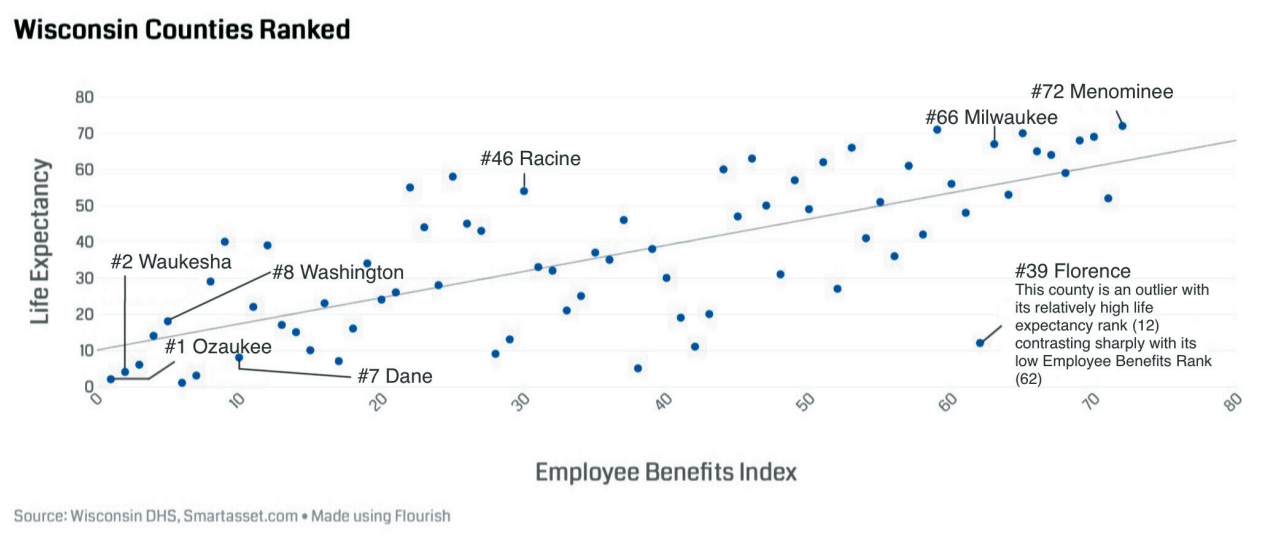
Smartasset, a financial technology and advising company, created an Employee Benefits Index score based on metrics such as the unemployment rate, percentage of the local population with employer health insurance and cost of living.

Waukesha was ranked second in the state, while Ozaukee took first and Washington took fifth.

"(Waukesha) ranked first in the state in the 'health insurance coverage' category, and outperformed the statewide average by 1.40% in unemployment," said Smart Asset Vice President of Financial Education AJ Smith.

Smith said Ozaukee stuck out for its top 10 status in retirement savings and health insurance contribution rates.

Nationally, Waukesha



County is ranked 54th in the United States on the Employee Benefits Index. Ozaukee County is ranked 49th.

Ozaukee's total index score was 70.81 while Waukesha's was 70.46. They are the only two counties in the state with scores higher than 70.

Most counties scored between 40 and 60. Washington County's score was 64.6.

Menominee County's score was 27.9, the lowest in the state by more than

eight points.

When compared with life expectancy data from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and given a combined score, Ozaukee and Waukesha keep their top spots, while Washington slides from fifth to eighth.

The life expectancies in Ozaukee, Waukesha and Washington are 81.8, 81.5 and 80.4 respectively.

If only life expectancy is taken into account, Kewaunee County takes first place with a life

expectancy of 82.

"We have a dynamic business community that really is focused on attracting, developing and retaining employees," said Suzanne Kelley, president and CEO of the Waukesha County Business Alliance. "I think that creates a great environment (at) our area companies."

Kelley also cited competitive schools as a factor in Waukesha's success.

According to Kaiser Family

employer health insurance coverage in Wisconsin declined from 50% to 48% from 2008 to 2009, but climbed to 56% in 2010.

It remained steady at 56% or 55% until reaching 57% in 2017 and maintaining that coverage rate in 2018.

Medicare and Medicaid accounted for 15% and 16% of health insurance coverage in 2018. An estimated 6% of Wisconsin did not have health insurance coverage that same year.

Former Babies 'R' Us location to be renovated, developed

By Jake Ekdahl
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BROOKFIELD – New tenants will be moving into the former Babies 'R' Us building on Bluemound Road in Brookfield, but right now there's no telling who they'll be.

New building owner and KVC Construction Vice President of Development Randy Goll said plans are the "creation of an outlet partial and building, and a redevelopment of the existing Babies 'R' Us into a single tenant or multi-tenant" building.

The existing building will get a new facade and

the parking lot will be renovated with new landscaping and site lighting.

Goll said although there has been interest from prospective tenants, no commitments have been made. The building on the outlet construction will be between the existing building and Bluemound Road.

So far, only restaurants have been ruled out as potential tenants. Otherwise, Goll is open to a range of users from retail, to services to office space. "Really anything," he said.

Brookfield Alderman Rick Owen said the Common Council approved the outlet development at their Jan. 21 meeting.

"It's already been rezoned," Goll said. "(We're) going for our specific approval next month."

Brookfield Director of Community Development Dan Ertl said of the project "in baseball vernacular, it's rounding second (base)." No city funds are going into the project, Ertl said.

The outlet could be up to 4,000 square feet but the current plan is to propose 3,000 square feet.

The property became vacant following the closing of the Babies "R" Us in 2018, which was one of hundreds of Toys 'R' Us and Babies 'R' Us locations to do so that year.

Careers

From Page 1A

"There's no rule that says you must go to undergraduate school between 18 and 22," he said. "We have to get out of this mindset of thinking we have to do things how they've always been done."

It wasn't only private companies attending the event. At the Wisconsin Department of Transportation's booth, electrician Eric Martinson said the competitive pay, retirement benefits and job security combine to make a career at the DOT an attractive one.


"For the Waukesha County Business Alliance, this is about workforce development," said Amanda Payne, Waukesha County Business Alliance senior vice president of public policy. "We

are fortunate to work with fantastic partners on both the business side and the education side and we can use those partnerships for student career exposure and exploration."

It wasn't just sledgehammers that were popular with students. Oconomowoc eighth-grader Aiden Lofton said he particularly enjoyed the virtual reality experiences being offered, and liked being able to see in detail what the jobs entail.

Milwaukee Tool's Mark Hickock said he's made sure his own children are aware of all their career options, whether they involve a four-year college degree or not. He wants them to "be aware, then make the right choice for themselves."

Danica Joyner and Alynna Ostler of Templeton Middle School in Sussex both said they enjoyed the hands-on



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Brookfield & Elm Grove
THIS MONTH

‘Far from a fad’

Popularity of alcoholic seltzer drinks creating change in the beverage industry

By Eileen Mozinski Schmidt
Special to The Freeman

Spiked seltzers are enjoying a boom in popularity, a trend that has even reached regions known for beer production and consumption like southeast Wisconsin. A report released at the end of 2019 by the International Wine and Spirits Record called the rise of the drink category “meteoric.” The group’s “Hard Seltzer Report from IWSR Drinks Market Analysis” found that seltzer volume in the U.S. is currently about 82.5 million nine-liter cases, larger by volume than the leading spirits category in the country, vodka, said a press release. The report included malt-based products and those produced from wine and spirits, the press release said.

“Hard seltzer and other ‘seltzer-like’ products command a market share of 2.6 percent of all beverage alcohol in the U.S., up from only 0.85 percent a year ago,” the report said.

The organization projects the category will more than triple by 2023.

“Hard seltzers are far from a fad, they’re growing at a spectacular rate, and increasingly, hard seltzer producers are pulling consumers from other beverage alcohol categories, not just beer,” said Brandy Rand, chief operating officer of the Americas at IWSR Drinks Market Analysis, in the report.

At Raised Grain Brewery Company in Waukesha, there are three seltzer flavors on tap and a fourth flavor coming soon, all crafted by the brewery. Next month, the brewery plans to make canned versions of blends available, said Nick Reistad, co-owner of the company.

“We’re really excited about what we are coming out with,” he said.

The brewing company offers two lines of seltzers, the Diamond Hard Seltzer with 5 percent alcohol and the Black Diamond Seltzer with 7.5 percent. Both versions are 100 calories per 12 ounces, with zero carbs and zero sugar, according to Reistad.

They are available at the company’s tap room and canned versions will be sold in independent liquor stores throughout the region beginning March 1. The project has been about a year in the making, Reistad said.

“We wanted to have an



Submitted photo

Hard seltzers have increased in popularity in recent years, and now command a 2.6 market share of all alcohol beverages in the U.S., according to a recent International Wine and Spirits Record report. Raised Grain Brewing Company in Waukesha now crafts its own line of seltzers, including the Diamond Hard Seltzer beverage shown in this recent picture.

additional offering for the people that come to our tap room. Maybe they don’t drink beer, or are coming to an event with family or friends and want to take part. Maybe they don’t like beer or have gluten allergies,” he said.

Desire for light, low-calorie alcohol

At last month’s West Bend Youth Football Organization’s Beer Festival at the Washington County Fair Park, seltzers were also available.

The festival includes about 100 different beers, and this year featured about 10 seltzer brands, said Douglas Decent.

Decent was president of the football league when the festival began and continues to help out with the annual event. He also works in the beer business as a distributor in the region and has been witness to the growing seltzer trend.

“The younger folks, the 20-somethings, are trying this. All of these beer suppliers are making these seltzers. They are light, low calorie with a little bit of flavor. They are going over big,” said Decent, noting that craft beers are also rising in popularity.

“The overall trend is people are going to more of these craft beers but they’re drinking less,” he said, discussing changes in the alcoholic beverage industry.

“The pie is getting more spread out.”

Offering something different

At Raised Grain, Reistad

added that the brewery has “a little bit different approach than the mass market” in creating its seltzers.

“We don’t add any sugar back into our product. It’s more like an actual seltzer drink. There’s no sweetness to it,” he said, adding that the flavoring adds a “little bit of perceived sweetness.”

“It’s crisp and clean,” he said, of the taste.

Reistad stressed that the seltzers are all made with ingredients from Wisconsin locations.

“It’s a cool way to make a local seltzer. We’re not only supporting our 15 full-time and 30 part-time employees, but supporting farmers in Wisconsin and distribution networks in Wisconsin,” he said.

Offering the seltzers fits with the brewery’s objective of innovation, Reistad said.

“We’re always trying to tinker and figure things out and improve on things,” he said.

There is a perception that the seltzers are most popular among younger generations, but Reistad noted he sees the trend crossing generations.

“I also see people that are a little bit older” trying seltzers, he said. “It depends on what they are looking for, what their drinking occasion is and what they’re looking for out of their lifestyles.”

IWSR also conducted a customer opinion and attitude survey and found that while hard seltzers appeal to younger generations of consumers, the category “spans all ages and demographics,” the report said.

Wilson Center announces dual leadership team

BROOKFIELD — The Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts will be led by a team of two — Nichole Cooper, artistic director, and Vincent Vogelsang, general manager.

According to a recent announcement, the new structure is consistent with the leadership models of many leading arts organizations nationwide and is effective immediately.

“We are delighted that Nichole and Vince bring new energy and capabilities to the dual leadership role,” said Wilson Center Board Chair Susan Cerletty. “Their combined backgrounds are impressive, and coupled with their in-depth knowledge of our multifaceted organization, the board is confident they will help the center thrive as we embark on our next decade.”

Cooper joined the Wilson



Cooper



Vogelsang

Center in 2014 as marketing director and has an extensive background in arts organization programming and audience development. Prior to the Wilson Center, she was marketing manager for JCA, Inc., a national non-profit technology consulting firm; marketing and communications manager for Northwestern University’s Virginia Wadsworth Wirtz Center for the Performing Arts; and director of audience services for the Writers Theatre in Glencoe, Illinois. Vogelsang joined the Wil-

son Center in 2019 as senior director of operations, with 18 years of experience in real estate management and small business ownership. In 1999 Vogelsang began building an extensive real estate portfolio, which evolved into owning and running All American Plastic Recycling in Milwaukee. Following the successful sale of this business, Vogelsang served as national account manager for Vibrant Graphics in Glendale.

Immediate past executive director Anna M. Thompson recently expressed a desire to step aside from her role to spend more time with family.

The Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts focuses on performing arts, arts education and visual arts. It is located at 3270 Mitchell Park Drive, Brookfield.

Lawmakers look to make getting married easier

By Benjamin Yount
The Center Square

MADISON — It could soon be a bit easier to get married in Wisconsin.

Senate Bill 439 would shrink the waiting period for a marriage license from five days to three days, and expand the amount of time that license is valid out to 60 days. The legislation also would allow people to get a marriage license in any Wisconsin county.

“It simply gives more flexibility to people who want to get married,” state Sen. Dale Kooyenga, R-Brookfield, said. “There are a lot of folks in Illinois who are coming up to Wisconsin for barn weddings or other northern Wisconsin-type weddings.”



Kapenga

Kooyenga said changing the rules for marriage could encourage more people to tie the knot in Wisconsin.

Rep. Rob Wittke, R-Racine, said the proposed changes would also simplify the process to get married.

“If you are a fan of free enterprise, if you believe in less government in the process, then Senate Bill 439 is a common sense update to our marriage licensing process,” Wittke said.

This is not the first time lawmakers have looked at these changes. Wittke said the idea was presented last year, but failed to get

enough support.

A number of county clerks and local officials had concerns.

Kooyenga said that’s not a good enough reason to hold up the legislation.

“Are we here to serve the taxpayer of Wisconsin? Or do we do what is easiest for government employees?” Kooyenga asked out loud at Tuesday’s public hearing. “I would say, especially when it comes to marriage, which is something we want to promote in Wisconsin, that I am going to err on the side of making things convenient for those who want to get married.”

This push comes as lawmakers in Wisconsin are also looking to end the state’s six-month-waiting period between marriages.

Smith joins the LAK Group as senior consultant, executive

BROOKFIELD — The LAK Group, a leading management consulting firm, announced that Shelley Smith has joined the firm as a senior consultant and executive coach.

“I look forward to sharing my passion for coaching, organizational and leadership development with the amazing team at LAK Group and the clients they serve,” said Smith.

Smith’s areas of expertise include executive coaching, physician leadership coaching, leadership/talent development, change and



Smith

succession management, and performance consulting. She is a credentialed executive and physician coach.

Before joining the LAK Group, Smith was part of the Talent and Organizational Development team at Aurora Health Care. She also served the financial services industry in various roles, which included leading the training and development func-

tion, the financial and regulatory turnaround of a branch office, and the oversight of multiple professional teams.

Smith holds a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point and earned her master’s in Business Administration from Concordia University of Wisconsin.

Outside of work, she enjoys spending time with her grandsons, her mastiffs, and with her husband on their Harley-Davidson.

Study: Brewers’ stadium has generated \$2.5 billion for state

Five-county sales tax set to expire this year

MILWAUKEE — In its 20 years, Milwaukee Brewers’ Miller Park has generated \$2.5 billion in economic output, according to a study released by the Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce.

MMAC President Tim Sheehy said the study’s findings are validation that the public-private partnership was successful. Miller Park was made possible by a 0.1% sales tax levied in a five-county region including Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Washington, Waukesha and Racine counties. That tax is expected to end during the first part of 2020.

“Twenty years ago, MMAC made the case to our members and to state policymakers that keeping Milwaukee a major-league city was a wise investment,” Sheehy said in a statement. “This independent study shows that the actual return on that investment has exceeded our expectations.”

The study was conducted by Convention, Sports and Leisure International, an advisory firm specializing in sports and entertainment industries. It shows that the construction and operation of Miller Park has generated thousands of jobs, billions in

“This independent study shows that the actual return on that investment has exceeded our expectations.”

— Tim Sheehy, President, Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce

direct spending and personal earnings and hundreds of millions in tax revenue from 1999 to 2019.

The \$2.5 billion cited by the study represents the “cumulative net new impacts” — benefits to the city of Milwaukee, Milwaukee County and Wisconsin that would not have been realized without the existence of the Brewers and Miller Park, according to the announcement.

Other key findings in the study include:

■ In the first year in the ballpark, Brewers attendance increased by nearly 80% from the team’s final year at Milwaukee County Stadium.

Since opening in 2001, despite operating in the smallest market in Major League Baseball, the ball-

park has provided the region with a modern sports and entertainment venue, drawing an average of 2.7 million paid attendees per year (3.1 million in the last two seasons, including 2.9 million Brewers game attendees, which ranked eighth-highest in MLB in 2019 and 10th in MLB in 2018.)

■ Based on historical Brewers attendance data, approximately 22% of ballpark event attendees are estimated to live within Milwaukee, 38% within Milwaukee County, and 86% within Wisconsin. The remaining 14 percent of attendees live outside Wisconsin.

The Brewers echoed the report’s finding on the value of Miller Park.

“We are proud to call Miller Park home every day and feel privileged to operate in one of the finest facilities in Major League Baseball,” said Rick Schlesinger, president of Business Operations for the Milwaukee Brewers. “The impact that Miller Park has on our local community and regional economy only adds to that pride, and the Brewers will do all we can to continue to provide a great fan experience and economic opportunity for Wisconsin families.”

Fiserv’s app allows for mobile PIN transactions without extra hardware

BROOKFIELD — Fiserv is predicting that its new app will provide easier transactions for merchants than the traditional point-of-sale terminals.

First Data, which is now part of Fiserv, allows merchants to use their own devices to accept payments of any amount without additional hardware.

Fiserv, together with Visa, Samsung and PayCore, has completed a first-of-its-kind PIN on Mobile Transaction,

according to the announcement.

The technology facilitates secure PIN entry on a consumer-grade mobile device and simplifies payment acceptance by making it possible for merchants to accept PIN-based contactless transactions without needing a separate card reader or PIN-entry device.

“The way people want to pay is changing,” said John Gibbons, executive vice president and head of

EMEA at Fiserv. “Contactless CHIP and PIN payments are common, yet over 23 million micro merchants in Europe alone may lack terminals to accept them. We’re making sure no merchant is left out and helping them do business in the cashless economy by turning the smartphone into a card acceptance device.”

Fiserv recently completed the first PIN on mobile payment via the app-based solution.

Spring 2020

Published by Freeman Newspapers

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Brookfield & Elm Grove THIS MONTH

Balzer and Meza tie to run for Brookfield District 3

BROOKFIELD — Ron Balzer, incumbent, and Jenna Meza will compete for the District 3 Common Council seat in the April general election.

Balzer received 332 votes, or 41.2%, and Meza received 315 votes, or 39.3% during the February primary.

Gregory R. Keller received 150 votes, not enough to continue in the race in the general election. There were five write-in votes. Results are unofficial until canvassed.

When asked what the biggest issue affecting Brookfield is, candidates



Brookfield District 3 Common Council seat

Ron Balzer (i)	332	41.2%
Jenna Meza	315	39.3%
Greg J. Keller	150	18.7%

Meza said it's important to reorganize how tax dollars are being spent, without adding more taxes. Meza said it's important to balance the growth of the city while also preserving its values, by recognizing the quaintness while still developing a modern outlook.

Balzer said issues in the city are railroad noise and road work. Balzer said he would also like to see more redevelopment, with more stores, restaurants and housing.

ELMBROOK SCHOOL BOARD

Roskopf, Wied to vie for at-large seat

School Board President Kathryn Wilson, not seeking re-election

BROOKFIELD — Candidates Jennifer Roskopf and Leanne Wied will be running for the at-large seat on the Elmbrook School Board in the April 7 general election.

Roskopf received 3,564 votes, or 48%, and Wied received 2,746 votes, or 37% Ghazala Sajjad, one of the three candidates, did not



Wied

There were 74 write-ins. Results are unofficial until canvassed.

Outgoing Elmbrook School Board President Kathryn Wilson, who currently serves the at-large seat, announced in November that she would not seek re-election.

Wied recently said Elmbrook has a reputation for excellence, opportunity and innovation. In order to

Elmbrook School Board at-large seat

Jennifer Roskopf	3,564	48%
Leanne Wied	2,746	37%
Ghazala Sajjad	1,036	14%

maintain that reputation, Wied said they must review the curriculum, technology, instruction and delivery models with a critical and analytical perspective.

Roskopf said the district's growing enrollment and its potential to exceed the elementary school's capacity is the most important issue. Roskopf said a community and district committee should monitor and analyze enrollment forecasts, understand student and family impact and provide transparency.



Brookfield Academy students win Scholastic writing awards

BROOKFIELD — Brookfield Academy announced that six Upper School students are regional award recipients of the 2020 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. The following students earned more than 20 writing awards in a variety of categories:

Emmalyn Bergman, Oconomowoc, Gold Key (short story); Leah Johnson, Pewaukee, five Gold Keys (poetry), two Silver Keys (poetry), Honorable Mention (memoir); Mishaal Omer, Brookfield, Gold Key, Silver Key (poetry); Serena Suson, Pewaukee, three Gold Keys (Script, Poetry, Memoir), two Silver Keys (Short Story, Poetry), Honorable Mention (Poetry); Ziyen Wu, Brookfield, Gold Key (Memoir); Ruthie Yu, Brookfield, Gold Key (Flash Fiction), two Silver Keys (Science Fiction/Fantasy, Short Story).

All six Brookfield Academy students who earned a Gold Key will compete for Gold Medals at the national level. The Scholastic Art & Writing Awards program is considered the country's most prestigious scholarship and recognition program for creative students in grades 7-12. The regional awards ceremony will be held Saturday, May 9, 1 pm, at University of Wisconsin – Parkside in Kenosha. National Gold Medalists will be announced in March and honored at a ceremony in New York City in June.



Photo courtesy of Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce

Alliance Tax & Accounting Service celebrates 10 years

BROOKFIELD — The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at Alliance Tax & Accounting Service, 150 N. Sunnyslope Road on Jan. 9 to celebrate its 10-year anniversary.

Pictured in the front row are, from left to right: Alan Fischer/Voya Financial Advisors; Melisa Maroo/Brookfield chamber investor relations manager; Amanda Muckerheide/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service; Nickolas Pierce/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service; Arthur Lee/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service owner and founder; Karen Lee/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service; Eric Hildeman/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service; Ashley Kramm/Alliance Tax & Accounting Service; Carol White/Brookfield chamber president; and Stephanie Fong/Primerica.

For more information visit <http://www.alliancetaxusa.com>.



Photo courtesy of the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce

Aquatic Adventures celebrates 20 years

BROOKFIELD — The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for Aquatic Adventures on Jan. 23.

Pictured in the front row, from left: Lori Choinski/Gerald Nell; Carol White/Brookfield Chamber president; Adam Crouse/Aquatic Adventures; Tiffany Crouse/Aquatic Adventures; Jerry Otte/Aquatic Adventures; Jenny Otte/Aquatic Adventures; Cathy Rosch/Aquatic Adventures; Melisa Maroo/Brookfield Chamber investor relations manager; and Robert Feest/Robert J. Feest Insurance Agency and Brookfield Chamber Board member.

Aquatic Adventures is a PADI 5 Star Dive Center serving southeastern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. They recently celebrated 20 years in business and are located at 13830 W Greenfield Ave. For more information visit <https://diveaai.com>.



Photo courtesy of the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce

Twilight Solutions joins chamber

BROOKFIELD — The Brookfield Chamber held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for new business Twilight Solutions on Dec. 10.

Twilight Solutions is a specialized lighting design-install company that provides custom lighting solutions for any outdoor space, utilizing classic and cutting edge technologies. They are located N3699 Petrie Road in Lake Geneva. For more information visit www.twilightsolutions.com.

Pictured in the front row, from left to right are: Robert Feest, Robert J. Feest Insurance Agency and Brookfield Chamber Board member; Rob Kochanski, Local First Podcast; Angela Lingle, Twilight Solutions; Jennifer Rundell, Rundell Redesign; Wendy Frausto, Exacta Corp.; Dennis Hill, Exacta Corp.; Carol White, Brookfield Chamber president; and Scott Haen, Johnson Bank and Brookfield Chamber Board member.



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Sal's Pizza Owner Sal Aguilera places toppings on a pizza in the restaurant kitchen in Waukesha.

Americans eating more pizza; local venues benefit

Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin: 32% more pizza is being eaten

By Jake Ekdahl
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262-213-2657

WAUKESHA – Pizza has long been a favorite meal in America, and it looks like it won't be giving up its popularity anytime soon. According to Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin, Americans are eating 32% more pizza than they were 10 years ago. Pizza's variety and accessibility were cited as potential reasons. "When you have a pizza, you have an instant party," said Suzanne Fanning, chief marketing officer for Wisconsin Cheese and senior vice president at Dairy Farmers of Wisconsin. Maynard Carl, general manager at Marty's Pizza in Delafield, said though the business does not release specific sales figures, orders are strong.

"We're doing good for sales," he said. "People are always buying pizzas." Carl said the sauce recipe in Marty's hasn't changed in 60 years, and the locally grown vegetables and sourced cheese appeal to customers. "Consistency makes people want to come back," he said. Innovation and adaptability also keep people coming. Marty's offers cauliflower crusts and Marco's Pizza in Waukesha has gluten-free options. Customer service and good deals appeal to consumers too. Sal's Pizza order-taker Ashley Urbina said 20% discount coupons are always available. Sal's owner Sal Aguilera said the restaurant's first five years had challenges but sales are steady now that the business is established.

"You have to love what you do," he said. On Facebook, pizza lovers had no trouble sharing their habits with The Freeman. Josh Kleifgen said he eats pizza seven or eight times per week, and Samantha Leann said her "freezer is pizza-filled 99.9% of the time." Chris Curren said it's a staple for when he's watching the Packers, Brewers or Mets play. Even the more conservative estimates on pizza consumption were once every week or two. Lovers of Chicago-style deep dish pizza will soon be able to get their fix at Lou Malnati's on West Blue-mound Road in Brookfield. Carl said the convenience of pizza is hard to beat. "You don't have to sit around the table," he said. "It's quick and easy. Paper plates and easy cleanup."

Zisser joins the LAK Group as director of business operations

BROOKFIELD — The LAK Group, a management consulting firm, announced that Greg Zisser has joined the firm as the director of business operations. "I look forward to leveraging my experience to help the LAK Group deliver on its commitment to putting the right people in the right seats so that our clients and their businesses win," said Zisser. Zisser's areas of expertise include managing large and diverse teams, controlling risk and managing project scope. He enjoys staying on top of new trends in technology and thought leadership to incorporate

best practices, new solutions, and ensure outcomes meet or exceed the needs of clients and customers. "Greg's experience in logistics management and process design — coupled with his passion for delivering a stellar client experience — makes him a valuable addition to our team and resource for our clients," said Michael Grubich, president and managing partner of the LAK Group. "We are fortunate to have Greg on our team, and we look

forward to a long and fruitful relationship." Prior to joining the LAK Group, Zisser served as a project manager for a Fortune 500 company. During his tenure, he was responsible for delivering change by aligning stakeholders around project goals in a way that clearly communicates a strategic vision. He holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire. He began his career working in the nonprofit industry and has a service-based mindset when it comes to professional relationships. Outside of work, Greg enjoys spending time with his family.

Paul Mitchell School to relocate from Pewaukee to Wauwatosa

By Katherine Beck
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PEWAUKEE — Paul Mitchell The School Milwaukee will relocate its campus from its longtime location on Silvernail Road in Pewaukee to a building on Burleigh Road in Wauwatosa, which is set to open this summer. The Paul Mitchell Beauty School has offered cosmetology courses at its Pewaukee location for seven years. According to a recent announcement, the school will move to an 8,434-square-foot space at 11415 W. Burleigh St., opposite The Mayfair Collection's main entrance in Wauwatosa.

The new Paul Mitchell The School Milwaukee will be an open, spacious facility featuring licensed instructors who offer students an educational experience in cosmetology and barbering. The campus will include a 28-chair clinic classroom, 12-chair barbering clinic classroom and five large classroom spaces for additional training. In addition to its educational programs, Paul Mitchell The School Milwaukee offers salon services to the public, including haircuts and styling, coloring and more. "We're thrilled that Paul Mitchell — a brand with tremendous cachet and history — made the strategic deci-

sion to locate its Milwaukee school near The Mayfair Collection," said Tim Blum, executive vice president with The Mayfair Collection developer HSA Commercial Real Estate, in a statement. "We believe this new location will help introduce Paul Mitchell The School to potential new students as well as salon guests who shop, eat and live in this vibrant mixed-use community," Blum said. The Mayfair Collection includes more than 400,000 square feet of retail anchored by Whole Foods Market and Nordstrom Rack, restaurants including local favorites Pizza Man and AJ Bombers, and more.

Wisconsin lawmakers look to get tougher on repeat drunk drivers

By Benjamin Yount
The Center Square

MADISON — A first-time intoxicated driving charge in Wisconsin will continue to be treated like a traffic ticket, but lawmakers at the statehouse are looking to get tougher on repeat drunk drivers. The Assembly overwhelmingly approved two proposals this week. State Rep. Jim Ott, R-Mequon, said one of the plans he supports, Senate Bill 6, would impose an 18-month mandatory sentence on anyone convicted of their fifth or sixth operating while intoxicated infraction. Ott, who's been trying to toughen Wisconsin's drunk driving laws for years, said the idea is not to lock more people up. Rather, he wants to get a repeat drunk driver's attention. "My best hope with this is that someone who is in court being sentenced on their fourth-offense OWI, when they hear from the judge or their attorney, 'Come back here again for OWI and you're going to spend a minimum of 18 months behind bars,'" Ott said. "I think that's a powerful message." Ott added that the average



Shutterstock.com photo

sentence for a fourth OWI in Wisconsin is about seven months in jail. The Wisconsin Senate already approved the 18-month mandatory sentence. That plan is headed to the governor's desk. Ott's second OWI legislation, Assembly Bill 379, would increase the statute of limitations in first, second and third drunk driving cases. "It increases the statute of limitations for first offense from two years to three years, and for second and third offenses from two years to three years," Ott said. Prosecutors need more time to look in the rear-view mirror on drunk driving cases across Wisconsin, Ott

said, because they often find out that someone arrested for an OWI here was arrested for a drunk driving charge in another state as well. "Sometimes a person has an OWI in another state, and it's not noticed here in Wisconsin. And they get another one here in Wisconsin," Ott said. "You can't charge the one in Wisconsin as second-offense OWI 'til you find out about the one in the other state." That proposal now heads to the Wisconsin Senate for a vote. If it passes, Ott said, four of the five pieces of legislation that he authored to get tougher on drunk drivers will have made it to the governor's desk.

Brodzik joins First Business Bank

BROOKFIELD — First Business Bank, a division of First Business Financial Services, Inc., announced that Doug Brodzik was hired as senior vice president — commercial real estate banking. Brodzik joins First Business Bank with over 25 years of experience in commercial real estate lending. Most recently, he served as a senior vice president of commercial real estate lending at BMO Harris Bank where he was responsible for loan originations in Wisconsin. Throughout his career, Brodzik has been



Brodzik

involved in numerous CRE loans throughout the Midwest. Brodzik holds a BBA in Real Estate and Urban Land Economics, an MBA from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, and is a graduate of Banking School at the University of Virginia. He holds the MAI designation from the Appraisal Institute and the Certified Commercial Investment Member, CCIM, designation

from the National Association of Realtors. Brodzik is licensed by the state of Wisconsin as a certified general appraiser and a real estate broker. Brodzik is "a board member of the local CCIM Chapter as well as Vision Forward, a non-profit community group serving the needs of visually impaired. He is a past president of the Commercial Association of Realtors — Wisconsin, the State Appraisal Institute Chapter, the Real Estate Alliance for Charity, and the Inner City Redevelopment Corporation.

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Open ‘dear’ season: Marriage proposals by postcard

Every four years, we have the calendar oddity of leap year. It grants one extra 24-hour period at the end of February.

A socially endearing tradition from bygone days prompted women to be assertive and propose marriage on February 29. Serious and comical postcards were marketed to females to be able to express matrimonial intent. The U.S. Post Office could deliver a marriage proposal for two cents, one for the card and one for the stamp. The example postcards shown in today's column have mailing dates of 1906-1914.

Graniteware stands up to time

Darlene from Delavan shares her collection of Graniteware.

Americans were introduced to a new type of kitchenware in the late 19th century. Surprisingly, graniteware or enamelware had a most welcome effect on kitchen chores. Grandmother's black and heavy cast-iron cookware was pushed to the back of the cupboard. This new metalware was layered with coats of enamel then fired at high heat to produce a glass-like finish.

Salesmen pitched the slogan, "Colorful cookware



by selecting only bright, solid colors and displaying them in novel ways throughout her home. The 250-plus pieces include very new to very old with worldwide manufacturers. The initial slogan is still true: "Colorful cookware makes a cook happy." **Total collection value of \$950.**

back and underside of your item, and measurements are important. List any known history or even hearsay, length of ownership and all markings, even partial ones. Include your name, address and phone number. No photos can be returned and no purchase of antiques 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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Mimosa opens in Brookfield

Restaurant offers breakfast items with a twist

By Nikki Brahm
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BROOKFIELD — A new breakfast and brunch restaurant, Mimosa, has opened a second location in Brookfield.

Owner Apostoli Evreniadis opened his first location in Franklin and decided to expand to Brookfield. The location there has been open for over a month at 275 Regency Court.

Athanasios Almouti, waiter and family friend of the owner, said the restaurant is also run by the owner's mom and dad. Almouti said the owner's mom takes great care of the place.

"She's making the jam,

making the soup every day, most of the menu items, the recipes on the souvla and the stuff, it's her recipes," Almouti said. "She takes care of this place like it's her house, it's her family."

Almouti said the owner takes great care to make everything in the restaurant perfect.

"Even if the portrait on the wall is kind of like tilted, he's going to fix it, he pays too much attention to details," Almouti said.

Mimosa offers a variety of food items and, of course, their signature drink — mimosas. The mimosas have different qualities depending on what kind of champagne is ordered.

Bloody Marys are also offered and are made with sake, the Japanese rice wine, instead of vodka.

"This restaurant, we try to stand out from other restaurants, like how they approach food in more classic ways, we have more of a twist inside the items that will make us more interest-



Nikki Brahm/Freeman Staff

Emiliano Gomez (left) and Athanasios Almouti (right) make mimosas together at the new Mimosa in Brookfield.

ing," Almouti said.

Food offered at Mimosa includes some Greek-inspired takes on breakfast foods such as mimosa potatoes or their chicken souvla skillet, which includes chicken breast, imported feta, red and green peppers, onion and is topped with housemade greek yogurt avocado sauce.

Also on the menu are

dishes with eggs, pancakes, waffles, crepes, french toast, authentic greek yogurt, oatmeal, omelets and skillet.

So far, Almouti said, business has been looking good in Brookfield and people get to know Mimosa better every day.

"We aim to give the best quality of the food to our customers with the best possible service," Almouti said.



Photo courtesy of the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce

Spenga joins Brookfield chamber

BROOKFIELD — The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce recently held a ribbon-cutting ceremony for new business Spenga on Feb. 10.

"Spenga combines three essential elements of fitness to create what's simply known as the best workout ever," according to the announcement. The business is located at 15375 W. Bluemound Road. For more information visit <https://www.spengabrookfield.com>.

Pictured from left to right in the front row are: Pat Miller, Small Step Solutions and Brookfield Chamber board member; Brookfield Mayor Steve Ponto; Christian Osell; Everett Osell; Tracy Bruner, owner; John Brymer, owner; Lucina Brymer; Kristin Jackson — all from Spenga; Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow; Carol White, Brookfield Chamber president; and Stephanie Fong, Primerica.

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PACKERS

Murphy impressed with 2019 season

Packers CEO talks present, future of team

By Rob Reischel
Special to The Freeman

GREEN BAY — Mark Murphy was cautiously optimistic. As the 2019 season approached, Murphy — the Green Bay Packers’ president and CEO — was excited by several developments. Murphy was highly impressed with rookie head coach Matt LaFleur. He felt general manager Brian Gutekunst — who had been on the job just 18 months — had made several key additions.

And after two consecutive seasons without a playoff berth, Murphy thought the Packers could turn things around. “I was hopeful,” Murphy said. Even Murphy himself, though, was amazed by what came next. A 13-3 regular season record. An NFC North division title. And a trip to the NFC Championship Game. After Green Bay went 13-18-1 in the previous two seasons, that jump shocked many people — including Murphy.

“Yeah, honestly, I was a little surprised,” Murphy said. “But it was a great, great year.” During a lengthy interview, Murphy discussed a bevy of topics ranging from the 2019 season to Green Bay’s management structure to the future of quarterback Aaron Rodgers in Green Bay. “Eventually we’ve got to make decisions that are in the long-term, best interests of the organization,” Murphy said of Rodgers. What follows is an edited version of that interview:

Q: You’ve made major changes at both general manager and head coach in the last 24 months. The result was you guys won more games this season than any time since 2011. What are your early feelings regarding those moves?

A: I’m very pleased. I think both Brian and Matt have really stepped into their positions and performed well. Just as importantly, they have a great working relationship.

Q: What impressed you the most about Matt this season and where does he still need to grow?

A: Well, overall, obviously, I was very impressed with the way he handled things. First of all the quality of the person. That came through in the interview and I’ve seen it over the last year. He’s humble. He gives the credit to the players and then, on the opposite side, he’s quick to take the blame himself and I think that resonates well with our players. He’s very sincere and I think that the players see that. I mean, you look at all the different moves he made around the building and I think he’s very much in touch with our players and what they want and what

will help them play better. I think he wanted to change the culture within the locker room, and I think in a lot of ways he empowered our players. He looks at things with a focus on our players and how it will impact and affect them and what can we do ... to put them in a position to have success.

Q: You hired Matt LaFleur after just one interview, something many people viewed as impulsive. Was there a time after Matt was on board where you thought, “maybe we needed a second interview here?”

A: No, no. I felt very confident that he was the right one. And right or wrong, when you think you’ve got the right person, I think you want to move quickly. Because I think we were one of the first ones to hire in last year’s cycle.

Q: You guys always talk about championships being the end-all in tiny Green Bay, Wisconsin. But after two straight losing seasons, did a 13-3 record and a trip to the NFC Championship Game surprise you?

A: Yeah, honestly, I was a little surprised. I was hopeful and I thought (LaFleur) would do well. But, obviously, you look back through the history of the Packers. No other first-year head coach had the kind of success that he did. So that obviously speaks well of him. Obviously with our history, when you do something that’s never been done it speaks pretty well of what you’ve accomplished.

Q: Two years ago, you went away from a power structure that had worked for a generation, one in which the team president largely stayed out of the day-to-day football operations. Now, you oversee everything on the football side of things. How do you think that has gone? And are you content to leave things as they’re currently arranged?

A: I am. I think Matt and Brian have established a great working relationship. I think the structure helps in that regard, that they’re more peers rather than one working for the other. At the end of the day, you can talk about structure, but it’s really the people and how they interact. And I feel really good, not only about Brian and Matt, but also (Executive Vice President/Director of Football Operations) Russ (Ball). The main focus is what’s best for the team and what can we do to make sure the team wins.

Q: You named Brian Gutekunst general manager in Jan. 2018. Then in Jan., 2019, you hired Matt LaFleur. At any point during the last offseason did you worry about your own future with the Packers if those hires backfired?

A: I try not to think that way. I try to focus on the positive. Yeah, so, a year ago, Matt’s a couple weeks in and that was an exciting time. It was obviously very difficult making the change, or making the decision to move on from Mike (McCarthy). But it was very clear that Matt had a plan and, I knew this from the search process, that having been with (Los Angeles Rams coach) Sean McVay when he started as a first-



Packers President and CEO Mark Murphy talked to The Freeman about the 2019 season and the future of the team.

year coach and then (Tennessee coach) Mike Vrabel in his first year; I think Matt really observed and learned a lot. He had specific ideas and thoughts of, ‘when I’m a head coach, there’s certain things that I want to do.’ And then the other thing is I thought he did a really good job putting together his staff those first few weeks.

Q: You guys signed four high-priced free agents all on the same day last offseason (March 12) and they all played a big role in your dramatic improvement in 2019. What was that day like inside your building?

A: It’s probably up there with the Reggie White (signing). There was a lot of excitement. Obviously, Ted (Thompson) did a great job as general manager, but we weren’t overly aggressive, we weren’t always aggressive in free agency. So this was kind of Brian putting his stamp on the team. The other thing that I really liked is often times in free agency, you’re spending money on players that are on the downside or near the end of their careers. I think all four of them are in their prime or just entering their prime. So they should have multiple good years ahead of them.

Q: When Brian Gutekunst wanted to go out and sign those players, did he have to come to you for clearance?

A: You never know how free agency’s going to play out. Obviously, it’s a competitive process. But no, yeah, we’re in constant communication. There’s four of us (Murphy, Gutekunst, Ball and LaFleur) that meet twice a month, so pretty much every other week. Obviously, Russ Ball plays a key role from a salary cap perspective making sure we’re in good shape there. So then we were all on the same

A conversation with ... Mark Murphy



page and I’m glad the way it all worked out.

Q: What are those meetings like when the four of you get together?

A: It’s pretty consistently twice a month throughout the year. It definitely was during the season. Offseason, with travel schedules and vacations, it may vary a little bit, but the main purpose is to make sure that we’re all on the same page. We’re all communicating with each other between the meetings, but I think it’s really helpful to meet. Usually the meetings last a half-an-hour, an hour and we just go through all the different issues that we’re all dealing with, just to make sure we’re all on the same page.

Q: When you moved on from Ted Thompson as your GM two years ago, you said, “Within football, we have silos, and we’ve had some breakdowns in communication.” Are those silos gone?

A: Yes. Yeah. I think that speaks to the communication. I think communication throughout the organization is crucial. I do think this has been helpful to bring people together.

Q: In retrospect, do you wish you would have made a change at general manager earlier than you did?

A: Yeah, you know, I’d rather not get into that. Ted did a great job and I wanted to make sure that we were fair to Ted, especially given the health issues that he was facing. And it’s not like we

were broken. We had a lot of success. In 2016, we were in the NFC Championship Game. Then in ’17, we got off to a great start and then Aaron (Rodgers) gets hurt. Ted and Mike had a great run together. I just felt that things had kind of run their course.

Q: Had things gotten stale with McCarthy? And have you noticed a different excitement level around your team that was missing in recent years?

A: Oh absolutely. As the season went on, you could see it kind of ramp up and I think fans are excited. That home playoff win over the Seahawks was great to see. You don’t get many of those and I thought the fans, the crowd was great. I think a lot of them didn’t sit down and stood the whole game. I think everybody understood it was an important game for us.

Q: The summer of 2008 — when Brett Favre tried coming out of retirement and playing for Green Bay again — was like a daily soap opera. Are you worried that if and when you guys use a high draft pick on a quarterback to eventually replace Aaron Rodgers, there will be similar drama?

A: No, I hope not. Obviously, that was kind of a unique situation with Brett retiring and then un-retiring. I wasn’t there prior to that, but as I recall, Favre would talk about retiring for three or four years before that. And Aaron’s been pretty clear. He wants to keep playing. He’s driven. He wants to win more Super Bowl championships.

So, I think it’s a different situation.

Q: At some point, though — perhaps even soon — you’ll move on from Aaron Rodgers as your quarter-

back. What do you think that process will be like?

A: Yeah, the reality is eventually we’ve got to make decisions that are in the long-term, best interests of the organization. And we’ll see. I think Aaron was drafted when Brett was about the age that Aaron is now. So, that’s certainly an option. We’ll see. We’re still in the process of preparing for the draft and who knows what might be available when we’re scheduled to pick.

Q: Aaron will be 37 next season, and while he wants to play into his 40s, he’s already showing some slip-page. Do you feel your window with him as quarterback is almost closed?

A: Matt is closer to this than I am, but I think he’s still playing at a high level. So, I think we still have a good opportunity and the window is open to win championships.

Q: San Francisco beat you guys in convincing fashion twice last year. Do you believe it will take another aggressive offseason to catch the 49ers?

A: I do, although in Brian’s press conference he did say there will be a few more restrictions than we’ve had in the past, just really salary cap related. But there’s a lot of different ways to improve the roster.

Q: You’ll be 65 this summer. Do you want to do this until 70 (which is the mandatory retirement age for a Packers president)?

A: Yeah, I’d love to. If they’ll still have me, I will. I’m enjoying it. I think especially making some tough changes to now to have a great management and leadership team in place. I’m looking forward to winning a couple more Super Bowls over the next five years. That would be nice.



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