

Lake Country

THIS MONTH

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Early experience

High schoolers get close-up look at prospective careers, including firefighting/EMS

By Jake Ekdahl
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NASHOTAH — It's not uncommon for young people to have an idea of what they'd like to do for a career, but lack the experience to make a specific decision. At the Lake Country Fire & Rescue Training Center, students are able to get experience and learn what they like — or don't — right away.

Students are able to get career experiences in an actual fire station while still in high school. LCFR sees students from the High School of Health Sciences, or HS2, a public charter school on the Kettle Moraine campus; as well as Arrowhead students. St. John's Northwestern Academies students have also participated in the past.

"All four grade levels do something with us," said Training Center Division Chief Tanya Reynen, of the HS2 group. During that time, they do ride time, firefighting I workshop, EMT coursework including potential certification, and more.

"I think the goal is to try and get more students in, and we've grown from 50 to 200 students over the last seven years," said HS2 Director Steve Plum.

He said part of the goal is to help students figure out what they want to do, and who they are. In addition to Lake Country Fire & Rescue, the school partners with ProHealth Care, Aurora Medical Center - Summit and Medical College of Wisconsin for other place-based learning opportunities.

The benefit for LCFR isn't only community involvement, but also the potential to train a steady stream of new recruits.

One student's story

Angelina "Angel" Pasdera, a senior with HS2, said she hopes to pursue work as a paramedic with LCFR after finishing high school.

"I've actually been a part of the program since I was a freshman," she said. "I did their fire and rescue course, and it really was an eye opener for me ... I would do morning checks with the crew, I would eat breakfast with the crew, (and) when they went out on a call I was able to go on the call and shadow them."

Pasdera recalled being shown how to apply tourniquets on a dummy, working on the fire trucks, using hose lines and using the "jaws of life" tool to remove a car door. She said she would, and does, recommend the program to other students.

"Last year, I helped teach the CPR course," she said. "I actually taught some of the freshmen who are now sophomores."

Even when a student decides to pursue a career outside fire or EMS services, Reynen and Plum still see that as a productive educational experience. Reynen said if a student decided to work at the hospital instead, what they learned at the fire station would still help them.

Plum said as people, it's important to have that kind of broad understanding: "We're all a really important part of this team, and it's great to get that experience."



Submitted photo

Angelina "Angel" Pasdera has been with the HS2 Lake Country Fire and Rescue Training Center program for four years and plans to pursue a fire department career after graduation.



Submitted photo

Vincent Ardellini looks up while climbing stairs in turnout gear.

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Arrowhead looking to annex into Hartland

Move prompted by district’s desire to sell land near school

By Cara Spoto
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TOWN OF MERTON — Looking to capitalize on a 42-acre farm it owns near campus, Arrowhead Union High School District officials are in the process of annexing the school and nearby parcel into the village of Hartland.

The district, by way of its School Board, approached the Village Board about the request in September, submitting an official petition for direct annexation.

Speaking about the petition on Sept. 29, Arrowhead Superintendent Laura Myrah said the idea of annexing into Hartland first came up because the district is contemplating selling the 42-acres parcel to a developer.

“We learned the land is more valuable as part of Hartland,” Myrah said, mainly because the village could allow the land to be subdivided into smaller lots, which would allow for more homes to be built.

After that, the board realized it would make sense to just annex the entire school campus into the village, she said.

Town island

The school and the 42-acre parcel, which sits just north of campus along Highway K, are currently in the Town of Merton.

“Really the school is an almost an island of the Town of Merton, with Hartland all around us. Our address is Hartland, our fire and rescue is Hartland, so it just made sense to look into annexing the entire campus as well,” Myrah said.

Should the annexation be approved, the district would pay the village for a School Resource Officer (SRO) that would be staffed by the Hartland Police Department. Currently the school’s SRO is an employee of the Waukesha County Sheriff’s Department.

Budget woes

The school board is considering selling the land, Myrah added, because of the district’s ever-shrinking budget, and a need to do right by the district’s taxpayers.

“For the last half dozen years, our budget has been decreasing because of the school funding formula,” Myrah said. “Enrollment has been declining and our costs have continued to rise. We’ve made a lot of efforts to cut costs in recent years, but we have a referendum on the November ballot just to help with the infrastructure costs.”

Timeline

Attempts to reach Village Administrator Tim Rhode to determine the timeline for the annexation were unsuccessful on Sept. 29, but Myrah said she believed the petition was slated to go before the village Plan Commission sometime next month.

Speaking to the Village Board earlier this month, Robert Rosch, president of the Arrowhead Union School District School Board, told trustees that the district would like to see the annexation completed by the end of the year if possible.



Kids spend some time Sept. 30 writing messages about kindness in chalk outside Asa Clark Middle School.



A message quotes Mark Twain, saying “kindness is a language the deaf can hear and the blind can see.”

Spreading kindness

PEWAUKEE — Pewaukee School District sixth-graders wrote encouraging messages in chalk outside on the morning of Sept. 30 to “spread some kindness,” the district said. The district called on others to take the opportunity and spread some kindness of their own.



Pewaukee School District sixth-graders write messages of kindness outside Asa Clark Middle School on Sept. 30.

Arrowhead district holding referendum vote Nov. 3

To focus on building updates, technology infrastructure

By Jake Ekdahl
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HARTLAND — Arrowhead Union School District residents will vote on a referendum question Nov. 3, but should the referendum pass, their taxes won’t go up.

The nonrecurring operating referendum, the district’s first since 1999, would allow Arrowhead \$1.7 million per year for a five-year period, totaling \$8.5 million. Those funds would be spent on site infrastructure repairs and improvements.

Arrowhead Superintendent Laura Myrah said improvements would be district-wide, rather than focusing on a particular building or area. She said the roofing, HVAC and technology infrastructure on district buildings is aged and needs to be updated.

The 1999 referendum, which passed, was a 20-year referendum with a \$1.7 million repayment expense per year. Arrowhead finished paying that off in March. The Nov. 3 referendum question will not ask the voters for a new loan, but instead it simply asks the voters to continue to fund the \$1.7 million a year for five years.

To approve the referendum would

be to allow the local tax rate to stay the same, rather than opt to raise it. Myrah said there’s even a chance it could be passed and taxes would still go down, due to the district relying on conservative estimates at this early stage.

The district emphasized the referendum proposal has no long-term debt or interest payments, a funding sunset of five years, and is tax-neutral.

The decision to put a referendum question to voters was discussed prior to the coronavirus pandemic, but the district has seen increased expenses from operating schools with safety precautions in place.

Myrah said some of the district’s HVAC units are 25 or 30 years old and require regular repairs, which already cost the district money. Some repairs need to be made in other areas. “Some of these repairs, really are urgent,” she said. “We don’t want roofs leaking in a classroom, for instance, or we don’t want heat going out in the winter.”

Without passing the referendum, the district would have to shift budget money from other areas, she said. “I think we’ve exhausted all the low-hanging fruit and probably the medium-hanging fruit,” Myrah said.

School Board President Robert Rosch emphasized maintaining high-quality facilities at the school protects home property values, especially in a competitive area like Waukesha County. He urged those who are interested to come see Arrowhead’s campus and its “tremendous assets.”

Rosch said Arrowhead has worked to gauge locals’ preferences regarding a potential referendum and made sure there was no long-term debt or interest payments. The district was able to avoid both with this proposal. “We are financially, fiscally very sound,” he said.

Voters will decide on the referendum Nov. 3.

“During the last 12 years, Arrowhead has completed over \$16 million in capital projects from its operating budget, for an average of \$1.4 million per year,” Myrah said. “As the district’s funding from the state decreases, Arrowhead cannot continue to pay for the increasing number of necessary infrastructure improvements without directly impacting the budget allocated to instructional programs and services for students.”

More information can be found at www.arrowheadschoools.org.

TOWN OF DELAFIELD

Town creates ordinance regulating portable toilets

By Cara Spoto
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TOWN OF DELAFIELD — Town officials have got their eye on anyone using a portable toilet as a permanent outhouse.

The Town Board voted unanimously in September to approve an ordinance regulating the use of chemical toilets and other portable outhouses, sometimes referred to as porta-potties or porta-johns.

Portable outhouses are essentially banned under the new rules unless a permit for their use is granted by the town in conjunction with a building permit, or for a special event. If the permit is granted as part of a construction project, the outhouses can only remain on site while construction is in progress. If issued for a special event, they must be removed within 48 hours of the event’s conclusion.

The move was prompted, Town Administrator Dan Green said, by

complaints neighbors had made about a property owner who has had a portable toilet on his property for an extended period. The property owner was apparently renting his pool out for diving instruction and letting the people who were accessing the pool use the portable toilet.

Such ordinances are not uncommon, Green said; the town just didn’t have one the books before the pool incident spurred the board to action.

The ordinance notes that if not



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Alex Nemec/Freeman Staff

Lake Country Fire and Rescue officially accept new members

DELAFIELD — Oconomowoc Lake, Wales, Town of Genesee and the Town of Delafield all joined Lake Country Fire & Rescue as of this morning. From left to right stand Chenequa Village Administrator Dan Neumer, Oconomowoc Lake Village President Michael Bickler, Lake Country Fire & Rescue Board Member Matt Grimmer, Town of Delafield Chairman Ron Troy, Delafield Mayor Kent Attwell, Nashotah Village President Rich Lartz, Wales Village President Jeff Flaws, Wales Village Board Member Gene Mayernick, Town of Genesee Board Chairwoman Sharon Leair, Town of Genesee Board Member Jim Morris, Town of Genesee Board Member Buck Houston, Chenequa Village Board Member Bob Bellin.

Rogers Behavioral Health to open mental health resource, research center

Facility expected to open next summer

By Alex Nemec
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SUMMIT — Rogers Behavioral Health, in partnership with the Ronald McDonald House Charities and Ladish Co. Foundation, has announced plans to open the Ladish Co. Foundation Center, which will feature “an array of hospitality and spiritual care services,” a press release states.

The Ladish Center will be used by families, others who are supporting patients as well as community members. It will be

located at Rogers’ Summit location, 34700 Valley Road. Rogers President and CEO Pat Hammer said in the release that the center will be “an incredible step” in Rogers’ history of providing mental health and addiction treatment.

“We will forever be grateful to the Ladish Co. Foundation and Ronald McDonald House Charities Eastern Wisconsin for their support and partnership ensuring these resources are available when needed most,” Hammer said in the release.

In addition, it will be a

“central hub” for patients and families to participate in educational and supportive programs. Rogers’ support groups, presentations on mental health and training for behavioral health professionals and community members will all be housed by the Ladish Center.

The Ladish Co. Foundation was founded in 1952 for the purpose of being operated for exclusively religious, charitable, scientific or educational purposes and routinely contributes to southeastern Wisconsin nonprofits, the release

states.

According to the press release, the project was made possible by a \$2 million donation in addition to the partnership with Ronald McDonald House Charities Eastern Wisconsin.

The release states that within the Ladish Center there will be a Family Room Program presented by RMHC. The room will “allow both families residing at the RHMC as well as other Rogers’ families to benefit from this supportive, comforting environment.”



Submitted rendering

A rendering of the Ladish Center at Rogers Behavioral Health.

President and CEO of RHMC Eastern Wisconsin Ann Petrie said in the release that having family members nearby while supporting a patient receiving treatment has proven to have a positive impact on the patient’s recovery.

“We are proud to partner with Rogers to deliver family-centered, compassionate care to those facing mental health challenges,” Petrie said in the release.

Hammer recognized the courage and strength it takes for patients and families to seek out treatment for mental illness and addiction.

“Along with our valued partners, we are humbled to support them every step of the way,” Hammer said in the release.

Girl Scout raises money to warn drivers of turtle crossing

By Alex Nemec
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SUMMIT — Why did the turtle cross the road? To get to the other side, obviously.

But Troop 6277 Girl Scout Ella Kreuziger noticed that on Sawyer Road in Summit, those turtles weren’t making it to their destination.

“I noticed that by the bridge near our house on Sawyer Road that tons of turtles would cross the road, but they would always end up getting hit,” Ella said. “I wanted to make people more aware they were there.”

To let people know the turtles were crossing the busy road, Ella wanted to paint the street.

Ella set up a table and sold treats like lemonade, brownies and Rice Krispies treats to raise money for the turtle crossing notices. She also sold painted rocks to look like turtles.

She had to raise over \$700 for her campaign to paint the street.

Ella’s efforts were in part to receive her Silver Award as a Scout — given to a Scout who looks for problems or issues in their community they can solve.

Jeremy Kreuziger, Ella’s father, said there were almost 100 different donations from the community to support Ella’s cause.

“None of this would’ve been able to be done if it weren’t for the help of the community,” Jeremy said.

He said he had a “very proud dad moment” when Ella talked about her initiative.

“I’m proud of her for taking on such an ambitious goal at 13,” Jeremy said. “It’s not something I would’ve done at that age and she took it on and completed it in a short amount of time.”

In total, the street will be painted in three spots. Two spots were painted on Delafield Road on Sept. 23. The last spot will be on Sawyer Road to be done in the future after the street is resurfaced.

Ella began raising money in



Submitted photo

Ella Kreuziger stands with Waukesha County Highway Operations Manager Bob Rauchle near the newly painted turtle crossing markings on Delafield Road.

June and last week drivers traveling down Delafield Road began to be notified of the friendly reptiles trying to cross the street.

“Ella put a lot of time into painting the rocks, being organized and diligent with this,” Ella’s mom Sara Kreuziger said. “She spent a lot of hours on the side of the road selling her treats and waving at cars. She did a really good job.”



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State champs rewarded with turf fields

LCL, Brookfield East upgrade stadiums

By Dave Radcliffe
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HARTLAND — Two defending state champions will have new-look football fields the next time they host a game.

Brookfield East and Lake Country Lutheran each got a makeover this summer and joined the growing list of high schools with artificial turf. The Spartans were one of the last programs in the Greater Metro Conference to play on grass, while the Lightning are set to join the Metro Classic Conference in football this fall.

Both schools enjoyed their time playing on grass. After all, it included each winning WIAA state championships last season — East also won a state title in 2016. But both couldn't pass up the opportunity to make the upgrade for a bevy of reasons.

"I think one of the best things about the field is it's 100% donor driven," LCL football coach Greg Brazgel said. "They got together and

said we basically dare you to turn down all this money that we're willing to donate, so it wasn't anything I thought out or even our administration thought out. It was nice to not have to wait for a referendum or anything."

The generous donation of \$300,000 came from the Ewald family and Ewald Automotive Group in June, and construction on the field was completed on Aug. 7, conceivably for the Lightning's opening game against St. Francis.

"I think the big push for it was our Level 2 game last year," Brazgel said. "There were a bunch of guys out with snowblowers just trying to clear off the field. Then the game ended up being an overtime game. But as the guys were plowing off the field they kind of looked at me saying, 'What are we doing here? There's got to be a better option.'"

Of course, Lake Country Lutheran went on to win that overtime game over Lomira and then moved its Division 5 Round 3 matchup to Oconomowoc against Racine

St. Catherine's due to the sloppy field conditions. The Lightning proved turf was a welcome sight with a 28-6 victory. In fact, their final three wins of the year came on artificial surfaces, including the program's first state title at Camp Randall Stadium when it knocked off Stratford, 22-13.

"For me even thinking about people giving us a hard time moving our Level 3 game to Oconomowoc, we played Racine St. Catherine's and people were saying, 'Hey, they're a fast team. Are you sure you want them on turf?'" Brazgel said. "I said, 'We're a fast team,' and we certainly played better on turf than if we were playing on grass. I'm just hoping it adds to our game."

Speaking of additions, LCL will also be installing a sports pavilion in partnership with Ewald Automotive Group, which is scheduled to be completed in the fall. The pavilion will serve the entire sports complex with concessions, storage and bathrooms.

"It's really going to



Submitted photos

The athletic stadium Lake Country Lutheran both got an artificial turf field this offseason.

improve our area," Brazgel said. "We made improvements to our soccer field and obviously our gym has always been one of the best for schools of our enrollment, so it's nice to throw the turf field in there. It puts a stamp on our facilities that hey, we're the real deal. We may be small but we're doing everything right."

East also bid farewell to its grass field this summer, which was installed in 2001. Not only did the Spartans get turf, but so did Brookfield Central as part of a \$5.4 mil-

lion plan in athletic upgrades. The proposal was approved last October and funds were drawn from the district's 10-year capital plan, meaning no taxpayer money is required.

But Westphal projected the field probably only had around five years left before it began failing under ground. Along with the turf, East made other upgrades to its athletic facilities over recent months.

"We have a new track as well, asphalt and everything," Westphal said. "It was

a complete tear out. The new track, that'll get probably finished the first week of September. The football field would be ready to go. We had lights, new poles, just better construction, and new LED lamps so it lights up the field pretty well."

Suffice it to say, times have changed for a couple of local programs. And success doesn't hurt.

"We're going to try to get those seniors to be the first ones on there," Brazgel said. "Probably a lot of it had to do with them winning."

T.J. Watt gifting Pirates some treasure

Giving \$10K of Pro Bowl earnings to Pewaukee football

By Dave Radcliffe
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PEWAUKEE — It might not be the biggest chunk of change to T.J. Watt — at least not anymore — but his alma mater will graciously accept it.

The All-Pro linebacker for the Pittsburgh Steelers gifted Pewaukee High School with a \$10,000 grant through the NFL Foundation on Aug. 11, donating his Pro Bowl winnings to the Pirates' football program.

Watt, who wore a Pewaukee sticker on his helmet while playing in the Pro Bowl game, said that his hometown will always be near and dear to his heart.

"All three of us brothers played there, so did my dad and my uncle as well, so I'm doing as much as I can to help out," Watt said over the phone following his team's morning practice Tuesday. "I know it's not the biggest chunk of money, but it will go a long way toward football equipment and help out as many young lives as possible not only on the field but off it as well."

T.J. is of course referring to his older brothers, J.J. and Derek, the latter of which is now his teammate in Pittsburgh. All made their way through the Pewaukee school system, went on to play collegiately at the University of

Wisconsin and now play professionally.

It's been a meteoric rise to stardom for the youngest Watt brother. He was named an All-Pro after the 2019 season at both edge rusher (first team) and linebacker (second), leading the AFC with 14.5 sacks.

Not bad for someone that suited up at tight end and quarterback for the Pirates.

"It's been incredible," Watt said. "I think I have a lot of amazing moments through the last handful of years. Looking back to high school, I wouldn't trade anything. I loved played quarterback for Pewaukee. Growing up all I wanted to do was be on the varsity team after watching my brothers play."

It's not as if linebacker was foreign to Watt, as it was one of three positions he was named first-team all-conference in the Woodland West his senior year under Justin Friske. But prior to his senior year, Watt had committed to play tight end at Wisconsin.

Instead, Watt wouldn't play a down of football for nearly three years, redshirting as a freshman, before missing the 2014 season due to a knee injury.

In the summer of 2015, Wisconsin head coach Paul Chryst asked Watt to move to linebacker. Safe to say that switch paid off, as the redshirt junior would explode for 11.5 sacks in 2016 and parlay that into becoming a first-round

pick in the 2017 NFL draft by the Steelers.

"Getting the opportunity to play at Wisconsin, something I always dreamed of doing and be fortunate enough to be drafted to the Pittsburgh Steelers and be supported by the best community, having a great coaching staff and great teammates, I've been very lucky with a lot of hard work as well," Watt said. "It's been awesome but there's still a lot of work to be done and we're just getting started."

Just three years into his pro career, Watt has lived up to the hype and then some.

After signing a four-year, \$9.25 million contract with Pittsburgh, who has since wisely exercised his fifth-year option, Watt had a stellar rookie campaign, amassing 54 tackles, seven sacks and an interception while also deflecting seven passes in 15 games.

Watt debunked the myth of the sophomore slump by earning his first Pro Bowl selection, finishing the 2018 season with 68 tackles, 13 sacks and six forced fumbles. He somehow managed to top those numbers last year, leading the league with eight forced fumbles and finishing third in NFL Defensive Player of the Year voting. Recently, the 25-year old was ranked No. 25 on the NFL Top 100 Players list.

His celebrity has grown off the field, as well, teaming up

with his two older brothers to host the game show "Ultimate Tag," which began airing on FOX on May 20.

"It's been fast — very fast happening," said Watt, who also starred alongside his brothers and mom, Connie, in a Subway commercial. "Growing up watching J.J. handle all the celebrity stuff, that helps keep stuff in check with me. He's the famous one so compared to him I know I'm low on the totem poll. I'm not there yet. He's earned every bit of that. I'm very happy he invited Derek and I to be on that show with him and that he hasn't forgot about his little brothers."

Not only did T.J. get to team up with his brothers on national television, but once again, he gets to play alongside Derek. The 27-year-old fullback signed a three-year,

\$9.75 million free agent deal with Pittsburgh on March 26 after spending his first four seasons with the San Diego/Los Angeles Chargers.

"It's been incredible," Watt said of being Derek's teammate in Pittsburgh. "We played together in high school. Derek and I have always been the closest since we're two years apart. We played youth baseball growing up and we lived together in college. Now he's just living down the road from me. He has a young son, my nephew, so I'm ecstatic to see him whenever I'm allowed to. His wife is staying here as well."

"It's very surreal. Me and my brother are very, very close, so to be able to see him on an almost daily basis after the past few years being on two different coasts has been awesome. And I think this is a great fit for him. I look forward to watching him being

able to blossom here."

Watt can look forward to a massive payday coming his way sometime in the next year or two. For now, he's happy to be back on the field with his teammates. Training camp kicked off on Monday at Heinz Field and the Steelers are slated to open their 2020 season on Sept. 14 at the New York Giants.

"It's nice to kind of have some normalcy back in my life and be able to put everything aside and get back to football," said Watt, who spent time training in the off-season at NX Level in Waukegan. "It's been very cool to see everybody back and see how their bodies and minds have transformed over the off-season. We haven't been able to see each other the past six or seven months, but it's been encouraging to see everybody come back in great shape and we're ready to have a big season."



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