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JUNE 2021

 The FREEMAN & ENTERPRISE

# Lake Country

## THIS MONTH

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# Breaking down barriers

## Pewaukee High senior earns fire/EMT credentials before graduation

**By Jake Ekdahl**  
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PEWAUKEE — Pewaukee High School senior Trinh Vo was in a strong enough academic position to graduate early. Instead, she chose to acquire skills and certifications in something new: fire and emergency medical services.

“I really didn’t want to graduate early (and) having all these certifications really opened a lot of doors for me,” Vo said.

Through a dual enrollment program at Waukesha County Technical College, she’s earned Firefighter I, Firefighter II and Hazmat certifications, and will be taking the national registry for emergency medical technician certification.

Vo is also the first female and first Asian American to serve as a Pewaukee Fire Department intern. “I feel like I’m breaking barriers (and) that’s really nice,” she said, adding that when she looked into fire and EMS statistics she found few in the industry were female and fewer were Asian.

“The fire service in itself is not an easy thing to do (and) she committed herself to doing a good job and helping other students achieve that as well,” said WCTC Fire and EMS Instructor Michael Jones.

Pewaukee Fire Department Assistant Chief Mark Hoppe said Vo has been enthusiastic and learning all aspects of the fire service, from medical and ambulance calls, to helping



Submitted photo  
From left, Pewaukee Fire Chief Kevin Bierce and Pewaukee High School senior and department intern Trinh Vo at the scene of a garage fire they combated.

on the fire engine to fire inspections.

He said she helped with a recent garage fire by assisting with crew accountability and making sure personnel locations were all up to date as they moved around the scene of the fire.

“We’re happy to see that younger generation look to the fire service,” Hoppe said. “I would encourage anyone who’s in their high school career (to) look to their high school or local fire department to see what programs they offer.”

He said the Pewaukee



Submitted photo  
Pewaukee High School senior Trinh Vo holds a fire ax in front of a WCTC fire vehicle while wearing her graduation cap and gown.

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# Teachers thwart near-drowning on Pewaukee Lake

## Fishermen team up to rescue father, daughter from waters

By Cara Spoto  
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PEWAUKEE — It's not every day that the simple pleasure of muskie fishing leads to an act of valor.

But on a recent Sunday evening it did.

Retired physical education teacher Jeff Kiser was out on Pewaukee Lake fishing with his wife around 5 p.m. on May 16 when he saw what looked like a child jump in the water.

Seconds later he heard a woman yelling for help, and immediately his lifeguarding skills from "1980s and '90s kicked in."

He grabbed a boat cushion and jumped in the water, blue jeans, fleece and all.

He swam to the first person he saw, an 8-year-old girl who was floating face down in the water in a puffy jacket, and put her on his shoulder. Then he saw a man, who was just under and sinking fast, and grabbed him.

"They were both unconscious. I was kicking like crazy," the Village of Waukesha resident, recalling the rescue.

### An assist

Kiser was trying his best to keep them both afloat when Matt Bright,

assistant principal and a former wrestling coach at Beloit Turner High School who was out fishing with two of his former students and wrestling athletes, approached the scene.

Arriving just in the nick of time, the men pulled the young girl into the boat where she coughed up water and began breathing, Kiser, 62, recalled.

Bright and the students had a harder time getting the girl's father out of the water. He was tangled in fishing line, but the men were eventually able to foist him into the boat, cutting the fishing line that had wrapped around his neck, and quickly administering CPR.

One of Bright's former students started the CPR, but Bright stepped in to finish the task, eventually getting the man to regain consciousness.

"We swatted him on the back, he threw up, and was able to start talking. By the time we pulled him into the boat and got him talking it was probably three or four minutes," Bright said.

### 'Combined effort'

A pair of kayakers and Kiser's wife called 911, and by the time rescuers got the father and daughter to the shoreline, Pewaukee Police had responded along with a crew from



Matt Bright



Submitted photo

Lake Country Fire & Rescue.

Both the father and his daughter were released back to their home that evening, police said.

After investigating the incident, Pewaukee Police Chief Timothy Heier said officers learned that the family rented a boat to go fishing that day. There were five people on the boat: the father, the 8-year-old girl, her mother, a 6-year-old and an infant.

Apparently no one on the boat could swim, Heier said. There were lifejackets on the boat, but none of the passengers were wearing them, he said.

Attempts to make contact with the father were unsuccessful, but Heier said the man reached out to the police department after the incident to express his thanks to the people who saved his life.

"He was very emotional," he said.

Heier said the department plans to give the rescuers a lifesaving award.

"This could have gone in a terrible direction. This was such a wonderful combined effort from citizens," he said.

### All in the training

Asked what made them react so quickly, both Bright and Kiser pointed to their work as educators

and coaches, and the lifesaving skills they both have due to those professions.

"Like my wife said, 'I just react,' because I have been training (as a lifeguard and swimming instructor) my whole life. Plus, being an educator you have that inner sense that you have to watch everyone," said Kiser, who taught for many years at what is today Les Paul Middle School.

"If I would have been there 12 seconds later it would have been a much different outcome," he added. "Someone is going to have a Father's Day to remember this year."

Bright noted that as an administrator, he's used to dealing with "a lot of crisis situations" so going to assist with the rescue was also second nature.

"To have that experience, it was very rewarding, but definitely shocking. It makes you realize that the training we have is so important," Bright said.

## OCONOMOWOC

# Baseball team to be named Lake Country DockHounds

## General manager hired to lead players

By Alex Nemec  
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OCONOMOWOC — The Lake Country baseball team officially has a name — the Lake Country DockHounds.

After more than 2,700 community submissions from the Lake Country community, the name selected for the team is the Lake Country DockHounds.

In addition, the DockHounds have also made the team's first hire by appointing Trish Rasberry as the general manager to lead the DockHounds

into its first season.

According to a press release, the DockHound is a representation of all the dogs seen on docks and boats across Lake Country in the summertime.

Owner and Managing Partner Tom Kelenic said the team was blown away by the amount of support and participation from the community.

"Now that the team has an identity that Lake Country can rally behind, it's time to get to work building a first-class ballpark and a championship-winning team that we can all be proud of," Kelenic said.

Moving into her role with the DockHounds, Rasberry knows the league well as she has served as the vice president of sales and service for the Milwaukee Milkmen. She is one of two female general managers in the American Association of Professional Baseball.

Rasberry said she jumped at the opportunity to manage the DockHounds.

"Being in a position to build the team and ballpark from the ground up is something that I'm really excited to be part of," Rasberry said in the release. "What really drew me to this was the ambition of the ownership group and the truly unique ability

we have to build something special here in Lake Country."

Construction has already begun at the ballpark site and an official groundbreaking is slated for this month where the team's logo will be presented. Play could start in spring 2022. The 2,500-seat stadium will be located near the north west corner of the Interstate 94/Highway 67 interchange. Outside of the stadium, there will be smaller developments that include NX Level Sports Performance and Spiderz Batting Glove, the release states.

For more information on the team visit lakecountrybaseball.com.

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## Tossing their caps

WAUKESHA COUNTY — Seniors across Lake Country ended their roller coaster final school year recently. Left: Gabrielle Koenig smiles at the Kettle Moraine High School graduation ceremony. Right: Arrowhead High School students toss their graduation caps in the air at their graduation ceremony.

Submitted photos



# Kettle Moraine High student-built shed to be raffled

Proceeds from raffle to support students, staff

**By Jake Ekdahl**  
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WALES — Students in Kettle Moraine High School's architecture class have put their skills to work and built a 10-by-12 foot utility shed, which will be raffled off in the community and raise funds for the Kettle Moraine Education Foundation.

"We wanted to do something a little hands-on with the class," said Tech Ed teacher Scott Bruening. He said the project teaches construction, layout, measurement and more. "The old 'measure twice, cut once' philosophy really kind of holds true," he said.

Bruening said he hopes to see the project continue in future years. "There seems to be plenty of interest," he said. "We certainly have the community support for it... Hopefully this is just the beginning of something we can continue to do."

The Education Foundation and Bliffert Lumber & Hardware contributed to the project and helped make it possible.

Bruening said the class seeks to meet the needs of



Submitted photo

Kettle Moraine High School architecture students built a shed that will be auctioned off to support future projects through the district's education foundation.

industry and equip students with the skills employers are looking for in 2021. He said a wider variety of students are interested in technical education and in particular more female students are enrolling.

"The KM Technology Education Department is always looking for community projects and partnerships to strengthen ties between the school and local businesses, as well as further the opportunities for its students," the district said, in a Facebook

post.

A time lapse of the shed being built can be viewed on the district's Facebook page.

The shed will be delivered to the raffle winner unfinished and unstained so the permanent owner can make those final touches just the way they want.

Raffle tickets will be available until June 30 with the drawing taking place July 1. More information is available at <https://rb.gy/htmfzb>.

# Waukesha County saw record number of drug-related deaths in 2020

Mirroring national trend, fentanyl playing greater role

**By Jake Ekdahl**  
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WAUKESHA — The total number of drug-related deaths in Waukesha County rose to 83 in 2020 from 54 in 2019 — that's the highest annual total on record.

Of the total 83 drug-related deaths, 56 were related to fentanyl, which is more potent than heroin.

"There's definitely an increase in the prevalence of fentanyl," said Waukesha County Deputy Medical Examiner Kristine Klenz. "(It's) not unique to us."

Fentanyl is more potent than heroin, which means it requires less of the substance to achieve a high and it also takes less for an individual to overdose, potentially fatally.

Waukesha County's experience appears to be mirroring a national trend. According to the Centers for Disease Control, "over 81,000 drug overdose deaths occurred in the United States in the 12 months ending in May 2020, the highest number of overdose deaths ever recorded in a 12-month period... Synthetic opioids (primarily illicitly manufactured fentanyl) appear to be the primary driver of the increases in overdose deaths, increasing 38.4% from the 12-month period leading up to June 2019 compared with the 12-month period leading up to May 2020."

Klenz pointed out the medical examiner's office sees only "the tip of the iceberg," and deaths only account for a portion of overdoses. Even national emergency room data, which tends to be published more slowly, doesn't give a complete picture, as there are cases in which an individual overdoses and emergency services are not called.

"The absolute guidance is to always call 911 because that person still needs medical attention," Klenz said.

The administration of Narcan, also called Naloxone, by first responders and family members may also be helping keep overdose deaths lower than they might otherwise be.

"Does Narcan save lives, absolutely," said Waukesha Police Captain Dan Baumann. "We also know that we only can provide limited care for somebody that is in respiratory crisis, which is what fentanyl and heroin does."

Baumann said heroin used to be rarer, but the drug's cost effectiveness has spurred its prevalence. He added he'll be at the Prevention in the Park Fundraiser in Hartland at 11 a.m. Sunday, hosted by Your Choice to Live, Inc., an Oconomowoc-based drug prevention organization he's a board member for. "(They're) really educating kids on what this does to your body," he said. The event is at Nixon Park, 175 E. Park Ave.

Klenz said one other noticeable trend is overdose victims being relatively older than in previous years. The most common ages are those in their 30s, 40s and 50s, in that order, but that used to be a bit younger. She added that because the annual death tolls are under 100, the samplings can more easily be skewed by statistical outliers.

Klenz said that while much attention has been focused on the toll of opioid prescriptions, heroin and fentanyl have moved to become more significant problems during that time.

What kind of role the pandemic played in the rise of overdose deaths, if any, is too soon to say, Klenz said. The data from 2021 will help answer that question.



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# Kettle Moraine students lead national inclusivity conversation

## Students, staff value speaking with peers from across the nation

By Jake Ekdahl  
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WALES — Students from Kettle Moraine School District met virtually with peers from across the country this spring to discuss equity in education at the SEE Summit.

The SEE Summit is a student-led virtual event meant to engage schools and facilitate conversation around making education a more inclusive experience for students from under-served backgrounds.

Student-led sessions including topics such as the value of diversity, listening, considering multiple historical viewpoints, and speaking up when one sees a problem.

“The mission behind it was to bring students and teachers together from all over the country and to give students an opportunity to be the teachers,” said Kettle Moraine social studies teacher Zakarie Lenski. “I would say that our students really

took a lead role. ... They were actually part of the administrative roundtable (and) showed what Kettle Moraine is all about.”

One of those students was Briana Medina, who said she felt it was good to meet and speak with students from different demographic, religious and socioeconomic backgrounds. In addition to other areas of Wisconsin, peer districts were located in southern California and Ohio. Medina said one of the takeaways for her was the benefits of curriculum that takes into account multiple viewpoints and makes use of work from authors of a wide variety of backgrounds.

“(Sometimes) teachers and students don’t even realize these conversations are affecting students from these backgrounds,” she said.

Isabella Nichols, another KM student, said allowing students to lead the conversations “was really powerful, and I think as students it was empowering (and) changing.”

Students weren’t the only

ones who got to spend some time with communities different than their own. Kettle Moraine teacher and Cultural Proficiency Coordinator Pamela Martin said she was paired up with students from Santa Clara, California.

“(They’re) very different high schools from what we teach,” she said. “Hearing their voices and their experiences was very important to me.” She said she can keep those stories and experiences in mind while in class.

Exposure to peers from across the country yielded revelations big and small.

“Other people don’t say ‘bubbler,’” Brooks Wisniewski said, adding that the experience was “a really great opportunity to voice my opinions and some of the things I’ve experienced as a Jewish person within Waukesha County.”

Kettle Moraine student Joshua Elkin recalled learning about the Civil Rights movement when he was younger, and feeling the framing of the lessons seemed to



Submitted photo  
Brooks Wisniewski was one of a handful of Kettle Moraine students to take part in the National SEE Summit.

indicate discrimination ended when the Civil Rights Act was signed in 1964, but only later learned about forms of discrimination that evolved afterward.

“We can obviously see racism is still alive and well in our society,” he said. “We don’t often see the connection between history and the present. ... Those themes reinvent themselves, they don’t necessary dissipate.”

For Noor Salameh, the SEE Summit is an experience

she’d recommend future students partake in.

“I think anyone can benefit from this,” she said. “As a human you’re constantly learning (from) everyone around you. ... Everybody is an educator in a sort of way.”

Martin said leading conversations, scheduling and coordinating with others and giving live presentations are skills that will help the students in the future.

“All leadership skills were

a part of this,” she said. “All of them, as part of their presentations had a discussion format at the end. ... They were calm, they were very professional and they did a fantastic job.”

Lenski said there are considerations for doing the summit annually going forward. 2021 was the first time it was held.

“It’s how they feel in the educational system, and it’s their voice in this,” Martin said.

# Hartland to appoint interim administrator

## Rhode receives \$47,020 as part of separation agreement

By Cara Spoto  
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HARTLAND — As they adjust to the resignation of former Village Administrator Tim Rhode, trustees planned to appoint Finance Director Ryan Bailey as their interim administrator when they gathered for a Village Board meeting on June 14.

Trustees officially accepted Rhode’s resignation on June 3, but

a copy of the “Resignation Agreement and Release” obtained by The Freeman indicates that Rhode’s actual separation date with the village was June 1.

According to the agreement, the village has agreed to pay Rhode his regular salary for four months, in the amount of \$40,920, along with \$5,528.34 for 93



Bailey

days’ worth of unpaid vacation days, and an additional \$472 for eight hours of unused floating holiday pay. The village has also agreed to pay Rhode \$100 to reimburse him for use of his cellphone in April and May. Officials further agreed not to challenge any claim for unemployment insurance Rhode may make after his severance pay has been paid out after four months.

The agreement also contains a condition that Rhode not seek re-

employment with the village or make any claims of damages against the municipality.

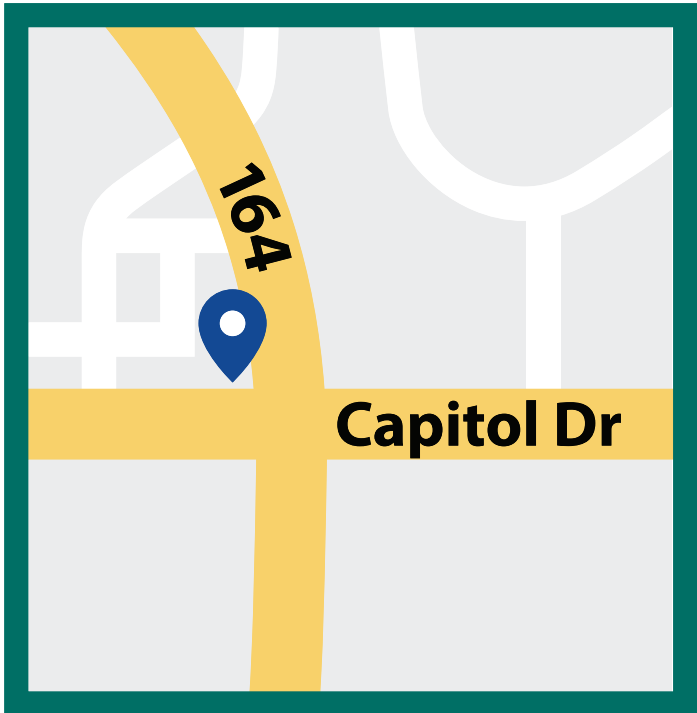
Addressing Rhode’s resignation in early June, Village President Jeff Pfannerstill said: “I am sure other communities will be excited to have Tim Rhode will as their administrator.”

Rhode came to the village in January of last year, after four years as the town administrator in Cedarburg. Prior to his time in Cedarburg, he was the city administrator in St.

Francis for five years. He was also village administrator in Butler for five years and city administrator in Monticello for two years.

Speaking to The Freeman in early 2020, Rhode said he would miss the Cedarburg town staff and board but was ready for the chance to serve a bigger community like Hartland.

A press release issued on June 4 by the village noted the administrator’s contributions to Hartland, including overseeing a number of major subdivision developments.



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