

Brookfield & Elm Grove

THIS MONTH

NOVEMBER 2021

C.C.'s Elbow Room to open in Brookfield

Bar & grill to provide sense of community

By Nikki Brahm
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BROOKFIELD — A new bar and grill dubbed C.C.'s Elbow Room is coming to North Brookfield Road — taking over what once was Sabella's Pub.

The business is planning to install a vintage U-shaped bar that patrons will come across right as they open the door, since the former U-shaped bar needed a replacement. Owner and operator Cee Cee Ceman told The Freeman she is aiming to open the new community bar sometime before Christmas, although the timeline is tentative.

Ceman said she decided it was time to purchase the bar after her husband passed away a little over a year and a half ago. Ceman has worked in the restaurant industry since she was 15 years old — bartending, waitressing, managing and running a smoothie/café. She has lived in Brookfield for 30 years.

"I took a year to digest everything and this kind of hit me like 'Cee Cee, you've always wanted to do this,'" she said.

Ceman, who has two daughters, said they were excited about her new venture and plan to also hang out at the bar.

She met with the former owner of Sabella's, who sold her the business, and recently passed away.

"I talked with the own-

ers, I guess other people have tried to buy it and they were interested in keeping it a bar, so they didn't want to sell it if they were just going to make it a parking lot or something, they wanted to keep it going," Ceman said.

Plans

Ceman said she could have had a regular bar positioned against the back wall of the building, but she chose the U-shaped bar to encourage new friendships and create an intimate setting.

"The demographic around here is so vast, I could see people coming here before they go to a ball in a ball gown for a few drinks ... and I want the baseball (and softball) teams that I'm going to sponsor sitting right next to them," she said. "It's going to be everything."

The business will offer some food options, such as a Friday fish fry, Reubens and a secret pizza that is yet to be revealed.

Ceman plans to have another bar outside the front of the business with a fenced-in patio area. She also plans to have musicians perform outside and inside and wants to install a large screen outside to watch Packer games.

Ceman also plans to have a jukebox that connects to the phone, gambling machines and TVs installed so patrons can watch games.

She will be working the bar and said she'll be excited to meet more of the community once she opens.

To learn more about the business, visit the website at <https://www.ccelbowroom.com>.



Nikki Brahm/Freeman Staff

Cee Cee Ceman plans to open Elbow Room Bar & Grill at 2850 N. Brookfield Road.



Nikki Brahm/Freeman Staff

Cee Cee Ceman is currently renovating the interior of what will soon be Elbow Room Bar & Grill at 2850 N. Brookfield Road. Ceman aims to open the business sometime before Christmas.

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Data shows some schools growing, others not

Elmbrook saw a 6.05% enrollment increase

By Jake Ekdahl
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WAUKESHA — New enrollment data shows some Waukesha County school districts are growing while others are shrinking, though none are moving at a particularly dramatic pace.

Districts across their state submit the “third Friday” count each year, which is taken on the third Friday in September — though it becomes public later — and measures enrollment. The figure affects the three-year rolling average memberships used for revenue limit and per pupil aid.

Only two districts in the county had a percent change of greater than 3% from last academic year to this one: Elmbrook and Norris.

Elmbrook saw a 6.05% enrollment increase with 438 new students, but the majority of that figure, 395, can be accounted for due to the district’s new free 4K program.

The other district with a significant shift is Norris,

which saw a 40% decrease. But because enrollment within Waukesha County was only 15 students, that figure only accounts for six students.

Other than Elmbrook, Mukwonago Schools saw the most robust growth at 2.75%, or 128 students.

Waukesha Schools saw a decrease of 203 students from 11,801 to 11,598, about 1.72%. The district has benefited from the virtual charter school eAchieve, which operates through the district and saw enrollment more than double last year in the earlier stages of the coronavirus pandemic.

“eAchieve certainly has been a positive financial factor for us,” said Waukesha Assistant Superintendent for Business Services Darren Clark.

Clark said while some of last year’s new students have returned to previous districts, a large share have remained. Not all eAchieve students show up on the third Friday data, however, because some are nonresident students; the DPI provides per pupil aid for nonresident

Third Friday Enrollment Count

District	2021 September Count	2020 September Count	Change	Percent
Arrowhead	1,911	1,933	-22	-1.14%
Elmbrook	7,683	7,245	438	6.05%
Hamilton	4,995	4,944	51	1.03%
Hartland-Lakeside	1,185	1,172	13	1.11%
Kettle Moraine	3,280	3,340	-60	-1.80%
Lake Country	364	371	-7	-1.89%
Menomonee Falls	3,855	3,790	65	1.72%
Merton Community	811	796	15	1.88%
Mukwonago	4,780	4,652	128	2.75%
Muskego-Norway	4,783	4,870	-87	-1.79%
New Berlin	4,264	4,325	-61	-1.41%
Norris	9	15	-6	-40.00%
North Lake	249	247	2	0.81%
Oconomowoc Area	5,215	5,304	-89	-1.68%
Pewaukee	2,739	2,744	-5	-0.18%
Richmond	396	389	7	1.80%
Stone Bank	274	281	-7	-2.49%
Swallow	406	416	-10	-2.40%
Waukesha	11,598	11,801	-203	-1.72%

Source: Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction

students, too, though not as much.

Waukesha is not alone in experiencing enrollment decreases, it’s just one of a dozen districts in the county to be seeing that trend. At a recent Kettle Moraine School Board meeting, Chief Financial Officer John Stellmacher said one of the factors spurring the demographic trends are simply fewer students coming in than

graduating. KM had 201 incoming kindergarten students this year following 337 graduates in the class of 2020.

Arrowhead Superintendent Laura Myrah previously told The Freeman the district has seen an enrollment decline on average of about 30 students per year over the last several years. She said one thing driving that is fewer homes available at the size

and price point families with school-aged children are looking for, with older populations staying in houses longer than in past decades, keeping inventory low.

Clark said with the last two years being highly unusual, it will be hard to use them as benchmarks. He said the School Board is going through workshops currently to address enrollment trends.

Town of Brookfield reviewing Shake Shack proposal

Plans for drive-thru restaurant tabled; will go to Plan Commission

By Nikki Brahm
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TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — A new option for burgers and shakes may be coming to Town of Brookfield residents since the Town Board is reviewing a proposal for a Shake Shack along North Barker Road.

Shake Shack’s menu includes fresh, made-to-order hamburgers, hot dogs and similar fare, in addition to shakes and frozen custard. According to its website, the eatery has a presence in 33 states, including a pair of Wisconsin locations in Milwaukee and Madison.

The new Shake Shack location is

proposed at 585 N. Barker Road — the location of a shuttered Perkins.

Shake Shack, which began operations in 2004, is testing a new component to its business model that drew heavy scrutiny from commissioners during a preliminary review of the restaurant — the drive-up service.

In July, commissioners shared concerns of traffic backups on Barker Road as customers flow in and out of the parking lot, particularly during peak times amid the lunch and dinner rush.

According to Town of Brookfield Clerk Veronica LaGuardia, the proposal was presented before the Town Board on Oct. 5, but it was tabled pending a request for addi-



Courtesy of Town of Brookfield

A proposed Shake Shack may come to 585 N. Barker Road in the Town of Brookfield.

tional information.

The item was then brought before the Architectural Control Committee on Oct. 13, where it received a recommendation for final approval.

The project plans and recommendation for approval are still moving through the the approval process and was scheduled to return to the Plan Commission on Oct. 26 for consideration.

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ELMBROOK SCHOOL DISTRICT

Court denies motion to dismiss mask lawsuit

Mother sues over former mask policy

WAUKESHA — A request by the Elmbrook School District to dismiss a lawsuit that addresses the legality of a former mask mandate in the district has been denied by a Waukesha County Circuit Court judge, according to online court records.

According to online court records, attorneys with the school district and Heidi Anderson, the plaintiff, argued over the motion to dismiss Oct. 14.

The case was first

brought by Anderson, a Brookfield resident who has taken the district to court before and had a daughter in the district. An amended complaint added two additional plaintiffs, Chad and Maja Cuellar. Anderson objected to mask wearing on personal and religious grounds.

The school district argued that the case is moot. In a May 24 brief supporting a motion to dismiss the plaintiff's complaint for declaratory judgment, the district argued the complaint fails to address relief that can be granted. The only relief listed in the complaint was to strike down the mandate, the district's attorney argues. The district also lifted the mask mandate on

May 17, "rendering (the) plaintiff's claims moot."

The court will continue to hear the case after the Thursday decision. Attorney Brady Henderson, who represents Anderson, said the case is asking the court to decide whether Elmbrook's mask policy can actually be applied as it was worded. According to the court filing, that policy had been filed under the student dress code, but it was meant to apply to all individuals on district property, and was applied 'in the event that a governmental agency declares a public health emergency due to a communicable disease.'

A status conference has been scheduled for 10 a.m. Nov. 22.

Elm Grove doctor named 2021 WEMSA Physician of the Year

Robinson commended for early efforts on COVID-19

ELM GROVE — Dr. Jon Robinson has been recognized as the 2021 Physician of the Year by the Wisconsin EMS Association.

Robinson organized a clinic that provided nearly 1,000 COVID-19 immunizations — including second doses — over three months. All vaccine doses were put to use. He's emphasized the importance of volunteers in making the effort possible. Many of the volunteers were from the Elm Grove Women's Club.



Robinson

Waukesha County Supervisor Thomas Michalski, who represents Elm Grove.

Robinson came to Elm Grove more than three decades ago and oversaw advancement of EMS ser-

"This was all done in the very early days of COVID-19 vaccinations, when it was difficult to get the vaccine," said

vices there. All village police are now at a minimum EMT-Basics and some have achieved the level of EMT-Paramedic. Robinson also became a fully sworn police officer and a member of the Walworth County SWAT Team and Milwaukee Fire Department Heavy Urban Rescue Team.

The award will be presented at the annual WEMSA conference Oct. 30 at the Central Wisconsin Convention Center in Rothschild.

SoHo Boutique opens third location in Galleria West

BROOKFIELD — A third location of SoHo Boutique by Stephanie Horne has opened in Galleria West Shopping Center on Bluemound Road in Brookfield.

SoHo specializes in women's fashion, health, wellness and beauty.

"It felt like a natural fit," said Horne about her decision to expand to Galleria

West, where SoHo Boutique occupies space off the Atrium. "We're already seeing great results as new and old customers visit us."

Horne also operates SoHo Boutique locations in Lake Geneva and Milwaukee's Third Ward. The Brookfield store is at 18900 W. Bluemound Road.

"Stephanie Horne brings

a wealth of experience and is a perfect complement to the other fine merchants at Galleria West," said Bill Bode, the center's managing partner.

Horne is an independent, local proprietor who has operated boutiques in the metro Milwaukee area for 16 years, often with her two daughters assisting her.

Packers and pumpkins



Photos by Derek Johnson/Special to The Freeman

TOWN OF BROOKFIELD — Steve Dahlke, who has been professionally carving pumpkins for 33 years, carves a face into a huge pumpkin at The Corners of Brookfield on Oct. 17. About 100 people gathered at The Corners, 20111 W. Bluemound Road, to watch the Packers game on a big outdoor screen and enjoy various fall-related treats on the perfect 60-degree fall day.



Lukas Schwendel, 3, catches a football ahead of the Green Bay Packers game at The Corners of Brookfield on Oct. 17.



Brandi Brutsche, her son Breckon and Kassidy Neer cheer on The Chicago Bears during the Green Bay Packers game on Oct. 17 at The Corners of Brookfield.



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Oxford House seeking partnership with county

Network assists with addiction recovery

By Jake Ekdahl
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WAUKESHA — Oxford House, a network of self-help and self-supporting drug free homes for recovering drug and alcohol addicts, is seeking to partner with Waukesha County to establish its services here.

At the county Mental Health Advisory Committee meeting Monday, Oxford House Outreach Worker Ryan Clevenger said his life has dramatically changed for the better because of Oxford House. Like all staff in the organization, Clevenger stayed in one of the homes himself as he sought to get sober, and he's been so for four years.

Oxford House, which has more than 3,000 locations across the country, already operates homes in Wisconsin; in Milwaukee, Green Bay, La Crosse and more. The concept comprises democratically run homes of six to 15 residents, some for men and others for women. Residents must work, do community service and pay for their living expenses through an Equal Expenses Shared model — they must also find a sponsor and attend weekly meetings.

There are a total of 28 Oxford House locations in Wisconsin with 210 beds. Clevenger said if Waukesha County chooses to contract with the organizations, county officials will be welcomed and encouraged to see the facilities themselves.

Clevenger said he got his personal addiction recovery in Waukesha and his sponsor is a Waukesha County resident. "I really love Waukesha," he said. He's now a Wisconsin certified and national certified peer specialist, and pursuing a college degree in social work.

Clevenger said Oxford House equips residents with practical skills like management of personal finances, too.

There's evident demand for Oxford House services. A house opened by the organization Sept. 15 filled up within a week, while a more recently opened one is already half full.

Research indicates the Oxford House model is working. A study from DePaul University tracked Oxford House residents for two years and found 87% of the 900 people surveyed remained clean and sober.

Because Oxford House homes emphasize self-sufficiency, partnering counties only have to cover technical

support staff costs; about \$110,000 results in an outreach worker capable of opening three to five houses per year.

New houses sometimes require a start-up loan of \$4,000 to \$6,000 to get established and furnished, but any furniture needing replacement later on is covered by residents. Clevenger said the organization recently partnered with Steinhafels for furniture, too.

Oxford House residents get involved with their local communities and give monthly progress reports about their activities. The West Allis and Greenfield fire departments both coordinate with Oxford House.

Clevenger emphasized the community benefits for Waukesha County if it chooses to partner with Oxford House. "It's something you guys would never regret," he said.

Mental Health Advisory Committee Co-chair TJ Findley said he feels "it sounds like a great operation."

Those seeking to connect with Oxford House services for themselves or someone they know can visit oxfordhouse.com to see current openings, while more information is available at oxfordhouse.com.

Brookfield Central alumnus hikes Appalachian Trail, raises funds for mental health

BROOKFIELD — A Brookfield Central 2015 graduate fulfilled a longtime goal this year of completing a hike through the Appalachian Trail, raising awareness and funds for mental health and suicide prevention.

According to the Elmbrook School District's Alumni Spotlight page, Sean Markey was actively involved in Cross Country; Jazz, Pep, and Marching Band; Tennis; Track and Field; Key Club; and he founded the ultimate frisbee club FrisBC. He thanked

Elmbrook teachers Jeff Gryzwa, Jason Gillette and Ronn Blaha for their "inspiration, encouragement, and involvement in the pursuits of their students."

"The friends and connections I made, opportunities for college-level courses and preparation, and involvement in a large assortment of extracurricular activities made my Elmbrook experience exceptional," Markey said. He studied geological engineering at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and graduated in 2019.

Markey began his Appalachian Trail hike on March 26 with the intention of raising awareness for mental health and funds for the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. He traveled 2,193 miles from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mount Katahdin in Maine. After six months, he finished his journey on Sept. 8. Throughout his hike, Markey raised a total of \$29,235 for AFSP.

To learn more about Markey's journey, visit: <https://rb.gy/h5oj8l>.

Many reasons contribute to Brookfield's success

By Mayor Steve Ponto



Ponto

I have long regarded Brookfield as a special place, which is why my wife and I decided to build our home here more than 30 years ago. We have raised two daughters here and now have three granddaughters nearby. There are a number of reasons I place such a high value on living in Brookfield and why I believe the community has been so successful over the years.

First. Brookfield has a great location. It is about 10 miles west of downtown Milwaukee along I-94. It is in Waukesha County which has historically had a good, responsible county government. It also has Bluemound Road which, as it runs through Brookfield, is one of the premier commercial corridors in Wisconsin. Bluemound Road has offices, retail, hotels and restaurants. The heavy traffic on Bluemound Road attests to its importance.

Second. The city of Brookfield, together with the village of Elm Grove, has the Elmbrook School District.

The district, which has consistently been ranked as one of the best in the state, was again ranked number one in Wisconsin earlier this month by Niche, a national academic ranking agency. Brookfield also has excellent private schools. Niche just rated Brookfield Academy as the number one private K-12 school in the state. Also, our community has several top-performing parochial elementary schools.

Third. Brookfield has a stable, competent and responsible city government which has set high standards throughout its history and has maintained them. The city government has been able to attract and retain top notch employees, who are committed to excellence in public service and typically stay with the city government for a large part of their careers.

Fourth. The Brookfield community has invested in a

wide variety of facilities which enhance the quality of life. Brookfield has 29 parks, a great public library, the beautiful Sharon Lynne Wilson Center for the Arts, and a state-of-the-art Brookfield Conference Center. It has also attracted popular commercial facilities such as Lifetime Fitness.

Fifth. Most importantly, Brookfield has an intelligent, well-educated and successful population which values the community and typically chose it as the place they wanted to raise their children. For those children, Brookfield is a great launching pad. The success of many of the young people who have grown up in Brookfield attests to this.

Because I am so enthusiastic about Brookfield as a great place to live, work and play, I am very grateful for the opportunity I have had to serve as an alderman for 12 years and as mayor for the last 11 and one-half years. Celebrate Brookfield!

(Steve Ponto is the mayor of Brookfield.)

Brookfield chamber adapts to changing world

By Carol White

The Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce is a not-for-profit organization that exemplifies the energy and vitality of the area's business climate. We are an autonomous business association that serves and supports the needs of our investors.

We recognize the critical link that economic development provides in keeping our community, county and region a competitive place to do business. We work with our chamber investors and other organizations to promote business creation and growth, increase employment, retain existing businesses and jobs, stimulate overall economic growth, and improve the quality of life not only in Brookfield, but in Waukesha County and our region. We recently

launched our social media campaign, "Taking It To The Streets Tuesday", highlighting new business development and business expansion in our area. This campaign has been well received not only by our investors, but the community as a whole. While our office is located in Brookfield, our membership spans from Mayville to Racine and Madison to Milwaukee, hence making our commitment to the region as a whole.

The Brookfield Chamber, during the early months of the pandemic, quickly shifted all programming to virtual and became a hub of connectivity for the business community. That shift, along with a heavy focus on being viewed as the "go to resource" for the most current of ever changing information, led us to grow by

140-plus new business members from January of 2020 through December 2020. Even as we have shifted much of our programming back to in person, we still regularly hear "thank you" for keeping the business community connected and being an integral resource during challenging times.

Always listening to our investors, new programming this year includes our non-profit network, and on the horizon our entrepreneurial assessment tool and a leadership development program for those seeking to be better leaders themselves and build stronger teams as well as those new to a leadership role.

(Carol White is the president/CEO of the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce.)

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