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## Lake Country THIS MONTH

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# WHO LET THE DOG OUT?

## Colt the Bat Dog delights both players and fans at Wisconsin Brewing Company Park

By Michael Grennell  
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OCONOMOWOC — In the 1997 movie “Air Bud,” Buddy the golden retriever is allowed to take to the court and play for the Timberwolves basketball team after the referee made the pivotal call, “Ain’t no rule says the dog can’t play basketball.”

Flash forward 25 years, and fans and players alike are finding out that at Wisconsin Brewing Company Park, there ain’t no rule says a dog can’t be on the field.

Lake Country DockHounds bat dog Colt has become a star at the ballpark this summer, as people throughout the stadium delight in watching Colt race out onto the field and retrieve bats discarded by DockHounds players. After cheers from the fans start to die down following a Lake Country hit, it’s not uncommon to hear a chorus of calls ring out around the stadium.

“Look!”

“Is that a dog out there?”

“Look he’s getting the bat!”

“Oh my gosh that’s so cute!”

“Oh look at that, that’s so cool!”

But Colt is not distracted by the calls from the stands. When he’s on the field and dons his Lake Country DockHounds vest, he’s all business.

It just so happens that it’s a job he loves doing.

“Before we started, there was another dog in a different state doing it, and I was like, ‘I bet you he could do it,’” Colt’s trainer Kate Bucci said. “We tried it one time and it stuck. From that point on he was good to go. So we just kept doing more and more games, and then he got more and more popular, and we just kept doing it because he loves doing it.”

Bucci, the owner of KC-K9 Academy Dog Training, said she first got Colt when he was 4 months old, and he first began acting as a bat dog when he was 3 years old. Now at age 7, Colt was already a seasoned pro before Bucci reached out to the DockHounds to see if they were interested in his services.

“We’ve been bat-dogging for another team, and when this team created itself it was very close to home,” Bucci said. “So I reached out and said, ‘Hey, this is what we do for



Freeman file photo

Colt races back to the DockHounds’ dugout with a bat during Lake Country’s home opener against the Winnipeg Goldeyes on May 20.

another team. You guys are really close to home, is this something that you would be interested in?” and they were like, ‘Yeah, for sure,’ and it kind of just took off from there.”

And according to Lake Country manager Jim Bennett, Colt has been a hit among his players.

“Colt is fun,” Bennett said. “My first question was, ‘Is he going to put a mark in the bat with his teeth?’ But Colt, man, he’s amazing. ... It’s fun to watch. It’s fun to have that in

our dugout.

“There is nothing negative about Colt being in there. As a manager, I’m always looking for (the negative) but it’s all positive for Colt. The guys love him. They’re always petting him, or they might rub their bat on his back for good luck or something. But we all embrace Colt and it’s been awesome having him.”

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### INSIDE



Arrowhead boys golf coach now pulls double-duty as girls coach

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I’m James Soneberg, a deputy sheriff with 25 years of service to the Waukesha County Sheriff’s Department. I’ve seen the best of this County, but I’ve also seen areas in need of improvement such as increased crime, the proliferation of drugs entering our community, and the growing mental health crisis. In short, I know the change our County needs and I’m ready to lead that future. That’s why I’m running for Sheriff of Waukesha County.

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# Lake Country Picnic Company serving luxury picnics

By Nikki Brahm  
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WAUKESHA — Anyone can grab a bottle of wine and a group of their best friends to enjoy a luxury picnic experience put on by the Lake Country Picnic Company.

What started as a side hustle for owner Ashley Kipp has now become a full-time business. Kipp said she was working a full-time job last year when she decided to finally pursue her business idea in the Milwaukee and Waukesha County area.

“I’ve always been very excited by event planning,” she said. “I’ve always worked for retail stores, that was kind of my passion before this. I was a visual manager at a store called Anthropologie. I did it for four years and I always had this idea of doing a luxury picnic pop-up. I’ve seen it on Pinterest, Instagram, kind of bigger cities are doing this.”

While working her full-time job, Kipp launched a Facebook advertisement and was able to book around seven picnics.

## Food

Kipp had been struggling with getting the food prepared for the events. Recently, she



Photo courtesy of Chris Kipp

Ashley Kipp, owner of Lake Country Picnic Company, sets up a luxury picnic.

joined Chef Pam’s Kitchen to rent out kitchen space and create more food options.

Graze platters, boxes and tables are available — which include meat, cheese, crackers, dips and fruit. There are also sandwich boxes. The table is a larger size usually available for corporate events.

She also has grab-and-go picnics available to order on her website and pick up in Waukesha or Nourish Organic Juice Bar, 612 Milwaukee St., Delafield.

At picnic events, Kipp doesn’t have her liquor license, so she is unable to provide alcohol. Kipp said if the event is taking place in someone’s backyard or home, which is approximately 90% of her bookings, they can provide their own alcohol. Events are also booked at area parks and rental spaces. Kipp also provides sparkling water and an ice bucket to events.

“I love just connecting with new people,” Kipp said. “One of the things too is my degree is fashion design ... I love making things beautiful and helping (people) celebrate special occasions.”

Kipp sets up for a variety of events and so far has mostly seen birthday parties and

ladies nights, but she’s open to any type of event. The picnic setup makes any event more of an intimate and meaningful experience, she said. Last summer Kipp also assisted with a marriage proposal, with a luxury picnic set up at the lakefront.

Kipp arrives approximately one hour before the event to set up the picnic. Her favorite part is revealing the picnic to the group that’s celebrating.

“I’ve always I guess had this side-hustle or entrepreneur spirit and I finally took the dive to make this a full-time opportunity and I feel like ever since I’ve been really growing the business ... I hope this is inspiration or motivation for somebody who is kind of in the same boat, maybe has a side hustle that they want to turn into a full-time job. I think do it — you only live once and I hope it blossoms.”

Kipp will be at the Belfre Kitchen Night Market in Delafield every Wednesday night with mini personalized charcuterie boxes and grab-and-go picnic basket bundles.

More information can be found on the Lake Country Picnic Company website at [www.lake-countrypicnicco.com](http://www.lake-countrypicnicco.com) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/LakeCountryPicnicCo](https://www.facebook.com/LakeCountryPicnicCo).

## Colt

From Page 1

Bennett added that this was the first time in his career that he had ever had a bat dog working out of his team’s dugout, although he has seen other teams use one before. And while that’s likely the case for many on the DockHounds, not only has outfielder Jake Snider worked with a bat dog before, Snider found himself reunited with a familiar face playing in Oconomowoc.

“He’s awesome. I actually had Colt (as bat dog) when I was in college playing summer ball in Madison in the Northwoods League,” Snider said. “Colt’s awesome and I love having him

out every day.”

But even without a previous connection, the players on the team have very quickly enjoyed Colt’s presence in the dugout.

“It’s cool to hear the fans’ reaction every time he runs out there to go grab a bat,” Lake Country outfielder Lamar Briggs said. “It’s always pretty cool to (see). They love him. Everybody loves him.”

Colt and Bucci don’t work at every DockHounds home game, but there are still opportunities for fans to see the duo at the ballpark this season. According to the DockHounds’ website, Colt’s next appearance will be on July 22 when Lake Country opens up a three-game series against the Lincoln Saltdogs. From there, Colt will make five more appear-

ances this season on Aug. 5, 9, 19, 26 and 28.

When the pair aren’t out at the ballpark on gameday, Colt serves as a demo dog to help promote Bucci’s Hartland-based business.

“He’s been my demo dog for years when I worked elsewhere, and now he’s our main demo dog for my company as well,” Bucci said. “We (KC-K9 Academy Dog Training) do general obedience, normal everyday behavior training. We do puppy raising, we do breed consultations if someone is looking to get a new puppy, nutrition training — we kind of do everything.”

Colt declined to answer any questions asked of him, although he did wag his tail when asked if he was a good boy.



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ARROWHEAD GIRLS GOLF

Andrews to lead Warhawks

AHS boys golf coach now pulls double-duty with girls

By Rob Reischel  
Freeman Correspondent

TOWN OF MERTON — Replacing an icon is a monumental task.

But Ryan Andrews already has some experience in that department. And that's why Arrowhead believes Andrews can do it with aplomb a second time, as well.

Andrews was named the new girls golf coach at Arrowhead recently. Andrews replaces veteran coach Mike Breaker, who led the Warhawks to four WIAA Division 1 state championships and four runner-up finishes during his 22 years at the helm.

Andrews also took over as the Warhawks' boys coach in 2020, replacing the legendary Greg Budzien. In nine seasons as Arrowhead's boys coach, Budzien guided the Warhawks to three state titles and two second place finishes.

Now, Andrews is in charge of both programs — and will aim to keep them at the lofty level of his predecessors.

"I'm very excited for this opportunity," Andrews said. "Coach Breaker built an outstanding program and I just want to continue the legacy of the program. Really, I'm just extremely excited."

Andrews was part of Budzien's staff for five seasons last decade. And Budzien believes Andrews is a natural to handle both jobs at AHS.

"He's a knowledgeable, approachable players' coach," Budzien said. "He was a good player himself, so he had credibility with the kids. He's fun and friendly, yet competitive and determined."

"The kids really relate to his low-key approach. He has a very dry sense of humor, which is a great asset either playing or coaching this crazy game. He doesn't take himself too seriously, but his competition should."

In many ways, Andrews was born to coach.

His father, Dave, was the club pro at Merrill Hills when Ryan was young. And by the time Andrews was 6 years old, he was golfing regularly.

Andrews enjoyed a solid career at Waukesha West, and helped the Wolverines reach the state tournament during his senior year of 2004. And after graduating with an English degree from Creighton University in 2008, Andrews moved back to the area and began assisting his father — who by then was the men's and women's coach at Carroll College.

"That's when I learned that I really liked coaching and being around the game," Andrews said of his time at Carroll. "I grew up around golf, then after high school, I wasn't on a team anymore. I really missed the camaraderie of golf and missed the competitiveness of the game I love."

Andrews was hired as an English teacher at Arrowhead in 2014, and immediately got his foot in the door of the Warhawks' golf programs.

He was the boys' freshman coach from 2015-18, coached JV for a season, then took over the varsity job in 2020 after Budzien retired. The 2020 campaign was canceled due to COVID-19, but Arrowhead finished fifth at state in 2021, then fell two strokes short of state this year at the 'Sectional of Death.'

On the girls' side, Andrews has been the JV coach since 2015 and helped develop many of the players that later led the Warhawks' varsity squad. Since 2015, Arrowhead's girls have won a pair of state titles, been second twice and have six top-five finishes at state.

"I'm definitely lucky to be part of what they have going on at Arrowhead," Andrews said. "It's a great district and a great golf community."

"We get a lot of people coming out (for the team) and it's a great environment to be a part of. Lake Country



Submitted photo  
AHS coach Ryan Andrews.

has so many great courses and club pros and a lot of great golfers. So it's just a lot of fun to be a part of that."

Andrews admits there's a good deal of pressure at Arrowhead — where expectations are always lofty. But he repeatedly uses words like "fun" and "enjoyment" when discussing the environment he likes to create for his players.

"I'm someone who wants to make having fun and enjoying the experience the most important thing for the kids," Andrews said. "If the kids aren't enjoying themselves, they can't play to the best of their abilities."

"Realistically, I know there's some pressure that's involved and that's a good thing. People care. This is something that's important to them."

It's also extremely important to Andrews — who now takes on the immense challenge of keeping both Arrowhead programs among the state's elite.

Budzien and Breaker oversaw annual powerhouses. Now, Andrews would love nothing more than to continue what his predecessors established.

"I feel very fortunate and grateful and I'm just excited for the opportunity," he said. "It's a great challenge, but we're going to build a love of the game with the kids and have that going through the whole program. Then hopefully that helps us have some really good teams."

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