



🛸 The FREEMAN

# HUMOR & FAITH

County Executive Farrow discusses cancer journey

RSRT STD S POSTAGE | AUKESHA, W RMIT NO. 3

By Karen Pilarski kpilarski@conleynet.com 262-513-2657

aukesha County Executive Paul Farrow is all about battling the budget constraints in Waukesha County and showing what the county has to offer.

On top of that he is fighting cancer. but with humor and faith he is coming back swinging

Farrow announced he was recently diagnosed with mucinous adenocarcinoma, a rare type of cancer.

"I'm going to be facing a journey like many people have. Unfortunately, mine's a little bit more public because of the position. I'm still going to be at the desk. I'm still going to be working as hard as I can. My appearance may be changing a little bit, but the attitude won't. And good news is I still get to drink Mountain Dew every now and then. So, I am looking forward to continuing to work as hard as I can to help all of you make Waukesha County a success. I ask for your prayers, if you have them, and just give me some encouragement as you see me through the hall and keep the jokes coming. I'm going to need them," Farrow said in a video announcement.

See FARROW, PAGE 3



Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow announced he was recently diagnosed with mucinous adenocarcinoma, a rare type of cancer. Humor and faith are two things Farrow plans to use to fight cancer.

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# **NEWSMAKER Q&A:** Amanda Payne New Waukesha County Business Alliance CEO puts emphasis on building strong relationships

WAUKESHA — Amanda Payne, president and CEO of the Waukesha County Business Alliance, has continued to grow and evolve during her 12 years with the alliance.

After 14 years as president and CEO of the Waukesha County Business Alliance, Suzanne Kelley announced in December 2023 she would retire. The Waukesha County Business Alliance board of directors unanimously voted Payne as president and CEO. Payne took over the helm in July and previously said her hope for the organization was to continue to focus on driving solutions, bringing people together to collaborate and serving as an advocate and a voice for the business community.

Payne said she strives every day to be a leader who inspires and empowers people to be the best that they can be.

The Freeman asked Payne questions about her career and advice to other business leaders. Here are her responses:

#### The FREEMAN: What inspired you to work for Waukesha County Business Alliance?

Payne: I was inspired to work at the Alliance because I'm incredibly passionate about Waukesha County and the power of business to drive economic growth. I am a fifth-generation Waukesha resident and believe in the continued success of Waukesha County. We have great history and tremendous potential.

#### **FREEMAN:** What skills and experience have shaped your career?

**Payne:** The experiences that have most impacted my career are the opportunities to work with — and learn from — other successful leaders. Some important skills I've learned along the way are lifelong learning, being willing to admit what

you don't know, the importance of communicating clearly, and how to build strong relationships. An important skill I've learned from others is the ability to have both strategic vision and tactical execution to make it happen.

#### **FREEMAN: What advice do** you give to businesses and leaders?

Payne: Challenge yourself daily, be open to change, be authentic, stay true to your values, always go above and beyond and don't be afraid to be bold. To businesses, my advice would be to continue building a culture that will attract and retain the very best employees. They are your greatest asset. My other advice would be to build a network of peers to share best practices and learn from one another.

#### **FREEMAN:** What is the most rewarding part of being in this type of work?

**Payne:** The unbelievable team we have at the Alliance. It's the most dedicated group of employees I've ever worked with. I am inspired every day by our members and the work they do. Getting to know the business community and serve them by working at a chamber of commerce is extremely rewarding. Being able to positively impact your community is an honor.

#### **FREEMAN: Describe your**self as a leader.

Payne: I strive to be a leader who inspires people, encourages innovation and new ideas, and empowers people to rise to the occasion. I'm also usually the one making a joke to lighten the mood.

#### **FREEMAN: Best advice** ever received?

Payne: When opportunity knocks, open the door and say yes. Always put your family first.



Photo courtesy Waukesha County Business Alliance

New Waukesha County Business Alliance CEO Amanda Payne.

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### **Biography**

Who: Amanda Payne Title: President & CEO, Waukesha **County Business Alliance** Age: 41

Work experience: I've been at the Alliance for 12 years and led public policy for the organization before becoming CEO. I also currently serve as church council president at Ascension Lutheran Church in Waukesha. In addition, I serve on the La Casa de Esperanza Leadership Advisory Board and WCTC's Applied AI Lab External Advisory Board. Prior to the Alliance, my experience was in public policy and public relations. Education: Bachelor's degree from Butler University Family: My husband, Mike, and I

have three boys (George - 9, Charlie -7, Michael -1)

### Get to know .... **Amanda Payne**

My greatest achievement is: being a mom. My favorite TV show is:

"The West Wing."

My favorite movie is: "Apollo 13." My favorite childhood memory is: spending summers at our family cottage in Oostburg and swimming in Lake Michigan.

The person I most admire is: My grandmother - she was smart, classy, generous, tough and had more passion and pride for Waukesha than anyone I've ever met. Three words people describe me are: enthusiastic, motivated, loyal. First job I ever had: My very first job was delivering the Waukesha Freeman when I was in 6th grade! The food I like best is: ice cream and homemade pizza.

My favorite hobby is: reading, running, building campfires and cheering for the Green Bay Packers. My favorite music group is: Dave Matthews Band.

My pets are: Max, golden retriever. My favorite vacation place is: Outer Banks in North Carolina. My favorite childhood toy was: Speak & Spell.

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Survey: Child care staffing shortages affects

# 33,000 kids in Wisconsin

by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families indicated that if Wisconsin's child care providers were fully staffed and able to operate at full capacity, they could serve up to 33,000 more kids.

DCF's Child Care Supply and Demand Survey found almost 60% of providers across the state have unutilized capacity, such as closed classrooms, due primarily to staff shortages.

'Working parents across our state depend on having high-quality, affordable child care so they can get to work and feed their families, but with providers closing their doors and reducing slots due to staffing, affordable child care is becoming harder and harder to find," said Gov. Tony Evers in a news release. "This is not sustainable. If we want to address our state's generational workforce challenges, we must make sure child care centers have the resources they need to keep their doors open, pay their staff fairly, and serve as many kids as possible. It's as simple as that.

The average salary for lead teachers is in 2021.

MADISON — A recent survey conducted \$13.55 per hour, which is less than half of the average hourly wage of \$28.34 for Wisconsin workers. That, along with few or no benefits, is resulting in employees leaving child care centers for other work. Waitlists continue to grow with about 48,000 kids on waitlists in Wisconsin.

"The fully-funded Child Care Counts Program provided crucial support for child care providers to avoid big tuition increases while recruiting and retaining qualified staff," said DCF Secretary Jeff Pertl. "Unfortunately, part of the large workforce shortage that we are seeing in this survey is a ripple effect of the Child Care Counts payments being cut in half and a preview of what we can expect should the program not receive state funding.'

With families already struggling to pay the current prices of child care, it is difficult for centers to raise rates. According to the news release, a report released from Forward Analytics showed that the average cost for newborn care in Wisconsin was between \$10,400 and \$13,572 annually

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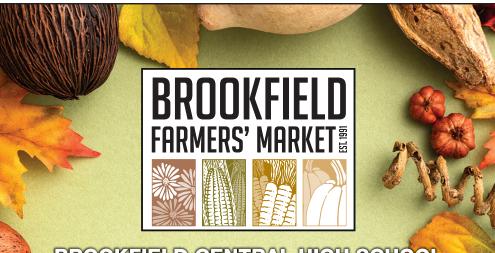
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## Waukesha County semifinalists in 2025 National Merit Scholarship announced

WAUKESHA COUNTY -Officials of the National confirm the student's earlier Merit Scholarship Corporation announced the names of more than 16,000 semifinalists in the 70th annual National Merit Scholarship Program. These high school seniors have an opportunity to continue in the competition for some 6,870 National Merit Scholarships worth nearly \$26 million that will be offered next spring.

The NMSC, a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance, was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Scholarship Program.

Over 1.3 million juniors in about 21,000 high schools entered the 2025 National Merit Scholarship Program by taking the 2023 Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, which served as an initial screen of program entrants. The nationwide pool of semifinalists, representing less than 1% of U.S. high school seniors, includes the highestscoring entrants in each state.

To become a finalist, the semifinalist and a high school official must submit a detailed scholarship application, in which they provide information about the semifinalist's academic record, participation in school and community activities, demonstrated leadership abilities, employment, and honors and awards received. A semifinalist must have an outstanding academic record throughout high school, be endorsed and recommended by a high school official, write an essay, and Jurss, Aaron

earn SAT or ACT scores that performance on the qualifying test.

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## County Board to vote on capital projects plan on Oct. 22

#### By Karen Pilarski kpilarski@conleynet.com 262-513-2657

WAUKESHA - The 2025-2029 Waukesha County Capital Plan focuses on the next construction phase for the courthouse renovation project, repaving, rehabilitation of county highways, improvements to park infrastructure and county facilities.

County Executive Paul Farrow submitted the plan to the County Board of Supervisors, who will vote on it during their Oct. 22 meeting.

"It's our duty to exercise prudent financial management to safeguard taxpayer dollars. However, it is equally important to invest in key infrastructure and communigrowth and enhance the quality of life for Berlin as part of a multiyear effort to improve multiple segments along this highway.

In addition, \$1.5 million will go toward replacing a salt dome which collapsed earlier this year.

The budget addresses increasing inmate population at the jail with \$250,000 toward a study to evaluate construction options. There is a total of \$470,000 budgeted to replace the roof and uninterruptible power supply at the Communication Center in 2025.

Design is underway for phase V of the Lake Country Trail, a 2.25-mile trail that would combine an off-road trail facility with on-road accommodations to link the Lake Country Trail at Roosevelt Park in ty improvements that will drive longterm Oconomowoc with the proposed Jefferson County Interurban Trail at the Waukesha-

our residents. Balancing fiscal responsibility with strategic investments ensures a project is largely funded through federal, prosperous future for Waukesha County," state, and local partnerships, with the Farrow said.

Some \$20.4 million is allocated for the 2025 Courthouse Project Step II. This phase will update security, refurbish the eastwest wing on the second floor and the existing County Board space. Additionally, it will update aging and outdated facility systems. Final funding is planned for 2026, with completion anticipated in 2027.

The 2025 Capital Projects Budget provides about \$5.2 million toward the rehabilitation of Moorland Road, between National and Cleveland Avenues in New

Jefferson County line. This \$2.0 million county's share at \$74,000. Construction is planned for 2026.

Naga-Waukee War Memorial and Moor Downs golf courses, Eble and Naga-Waukee ice arenas, and the Expo Center will also undergo infrastructure upgrades.

"In the past few years, we have seen costs increase faster than our revenue sources or tax levy limit can keep up with. This reality makes the need to shift things into the five-year capital plan a necessity for us to maintain the quality of services our county expects," Farrow said.

### Farrow From Page 1A

For four or five months he had been experiencing pain in his abdomen area.

"For me what I thought was just discomfort, either not good eating habits or just stress from different things, really was this manifesting, the pain I was getting from the cancer," Farrow said. He had some tests done to pinpoint the issue.

"On August 6, I had an attack and the pain was really harsh. I decided to go to the emergency room to be looked at. That is what led to the first CT scan that showed there was an anomaly in my abdomen," Farrow said.

The good news for him is that the organs are in good shape. The bad news is the cancer he has is outside of the organs and in the entire abdominal cavity.

His cancer is considered stage 4 and incurable, but the hope is to manage it.

"The goal right now with the chemotherapy I'm doing is to try to reduce the amount of cancer that is there. So potentially down the road they could do surgery to remove more of it and get it to the point where they can maintain it," Farrow said.

Farrow added it is his responsibility to educate people to understand what cancer can do, and how you can help those with cancer.

#### Treatment

The biggest challenge for the Farrow family is uncertainty of the future.

"After we get through this first round of treatments, I think we will have a better understanding of what the future holds," Farrow said.

The past few days have been good for him as he is on his off week of chemotherapy. He started his second chemo treatment recently with the plan of doing it for three months, every other week.

"They have come a long way in anticipat-ing some of the side effects and getting us prepared for it. Also looking at other types of medication such as anti-nausea as I'm getting chemo treatments," Farrow said.

The most impactful thing for him is sensitivity to cold.

"I'm an ice-water kind of guy. I would rather have more ice than water. I can't have any ice anymore. What it feels like is my entire tongue gets numb and feels like pins and needles going down my throat. I can tolerate cool," he said.

As a Mountain Dew drinker, Farrow now takes a drink out of the refrigerator and lets it stand for 15 minutes before partaking. He is only having one soda a day. Since July, Farrow has lost 20 pounds. The

challenge as he moves forward is to keep a consistent weight and not have rapid weight loss.

"That helps me maintain overall health better," Farrow said.

He hasn't lost any hair but a medicine he is on is designed to attack rapid-growing cells. Fast-growing cells also include skin and hair follicles.

'The medication doesn't differentiate between those. There is a possibility I'm going to lose my hair but for me it isn't a big issue. I embrace that this is something that

might happen," he said. Farrow joked how his brothers are rallying around him but vowed not to shave their heads in solidarity.

#### Humor and faith

Humor is the best medicine and he plans to inject funny things as much as he can.

Farrow said he has purchased T-shirts with funny messages such as "I purchased a chicken and an egg. I'll let you know.'

Farrow's sons and entire family are surrounding him with light and love.

He called his wife of 37 years, Amy, his anchor and said the key to getting through hard times is humor. Farrow said there are days you are going to cry but there are more days a person can laugh.

"She has been by my side through the dif-ferent challenges and opportunities that life brings us. We always joke about the roller coaster we are on. This is just another part of the ride," Farrow said.

In their bedroom is a sign that reads "Remember to kiss me goodnight."

'That is what we do every night," he said. The couple has always had a strong faith, and this experience is strengthening their faith.

"I've told a couple of people lately; look I didn't choose this path. I know the path that is chosen for me by God is one that he wants me to walk, if this is what it is," he said.

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# HAWS receives hurricane-displaced pets

WAUKESHA — HAWS, the Humane Animal Welfare Society of Waukesha County, welcomed a transport of shelter pets recently that have been affected by Hurricane Francine. In the aftermath of the hurricane, Greater Good Charities flew adoptables from Louisiana to both Pennsylvania and Wisconsin to find new homes.

Eighty-five pets were on the flight, which were unloaded at Waukesha's Crites Field. The animals will be shared between Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

"As always, the pets on this flight were already housed in shelters and available for adoption prior to the hurricane's landfall. No owned animals are part of this transport; local shelters are cleared via these transports to make room for emergency housing of the influx of owned pets, giving them the ability to reunite pets with their owners after the storm," HAWS said in a news release.

This flight is part of the Greater Good Charities Good Flights program. Local partner shelters receiving pets are HAWS, Elmbrook Humane Society, Humane Society of Jefferson County and Southern Wisconsin Humane Society. The shelters hoped to have these pets ready for adoption soon, after they have been evaluated and receive any additional medical care as needed.

This flight was supported by Tito's Handmade Vodka — the Vodka for Dog People. Greater Good Charities conducts life-saving airlifts and supports ground transport for at-risk and vulnerable pet populations with a heavy focus on disaster relief, homeless cats, asymptomatic heartworm-positive shelter dogs, and harder to place large dogs.

Learn more at greatergood.org.



Photos courtesy of Greater Good Charities Good Flights Greater Good Charities flew adoptable animals from Louisiana impacted by Hurricane Francine to both Pennsylvania and Wisconsin to find new homes.



Eighty-five pets were on a flight from Louisiana, which were unloaded at Waukesha's Crites Field. The animals will be shared between Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.



This hurricane-displaced pets flight is part of the Greater Good Charities Good Flights program. Local partner shelters receiving pets are HAWS, Elmbrook Humane Society, Humane Society of Jefferson County and Southern Wisconsin Humane Society.

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