

# HUMOR & FAITH

County Executive Farrow discusses cancer journey

By Karen Pilarski  
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Waukesha 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.

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



Photo courtesy of Hillary Mintz/Waukesha County Executive's Office

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.

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 anticipating 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.

See FARROW, PAGE 3

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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 yourself 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.

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.

Construction ongoing on former Thomas Farm property

TOWN OF DELAFIELD — Construction is under way on the Welshire Farm project (formerly Thomas Farm properties) in the Town of Delafield. The residential development will be done in phases, beginning on the west side of the property with 10 condominium duplexes and 45 single-family homes planned.

In January, the Town of Delafield rezoned the Thomas family farm properties from agricultural to planned district development to make room for 212 living units. The development is bordered by Interstate 94 to the south and Elmhurst Road to the east. Some residences will be very close to, but not on, Pewaukee Lake.

Neumann Developments is spearheading the Welshire Farm subdivision that will include single-family homesites on quarter-, third-, and half-acre lots and side-by-side condominiums. Amenities include 40 acres of preserved land for neighborhood trails and green space. The developer took ownership of the 150-acre parcel of land on May 17 for a total of \$6.4 million.

The Delafield Town Board approved plans for the subdivision at its June 25 meeting. At that time, Neumann Developments said it anticipates building roughly 30 homes annually, with the subdivision completely finished in six or seven years.



Cole Vandermause/Freeman Staff

Work has begun on the future site of the Welshire Farm development on the former Thomas Farm property in the Town of Delafield, just west of the Western Lakes Golf Club.

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Photos courtesy of Lake Country Fire & Rescue  
Pictured from left to right are: Lake Country Fire & Rescue Deputy Chief Josh Peterson, Capt. Keri Keller, Lt. Sam Chaput, Firefighter EMT Jens Wolbier and Firefighter EMT Russel Culhane.

## Lake Country Fire & Rescue announces promotions, hires

DELAFIELD — Lake Country Fire & Rescue has announced two additions to the department and three promotions. Deputy Chief Josh Peterson will lead LCFR's training division and most recently served as captain at Station 31. Capt. Keri Keller will lead the Lake Country Fire & Rescue Training Center and joins the department from Western Lakes Fire District. Lt. Sam Chaput begins his leadership role at Station 42 after working for LCFR for several years as a firefighter paramedic. Firefighter EMT Jens Wolbier, who has been with LCFR for several years part time, is now full time with the department. Firefighter EMT Russel Culhane begins his career with LCFR after being at Western Lakes. "We are thankful for the commitment and professionalism of all of these new and developing members and look forward with great anticipation as they continue their careers with us," reads a Facebook post from LCFR.

## SCENES FROM THE PAST



From the Freeman negatives at the Waukesha County Museum

### Contact penalty

"Mrs. Leslie Strohm, with sons Bill, 3, and Tom, 16, had no luck" Oct. 3, 1963, as evidenced by this photo in the next day's Freeman, "in a search for a contact lens lost by Tom when he hit a tackling dummy at football practice. The impact popped the lens from Tom's eye and sent it into the sawdust in the south campus tackling pit. A group of players searched for the lens and (Oct. 3) Mrs. Strohm made an effort but like the oft-told story of the haystack and the needle, the search was fruitless. Replacement value of the lens without insurance is around \$50. With insurance it varies up to \$10. (The) Strohm's are using (a) household screen to sift sand in (the) picture," the Freeman reported.

### Farrow

From Page 1A

"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 different 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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# Tall Pines Conservancy director retiring, Fedak to assume role

NASHOTAH — Tall Pines Conservancy Executive Director Susan Buchanan will retire before the end of the year and Rebecca Fedak will take over the role, according to a news release.

The Nashotah-based nonprofit focuses on preserving farmlands, water resources, and natural spaces in Waukesha, Dodge, and Washington counties. The land trust has nearly 3,000 acres under protection. Land trusts are private, community-based, nonprofit organizations established to protect land and water resources for public benefit and from future development.

Since being named executive director of Tall Pines Conservancy in 2008, Buchanan has overseen the organization



Buchanan



Fedak

achieving national Land Trust Accreditation, the highest national mark of distinction, and increased the number of acres under its protection from about 200 to more than 2,700 today with another 1,600

acres forthcoming.

Buchanan also formed a number of critical partnerships and programs at the state and regional levels including the Oconomowoc Watershed Protection Program, Lake Country Clean Waters and Farmers for Lake Country. Additionally, she has secured more than \$11 million in private, state, and federal funding for farmland protection and developed the annual Ride to the Barns bicycling fundraiser that brings hundreds of riders each year to area farms.

“With Susan at the helm, Tall Pines has evolved into one of Wisconsin’s most well-respected and successful land trusts and has garnered both a national and statewide reputation as a leader in land protection,” Tall Pines Board of Directors Chair Kyle Zwieg said. He is the co-owner of Zwieg’s Maple Acres, a sixth-generation family farm.

Fedak will start her role as Tall Pines’ executive director later this month and will work alongside Buchanan through the end of the year to ensure a smooth leadership transition. Most recently, Fedak was the Lake Michigan unit manager for the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources Office of Great Waters where she managed dozens of environmental restoration projects in partnership with agencies, nonprofits, and private entities at the federal, state, and local levels. Additionally, Fedak, who grew up in Hartland, is a farm owner. She and her husband, together with her parents, steward a nearly 100-acre farm where they are actively restoring wetlands, meadows, and prairie while also working with Tall Pines to preserve the property.

Before joining the DNR in 2019, Fedak was a partner and senior engineer for Brendle Group, a Colorado sustainability consulting firm where she led the water and climate practice areas. Prior to that she was co-founder and technical director for Running Water International, a social enterprise that brings open-source water and sanitation technologies to developing countries.



Courtesy of Shiflet Photography

Brianna Boucher of Hartland won the world championship title for her class at The World’s Championship Horse Show in Louisville, Ky.

# A LAST-MINUTE RIDE

## Hartland teen wins title at international horse show

By Dan Muckelbauer  
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HARTLAND — A ride on an unfamiliar horse paid off for a 14-year-old Hartland girl at a prestigious horse riding show in Louisville, Ky.

Brianna Boucher won the world championship title for her class at The World’s Championship Horse Show last month on an American saddlebred owned by Nancy Rothe-Egezeino of Genesee.

Another rider was supposed to show Guinness, who the owner leases to riders at Highland Ridge Stables in Watertown, said Brianna Boucher and her mom, Jill Boucher.

“She literally practiced on Guinness twice before we got to the competition,” Jill Boucher said.

It took place during the Kentucky State Fair, a state known for its quality

and love of horses.

While the Lake Country Lutheran High School freshman “thought it was going to go well,” she said she was hoping for just a good ride against highly competitive show horses, not the title in the country pleasure 13 and under championship class.

“I think he likes showing,” Brianna Boucher said of the veteran show horse, Guinness. “He was listening.”

“We’re very proud of Brianna and Guinness,” Sarah McClintock, owner of and trainer at Highland Ridge Stables, said in a news release. “Brianna’s worked hard all season to prepare for this show with her own horses. But, to enter the ring on a horse she’s only rode twice and take a world championship title is unheard of and so special.”

Boucher said she rides twice a week, once in private lessons with McClintock or trainer Gabby Greco and again

in group lessons with 12-16 other riders at the stables.

Riding since she was 6, Boucher has been competitively showing American saddlebred horses with Highland Ridge Stables since she was 8. She entered The World’s Championship Horse Show to compete with her own horse, Ali, and took reserve champion in the 13 and under, five-gaited class with her 8-year-old, chestnut mare.

One of the goals of riding American saddlebred is to show off the horse’s gaits, kind of like gears in a manual car.

While Boucher likes competition and riding her horses, including her other show horse, Topsy, she likes riding other people’s horses. “It’s something different,” she said.

It’s not just the horses that she likes. “I like the community. Even if we’re all competing,” she said. “You make a lot of friends through it, too.”



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