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FEBRUARY 2025

Lake Country

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Keeping the faith

Paul Farrow gives update on cancer battle

By Karen Pilarski
kpilarski@conley.net.com
262-513-2657

WAUKESHA — Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow is celebrating big wins such as a new grandchild this summer and playing Hot Wheels with his young grandson and relishing the small ones such as the possibility of drinking ice water in the near future.

It is his strong faith, family, friends and colleagues, and most of all humor, that have helped him immensely.

In September, Farrow announced he was diagnosed with mucinous adenocarcinoma, a rare type of cancer. His cancer is considered stage 4 and incurable, but the hope is to manage it.

Farrow recently completed his eighth round of chemotherapy and is in a holding pattern. The surgeon needs several weeks from the last chemo treatment for the medications to be out of his system. In March, he will undergo CRS-HIPEC (cytoreductive surgery and hyperthermic intraperitoneal chemotherapy), which is a surgery that treats abdominal cancers that have spread to the lining of the abdomen.



Courtesy of Waukesha County Executive's Office

Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow continues to hold on to his strong faith, family, friends and colleagues, and most of all humor during his cancer battle. In September, Farrow announced he was diagnosed with mucinous adenocarcinoma, a rare type of cancer. His cancer is considered stage 4 and incurable, but the hope is to manage it.

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County sales tax is officially dead

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

WAUKESHA — Waukesha County Executive Paul Farrow on Jan. 28 announced the sales tax ordinance proposed in October is now officially dead. Farrow spoke in front of the County Board of Supervisors on Jan. 28, a news release said.

Farrow previously introduced a proposed ordinance to authorize a 0.5% county sales tax to be added to the existing state sales and use tax of 5%. Under the proposal, the sales tax was scheduled to take effect July 1, 2025. Farrow said state revenue limits and the shared revenue formula have left Waukesha County with a “persistent \$5 million annual budget shortfall,” and a sales tax would alleviate that and provide property tax relief. The County Board was scheduled to vote on

the proposal in October but it was removed from the agenda shortly before the meeting.

There was a huge outcry from people in the county over the proposal.

Then-District Attorney Sue Oppen, Waukesha County Sheriff Eric Severson and County Clerk Meg Wartman all announced their public support to implement the sales tax. The Waukesha County Business Alliance encouraged the County Board to “slow down” and evaluate the proposal.

“Over the next two years, I will collaborate with local legislators, legislative leaders and the Waukesha County Business Alliance during the state’s legislative sessions to optimize revenue generating options for counties and minimize unfunded state mandates,” Farrow said.

The Waukesha County Board unanimously passed a resolution in December

asking the state to examine the lack of funding Waukesha County receives to pay for mandated services. Supervisors are encouraging residents to contact their state representatives regarding the matter.

“Despite being home to a significant portion of the state’s population, Waukesha County ranks second-to-last in per capita state funding among Wisconsin’s 72 counties. This lack of state support makes it difficult for the county to meet its residents’ needs,” a news release said.

In addition to working with local lawmakers, Farrow discussed a multi-pronged strategy that focuses on partnering with the business community, looking into significant service cuts and communicating with the public for more transparency into “what their county government does, how it impacts their lives, and how critical services are prioritized and funded,” a news release said.

“Waukesha County is the lowest spending county per capita statewide and among only two counties that has not implemented a county sales tax. 44% of all county property tax dollars collected from Waukesha County residents, or about \$51 million in our 2025 budget, covers the portion of mandated programs that the state failed to fund. The county would prefer to use \$51 million to pay for our Sheriff’s Department, 9-1-1 dispatch, or other vital county services,” the release said.

“On the one hand we have residents demanding high quality services, good roads, and safe communities and on the other hand we have many people who feel like they are already taxed too much and don’t want to pay more of their hard-earned money to the County, or any other government, so we have to find the right balance,” Farrow said.

LCL varsity dance team takes 3rd at WACPC State Dance competition

HARTLAND — For the first time in Lake Country Lutheran High School Varsity Dance Team history, the team made it to the podium with a third-place finish in D6 Pom at the Wisconsin Association of Cheer & Pom Coaches State Dance competition in January in La Crosse.

“The WACPC, Inc. organization consists of coaches from the state of Wisconsin who share a common goal of promoting and improving their leadership role in the sports of cheer and dance. As the link between spirit coaches and the WIAA, WACPC has a strong impact upon decisions affecting all Wisconsin cheer and dance programs,” according to the WACPC website.

There were 14 teams total that made it to state from the two regional events the weekend prior.

In addition, Elliana Fischer (senior) and Hannah Frahm (junior) competed their solos and made the All-State team. This is the third time making the All-State team for Fischer and second for Frahm. Front row, from left: Jillian Snyder, Lillian Wehmeier, Camryn Aldrich, Caylie Irish, Amber Hanson and Coach Nikki Hutsen; and back row, from left: Isabella Silva, Hannah Frahm, Eva DeWitz, Elliana Fischer, Maya Lauterbach and Brooklyn Schmidt.



Photo courtesy Lake Country Lutheran High School

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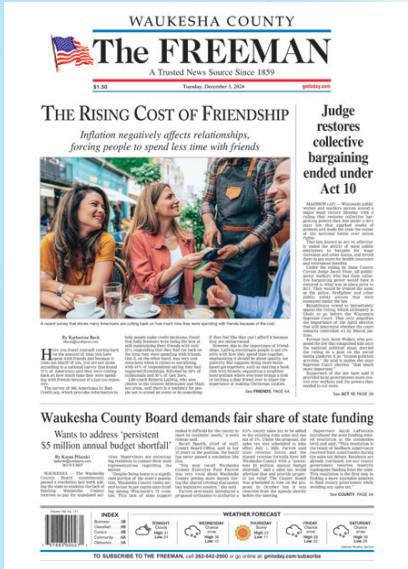


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NEWSMAKER Q&A: Jeff Knutson

Pewaukee village president discusses local government

PEWAUKEE — For many years, **Jeff Knutson** has striven to lead by example as Pewaukee village president. After getting involved in local government in order to address issues he identified, Knutson said he continues to find it rewarding to help Pewaukee be a great place to live.

The Freeman asked Knutson questions about the village, his leadership and goals. Here are his responses:

The FREEMAN: What inspired you to go into local government?
JEFF KNUTSON: Previous village president saw I had issues with what was going on and said to me “instead of complaining, get involved.”

FREEMAN: How has local government changed over the years?
KNUTSON: The village and City of Pewaukee are working together whenever possible and with surrounding communities.

FREEMAN: Describe your typical day.
KNUTSON: Except for Mondays, my day starts out with scripture reading and prayers, reading emails, texts, answering if needed, talking with staff when needed, helping around the house. Mondays usually start with meeting with village administrator about the village and upcoming meeting(s).

FREEMAN: What is the most rewarding part of being in this type of work?
KNUTSON: Seeing what we are

Biography

Who: Jeffrey J. Knutson
What: Pewaukee village president
Age: 73
Work experience: Business owner, sales representative, maintain lawns at my church
Education: Some college
Family: Wife, three step-daughters, seven grandchildren and three great-grandchildren

doing to improve the quality of life for the village residents and helping when I can to solve issues. Working with people on the boards, DPW, PD, and staff that really care about the community like I do.

FREEMAN: Describe yourself as a leader.
KNUTSON: I listen to what other people say (even though I’m always right. LOL) before speaking. I try to put people on boards and in groups that they excel at. By letting them know I will always have their backs, makes for a very cohesive group of individuals. The buck, as they say, always stops at the top.

FREEMAN: Best advice ever received?
KNUTSON: We are not perfect, so a mistake could happen. The main thing is that we learn from it and move forward. Again make sure you have their backs when you ask them to get involved.



Jeff Knutson

Get to know ...

Jeff Knutson

My greatest achievements are: Getting Costco in the village, working with developers for new development. My family.

My favorite TV shows are: “Blue Bloods,” “Yellowstone”

My favorite movie is: Westerns

My favorite actors are: Tom Selleck, John Wayne

My favorite actresses are: Kelly Reilly (Beth on “Yellowstone”), Lauren Bacall

My favorite childhood memories are: Working with my dad. Our Knutson family parties.

The person I most admire is: My dad (Pop)

Three words people describe me are: Driven, dedicated, optimistic

The worst job I had as a teenager: Working in a foundry

The food I like best is: Pork (bacon)

My favorite hobby is: Cars and trucks

My favorite music groups are: ABBA, Moody Blues

My pets are: None

My favorite vacation places are: Florida, Out West

My favorite childhood toy was: BB gun (I didn’t shoot my eye out)

Farrow

From Page 1

“It’s a two-week recovery in the hospital and three- to six-month recovery overall until I’m back to feeling like I did in 2023, which is how I always joke about it,” Farrow said.

Since being diagnosed he said there are tell-tale signs of the week of chemo and the week he is off. During the chemo weeks he goes Monday through Wednesday to get the medications. Thursday and Friday have been designated to catch up on emails and have meetings.

“The last three chemo sessions have completely drained me. To the point where I slept the entire day. The challenge is some of the side effects. My weight has fluctuated; it goes up and down as the medication side effects wear off,” he said.

Some side effects have been intolerance to cold and lack of taste. On non-treatment weeks he can eat more.

“It is amazing the difference from the last 48 hours. (Recently), I went for a quick event and slept for four hours. Today I feel fine, I feel good. There are a lot of things I’m going to get going through for the county. I have the energy to do it. I’m taking the energy where I can, when I can to do it,” Farrow said.

Farrow has heard from other cancer patients that every cancer patient is different. He recalled bracing people in September that his appearance may change; he may lose his hair.

“I was assuming I was going to lose my hair. That side effect from the chemotherapy hasn’t acted. My hair is a little more brittle, but I haven’t lost it. People joke with me that I look great. Looks are deceiving,” he said.

In Farrow’s life there is the public persona to go to events to be active but as soon as he gets back in the car, he feels tired.

“There are times when my wife (Amy Farrow) drove me to a few events and I told her she had to drive home because I’m going to just lay here and fall asleep,” he said.

The challenge for people is that they are not seeing physically what is happening. There isn’t a cast on or tubes hanging from him.

While he hasn’t lost his hair, which is a common perception of cancer patients, Farrow said there are still a ton of issues.

On the flip side, he appreciates his family such as his brothers not treating him any differently due to his health. His brothers will still play around as if nothing is wrong. Farrow also is grateful for his wife who listens to him vent or become emotional in the quiet moments at night.

Farrow’s faith while fighting cancer has inspired him to be more open to people.

“There are so many people who are going through things. It may be cancer or mental health or other family challenges. You don’t know why they are acting the way they are. I’ve spoken to people who have been very disgruntled and after five minutes you realize they are not mad at you but at the situation. They just needed to talk about it,” Farrow said.

What he uses to help him deal with his own battle is a sense of humor. Farrow, who is very open about his illness, posts videos during treatment wearing funny T-shirts. One said, “I’m only here for the alibi” or “I’m here, you’re welcome.”

“The biggest thing for me is my sense of humor, which has kept me going,” Farrow said.

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KM student nominated for national award for her monster art piece

WALES — A Kettle Moraine High School student’s art piece has been nominated for a National Scholastic American Visions award. Student Sadie Groskruetz won a Gold Key in the Scholastic Art & Writing Contest. She was recently nominated for the National Scholastic American Visions Award for her piece “Mr. Fluff Butt.” “I made this giant textured monster because I was in an art museum and was a little irritated that I couldn’t physically touch and interact with any of the art. I wanted this to be a piece that promoted audience interaction with art. I want people to feel all the textures and fabrics and hopefully appreciate it with more than one sense. There is a ‘Please Touch Me!’ sign that goes with this piece, which ironically, the Museum chose not to include with the displayed piece,” Groskruetz said. The Kettle Moraine School District said Wisconsin regional judges select five superior works from the Gold Key winners as nominees for the American Visions Award medal. National judges then award one outstanding artwork from each regional exhibition. Groskruetz’s piece is one of five pieces nominated from the Wisconsin region. That is one piece out of 2,500 (estimated), and 1 out of 150 Gold Keys awarded. There are only 250 nominees nationwide, the district said.



Kettle Moraine High School student Sadie Groskruetz was recently nominated for the National Scholastic American Visions Award for her piece “Mr. Fluff Butt.”

Courtesy of Kettle Moraine School District

Waukesha County Fair announces first performer: Justin Moore

WAUKESHA — The first headliner announced for the 2025 Waukesha County Fair is country musician Justin Moore, whose hit songs include “Small Town USA” and “Till My Last Day.” Moore will perform the second night of the fair, July 17, at 8 p.m. on the Miller Lite Main Stage. “We couldn’t be more excited to have Justin Moore take the stage at the Waukesha County Fair this summer for an unbelievable night of country music, dancing, memories, good ol’ fashion fun and more. Justin is an incredible entertainer who pours his heart and energy out on the stage. There’s no doubt, it’s going to be one amazing evening for all,” said Chrissy Gluege, executive director of the Waukesha County Fair. As a Valory Music Co. recording artist, Moore

has earned multiple award nominations from the Academy of Country Music, American Country Awards, Country Music Television, People’s Choice, and American Country Countdown, as well as an ACM Award win. All Miller Lite Main Stage shows are free with fair admission; ELITE VIP (\$100) and VIP seating (\$50) are available for an additional charge. Tickets will go on sale at 9 a.m. Tuesday. The Waukesha County Fair runs July 16 through July 20 on the Waukesha County Fairgrounds, 1000 Northview Road, Waukesha. For more information, visit www.waukeshacountyfair.com.



Photo courtesy of Waukesha County Fair

Country musician Justin Moore will perform at 8 p.m. July 17 at the Waukesha County Fair on the Miller Lite Main Stage.



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