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Friends have played cards for decades



Karen Pilarski/Freeman Staff

Longtime friends Marcia Walder and Jackie Krueger discuss card game techniques recently in Pewaukee. A group of women play cards each month and spend several hours together.

By Karen Pilarski
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PEWAUKEE — In Waukesha County a group of friends have what youngsters coined “squad goals.” The term means what you hope the group will accomplish or aspire to. For these humble ladies, they just enjoy each other’s presence and winning a

few nickels during a hand doesn’t hurt. A snowstorm caused a previous card game to be cancelled, but the next time everyone was ready to deal and play. Coffee was poured into teacups and snacks such as cheese, fruit and homemade apple pie were offered. Bonnie Sewell has played cards, particularly bridge, for over 50 years with the same group. There are only three members of the

original group left. While some have passed away or moved away, the “squad goals” have remained the same, which is to cherish their time together. Bonnie said the original group lived near each other in Brookfield and took bridge lessons together. Now, things have changed logistically.

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Whether it's a social gathering, a wellness workshop, or a fun outing, we've got it covered! Our goal is to help foster connection, support, and inclusive experiences for everyone in our community.

Check out the calendar, stay updated on upcoming events, and be sure to share with friends and loved ones who might benefit!



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Waukesha Rotary BluesFest announces 2025 headliners

WAUKESHA — It is time to start thinking about the summer, which means Waukesha Rotary Bluesfest. The 2025 headliners for the event at Naga-Waukee Park have been announced as Mitch Ryder and Marcia Ball.

At 8:30 p.m. Aug. 8, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels will perform. “With his band, Mitch Ryder & The Detroit Wheels, he had his first hit in 1965 with ‘Jenny Take a Ride!’ Two years later, he tried it solo, but the hoped-for success failed to materialize. In the ‘70s, he became famous through his legendary appearance on the WDR Rockpalast night. True and beautiful, with that certain dirt and whiskey in his voice, that’s real rhythm & blues and that’s exactly what Mitch Ryder does,” a news release said. His new studio album ‘With Love’ was recorded in Detroit in August 2024.

At 8:30 p.m. on Aug. 9, Marcia Ball with The Jimmys will perform

“The 2018 Texas State Musician of The Year has won worldwide fame and countless fans for her ability to ignite a full-scale roadhouse party every time she takes the stage. Born in Orange, Texas and raised in Vinton, Louisiana, her Acadian heritage and a lifetime of absorbing Gulf Coast rhythm and blues is evident in her original songs and the classics she chooses to cover. Ball brings her unique musical gumbo to Waukesha Rotary BluesFest with the backing of Wisconsin favorites, The Jimmys,” the release said.

Tickets go on sale May 1. For additional information on Waukesha Rotary BluesFest, visit www.waukeshabluesfest.com, email info@waukeshabluesfest.com, or call 1-800-366-1961. Proceeds from Waukesha Rotary BluesFest go back into the community through the Waukesha Rotary Club Charitable Fund, Inc.



Photos courtesy of Waukesha Rotary BluesFest

Mitch Ryder is one of the headliners for the 2025 Waukesha Rotary BluesFest in August.



Marcia Ball will headline the 2025 Waukesha Rotary BluesFest on Aug. 9.

Night Ranger to perform at Waukesha County Fair

WAUKESHA — Taking the Miller Lite Main Stage during Saturday night of the annual Waukesha County Fair this summer will be rockers Night Ranger.

The band will perform at 8 p.m. July 19. Tickets are on sale. All

Miller Lite Main Stage shows are free with fair admission, but up-front ELITE VIP and VIP seating are available for an additional cost.

ELITE VIP tickets for Night Ranger are \$80 (180 available) and VIP tickets are \$40 (820 available).

ELITE VIP tickets include fair admission, preferred parking, two drink tickets, and assigned seating in the front six rows. VIP tickets include first-come, first-serve seating in a designated area in front of the stage. Admission is not includ-

ed. Night Ranger recently released a new live album called “40 Years and a Night with Contemporary Youth Orchestra.” Some of their hits were “Sister Christian,” “(You Can Still) Rock In America,” and “Don’t Tell

Me You Love Me.” The Waukesha County Fair will run July 16 to July 20 at Waukesha County Fairgrounds, 1000 Northview Road, Waukesha. For more information, go to www.waukeshacountyfair.com.

Cards

From Page 1

“Because age is catching up with us, some of us can’t navigate the stairs and I’m one of them; we go to restaurants,” Bonnie said.

Due to not having the correct number of players, the ladies often play different card games.

The oldest player is Daisy Kreznar, 96, who is still sharp as a tack, according to her friend Bonnie.

The ladies reminisce about days gone by such as living near each other at one time or the days of piling the kids in the car without seatbelts. Bonnie remembered going into labor after visiting Joyce’s house while pregnant with twins.

Daisy recalled playing cards when she was a teenager with her mother. As the years went by, she would enjoy trips to Las Vegas with one of her adult children.

“I like to gamble, and I like to play cards,” Daisy said.

At one point Daisy belonged to three bridge clubs at one time.

How to be friends forever

The ladies have different faiths, backgrounds and views but don’t dwell on differences. They are genuinely excited to sit down with a cup of coffee and chat about their lives.

There is no competitiveness during card games.

Marcia Walder said she would go home, and her husband would ask if she won or lost. She just knew how much money she had come home with. It didn’t matter who won or lost.

Even after all these years, the ladies learn something new about each other. Jackie Krueger discussed how she came to the U.S. from Europe when she was a girl. She told them how she had to learn English. Her older brother recently passed away, something some of the ladies were surprised to hear about. Another tidbit was that Marcia and her late husband owned a successful Walder Home Bakery in West Allis.

They like to share stories both good and not-so-good ones and retell others.

“We just talk like crazy and share our families, our aches and pains. All that good stuff,” Marilyn O’Neil said.

The women said it is important to note that the monthly card games give everyone something to look forward to, which is very important. They added how the key to having a long-lasting friendship is to keep in touch.

What the women love is the camaraderie and the long friendships.

“We love the friendships, and the second best is playing cards,” Jackie said.

Marcia described it as putting on an old pair of shoes; it feels very comfortable.



Karen Pilarski/Freeman Staff

Some members of the friend group have played, particularly bridge, for over 50 years together. There are only three of the original group members left. While some have passed away or moved away, the “squad goals” have remained the same, which is to cherish their time together.

NEWSMAKER Q&A: Derrick Green

Executive director of Hartland Chamber talks transition, new ideas and impact

By Karen Pilarski
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262-513-2657

HARTLAND — Besides marrying his wife, **Derrick Green**, executive director of the Hartland Chamber of Commerce, said his biggest accomplishment has been landing his current role in Hartland and leading the Hartland Chamber of Commerce.

While the chamber is in a transitional phase, he is eager to learn and soak up all he can to see the organization thrive for the people of Hartland. The Freeman asked Green questions about his leadership skills, what the chamber does, and what is coming up in the area. Here are his responses:

The FREEMAN: What types of events or new businesses are coming to Hartland?

Derrick Green: The Hartland Chamber, alongside the Village of Hartland and the Business Improvement District, has already built a strong lineup of events. We're now focused on enhancing our net-working events by incorporating continued education opportunities for local businesses. Additionally, we're developing business-focused community initiatives like resume-building workshops and hiring events to support both businesses and job seekers. We're also exploring new ways to collaborate with the village to create engaging events that highlight and drive more attention to Hartland's incredible local businesses.

FREEMAN: What does Hartland do well? Where would you like more focus?

Green: Hartland is an incredible community filled with passionate business leaders and changemakers. From impactful events like The Wall That Heals, Hartland Lights, Bark River Bash and the Hometown Celebration, to the outstanding local restaurants and bars — Palmer's Steakhouse, Zesti, Beer Snobs, Duke's, Tabi's Lake Country, and the newly renovated The Inn, just to name a few. Hartland thrives on its vibrant local scene. Beyond that, our community-driven organizations, like the Hartland Area Food Pantry and Lake Country Caring, truly showcase the heart of Hartland.

Hartland's greatest strength is its sense of community, and I'm excited to see that energy continue to grow and strengthen in the years ahead.

FREEMAN: What does the Chamber do?

Green: The Chamber's primary focus is supporting local businesses, and we do that through three key objectives:

- Providing continued business education for our members and partners.
- Promoting and supporting local businesses both within and beyond the community.
- Facilitating connections to drive business-to-business and business-to-consumer relationships.

We achieve this through dynamic net-working events that blend education with opportunities to connect. We're also expanding our community events to deepen local engagement.

To further support our businesses, we offer unique advertising and sponsorship opportunities, and we're launching a stronger social media presence — including videos, podcasts, and more — to expand their reach. Additionally, we're building partnerships beyond Hartland to create new connections and starting a Continued Education series to provide even more value to our members and community.

FREEMAN: How did you get into this field?

Green: My passion is rooted in small and local businesses. I'm most motivated by building systems and finding ways to help businesses operate more efficiently and, most importantly, grow.

My love for entrepreneurship is what led me to this role and this field, and I'm excited to use that passion to support and strengthen our local business community.



Derrick Green

Biography

Who: Derrick Alan Skivington-Green

What: Executive director for the Hartland Area Chamber of Commerce

Age: 29

Work experience: I have over a decade of experience in professional sales, spanning multiple industries. My career began with owning a shoe store in Omaha, Nebraska, before transitioning into tech sales at Toast Inc. When COVID hit, I shifted to the electronics recycling industry, managing international sales.

From there, I took on a role in Strategic Alliances at ActionCOACH, a business coaching company. During that time, I also launched my own business focused on artist development and the music industry, which has been successfully operating for over two years. These experiences have shaped my passion for business growth, strategy and community impact.

Education: I went to high school at Columbus Catholic in Marshfield. I then attended Lake-land University in Sheboygan for Education. I did not finish my degree, I instead decided to enter the workforce. I am currently attending Moraine Park Technical College for Business Management.

Family: My mother and father, Darin and Diane, both live in Green Lake. My oldest sister, Daidre, and her wife, Daryl, live in Eau Claire with my 7-year-old niece, Deejai. My older brother, David, and his wife, Brooke, live in Dallas with my youngest niece, Ella Day. My wife, Claire, and I live in Beaver Dam. My wife Claire is an attorney for QBS Law in Mayville. We live with our three dogs, Harlem, Boo and Bunny!

FREEMAN: How would you describe your leadership skills?

Green: Collaboration and cohesion are at the heart of what I believe — we are always stronger together. Success comes from surrounding yourself with motivated, like-minded individuals, and I firmly believe that every person plays a vital role in an organization. Ensuring that people are heard and their needs are met is essential, especially in a Chamber dedicated to supporting its local businesses. The only way to truly serve our business community is to listen to what they need.

I'm a challenger. I push people to learn more, do more, and be more — because no problem is unsolvable. Growth often comes from pushing ourselves beyond what we thought was possible, and I welcome that same challenge in return.

Above all, I value understanding and empathy. Life can be tough, and sometimes we all need support. At the end of the day, people make the biggest impact in this world, and it's our responsibility as neighbors, colleagues, friends and family to lift each other up however we can.

FREEMAN: What is your biggest accomplishment?

Green: Leading in Hartland and leading the Hartland Chamber of Commerce is my greatest accomplishment. It may sound corny, but I truly believe that everything I've done has led me to this role and this incredible community. I'm honored and grateful to be here, and I'm excited to see the positive impact the Chamber can have in Hartland — no matter how big or small our role may be.

FREEMAN: What are the most rewarding and challenging parts of your role?

Green: We're still in a transitional phase, and there's plenty for me to learn, but right now, the most challenging — and rewarding — part of my role is finding new and innovative ways to bring even more value to our members.

Knowing that we're creating fresh opportunities for businesses to connect with each other and the community is incredibly fulfilling. We have some exciting initiatives in the works, and I can't wait to share them with our members!

Get to know ...

Derrick Green

My greatest achievement is: Outside of getting married to my best friend, Claire, my greatest achievement is landing at my role at the Hartland Chamber of Commerce. I would say a close second is starting my own business!

My favorite book is: I love fictional books.

One book I could not put down and read through with no stops is "Supermarket" by Bobby Hall or "The Stranger" by Albert Camus.

My favorite TV show is: My wife and I watch a lot of reality TV, but my favorite TV show of all time is "Community."

My favorite movie is: I have two; "Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom" and "Tombstone." I could recite each movie line by line.

My favorite actor is: It's a close one between Giancarlo Esposito and Pedro Pascal.

My favorite actress is: Margot Robbie — Barbie was just too good of a movie!

My favorite podcast is: Business Movers or Business Wars

My favorite childhood memory is: I think it was the lack of technology we had back then. Playing "sandlot" baseball with my friends and biking to the local ice cream shop Melody Gardens in Marshfield.

The person I most admire is: My mother and my father. They sacrificed a lot for my siblings and me. I will be forever grateful to them.

Three words people use to describe me are: Ambitious, visionary, community-driven

The worst job I had as a teenager: I was fortunate enough not to have any terrible jobs, but when I was 17, I worked in a car parts distribution warehouse and would often work with exhaust pieces. The amount of grease I was covered in on a daily basis is something I am fine never experiencing again.

The food I like best is: I love true authentic Mexican food, but nothing beats a good fish fry on Fridays in Wisconsin!

My favorite hobby is: Basketball and video games. I was a collegiate basketball player, and have coached basketball for over 12 years. I still play in old man's leagues to this day. Video games have been a part of my life since I can remember and have always held that nostalgia over me. I doubt I will ever stop playing them!

My favorite music group is: Steely Dan, Styx, and Johnny Cash!

My pet is: I have three dogs. Harlem, a German shepherd-Husky; Boo, a toy sized Australian shepherd; and Bunny, a blue-eyed pitbull. They are each extremely unique in personality, but all get along so well!

My favorite vacation place is: Mexico! Monterrey or Playa Del Carmen on the beach.

The favorite vehicle I ever had was: When I was 16 years old, I bought a 1984 Chevy Caprice Classic. I love that car, and am looking to buy another one someday.

On my desk is: Weekly and daily to-do lists, my water bottle, toy model of a Harley Sportster, a painted rock with the Batman symbol, and my money sign stress ball.

My favorite childhood toy was: My skateboard. There was not a day that went by I was not on it.

My favorite custard flavor is: I am simple man, vanilla or chocolate!

My goals for the year are: For the Chamber, our goals are to:

- Add more value to our members.
 - Installing our new events, promotional ideas, etc.
 - Enhance user-friendliness and collaboration
 - And improving some internal systems. P.S — for those who are interested in our 2025 Initiatives I will gladly send you our document explaining each of them in more detail. Don't hesitate to reach out!
- Personally, my goals are:
- Get married in August!
 - My wife and I are legally married already, but our big wedding ceremony is in August.
 - Renovate our basement and backyard.
 - Start my non-profit centered around the media arts for kids.

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Plans for new YMCA facility in Pewaukee still in early stages

WAUKESHA — A lot of work is being done behind the scenes to make the vision of a new YMCA of Greater Waukesha County (YGWA) location in Pewaukee become a reality.

CEO Chris Becker said Milwaukee architecture firm Kahler Slater has been brought on board to help design the project and VJS Construction Services in the City of Pewaukee has been hired to be the contractor. Becker said they have worked with both firms previously on projects.

The YGWC made the announcement of opening a new facility on the Waukesha County Technical College campus in Pewaukee in July. Once the new facility opens, the downtown Waukesha location would close.

“The existing Waukesha YMCA facility, built in 1954, is well beyond its lifespan with aged infrastructure, accessibility

barriers and operational inefficiencies. Coupled with growing demand for services, YGWC had to look elsewhere for expansion,” the release said.

At that time, YGWC said it would launch a capital campaign with a \$30 million goal that would involve fundraising events, informational sessions, and community outreach to engage local businesses, residents and stakeholders. The project planning and fundraising portion is expected to take two to three years, followed by site work and construction.

Recently, Becker said he has been working with the Board of Directors to strategize how they will fundraise.

“We have been working on capital campaign feasibility,” he said.

Becker said he anticipates having more concrete plans to announce in a month or two.

Lac La Belle approves road routes for ATVs

LAC LA BELLE — Another community has agreed to allow all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and utility task vehicles (UTVs) on local roads. The Village of Lac La Belle approved the ordinance recently.

However, ATVs and UTVs cannot be driven on the roads until all of the signs are installed and village officials give a final OK. This also applies to other Lake Country communities, Ottawa, Dousman and Summit, which also approved ordinances allowing ATVs and UTVs on their roads.

The ordinance approved by the Lac La Belle Village Board allows ATV routes on all village roads with the exception of all roads in the prior Village of Lac La Belle before the merger with the Town of Oconomowoc.

The Okauchee Area ATV/UTV Club is fundraising to pay for the required signage. Visit www.okatv.org to learn how to contribute to fundraising efforts.

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