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The **Breeze**

Serving the Whitewater Lake area

**Food Truck
Fest slated**

**Dog daycare
facility OK'd**

**Man sentenced
for fatal hit
and run**



Class of '72 celebrates

Members of the Whitewater High School Class of 1972 who were or are turning 70 celebrated with a picnic July 20 at Starin Park. From the left: (front row) Sandy Dunne Blaewood, Elaine Rohrs Younger, Marcia King Gascho, Pam Piatt Hansen, Donna Behling Ludtke, Connie Maize Hix, Rebecca McLean; (middle) Terri Davis Gaffner, Lynn Bellman Keiser, Ruthie Stradinger, Lynne Berard Kepp; (back) Kathy Lynd Roelli, Jack Wafle, Doug Hare, Rick Hare, Woody Knox, Kurt Markham, Dennis Wagie, Jeff Gage, Carl Dravis, Todd Pickering and Bruce Parker.

TOM GANSER *The Breeze*



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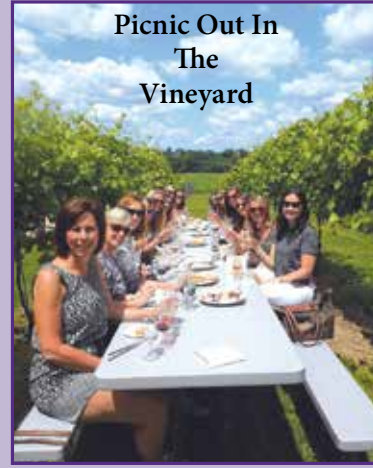
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BACHELORETTE • WEDDINGS • ENGAGEMENTS • BIRTHDAYS



The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater has earned five more years of business and accounting education accreditation from the AACSB. Above: Timothy J. Hyland Hall is university's home to the College of Business and Economics.

NICK POOK/UW-WHITEWATER PHOTO *The Breeze*

UW-Whitewater celebrates 50 years of AACSB accreditation

AACSB International has announced that the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater has earned five more years of business and accounting education accreditation. This marks the 50th year of consecutive AACSB business accreditation for the university and its College of Business and Economics.

AACSB has 1,026 accredited institutions in over 65 countries and territories and 194 institutions with AACSB accreditation for accounting programs. Achieving this milestone ensures greater access to high-quality business education for learners and for businesses seeking top talent.

"AACSB congratulates the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater on achieving AACSB accreditation," said Stephanie Bryant, executive vice president and global chief accreditation officer at AACSB. "The commitment to earning accreditation is a true reflection of the school's dedication – not only to its students, alumni network, and greater business community – but to society as a whole."

Achieving AACSB accreditation is a mission-driven, rigorous process that includes an in-depth assessment of internal activities. It is a peer-reviewed evaluation focused on continuous improvement.

During this multiyear path, schools focus on developing and implementing a plan to achieve their mission and align with AACSB's accreditation standards. These principles-based standards require excellence in areas relating to strategic management and

innovation, research, teaching and learning, and making the region better through business education.

"This year UW-Whitewater's College of Business and Economics is celebrating 110 years of business education, 25 years of online education, and now 50 years of continuous AACSB business accreditation. Whether online or on-campus, freshman to doctoral students, the College of Business and Economics helps students achieve their dreams for a better future," said Dean Paul Ambrose.

"Being Wisconsin's largest business school is no coincidence. With AACSB accreditation in both business and accounting, College of Business and Economics ranks in the top 2% of business schools globally for program quality. Whitewater proudly accept 97% of applicants, and College of Business and Economics graduates boast a 99% job placement rate," Ambrose added.

"It's been an incredible year of milestones for our College of Business and Economics," said UW-Whitewater Chancellor Corey A. King.

"Dean Ambrose and the faculty and staff work hard to create a world-class experience for our students, and our 50 years of AACSB accreditation are proof of the college's continued culture of transformative education. I'd like to congratulate our business school students, faculty, and staff – past and present

• CONTINUED ON PAGE 14

Whitewater to hold first-ever Food Truck Fest

By **Dave Fidlin**
CORRESPONDENT

An event aimed at spotlighting the various fare available through the popular food truck phenomenon is being offered in Whitewater for the first time.

City officials recently took the wraps off Food Truck Fest, an event scheduled to take place from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 14, at Cravath Lakefront Park, 341 S. Fremont St.

Economic Development Director Taylor Zeinert discussed the event with the board of directors overseeing the city's Community Development Authority at a meeting July 18. Her announcement of the inaugural event came days after the Common Council adopted an ordinance for mobile food operators.

Zeinert said there has been one overarching driver behind the new ordinance, in her discussion with the CDA board.

"We have gotten so much feedback about the downtown space to make sure we events that bring in those college students downtown to make sure we can create that foot traffic, so that when we have businesses to help them explore that area and pull them in," Zeinert said. "With that being said, we have decided to move forward with Food Truck Fest."

As the mobile food truck ordinance was working its way through different channels within Whitewater's municipal government, Zeinert and other city officials began putting out feelers to food truck vendors for the planned event.

"What's really exciting is that we have seen so much interest," Zeinert said as she reported on the event. "We currently have room for 20 food trucks, and we currently have 16 slots filled."

Thus far, committed vendors will be serving up such disparate offerings as tacos, grilled cheese and lumpia, which

are Filipino fried spring rolls. The small business owners operating the food trucks are expected to come from all over the region.

"They range from people from Illinois, people from Milwaukee, people from Madison, so it has been fantastic to see," she said.

The seed for Food Truck Fest reportedly was borne out of visits through the city's Business, Recruitment and Expansion initiative that is designed to bridge gaps between the business community and local municipal government.

"The information gathered has been helpful as to how the Office of Economic Development and the CDA can best support our business community," Zeinert said.

CDA board member Jeff Knight offered up another suggestion during the recent big picture discussion of promotional events for local businesses. He suggested reviving Taste of Whitewater, which would be similar to other initiatives in other communities.

"They could present their best fare to the community," Knight said, referring to brick-and-mortar restaurants. "You get new students in town, you have new people moving in. A lot of communities do that."

Earlier this summer, Zeinert discussed with city officials the benefits behind having a mobile food truck ordinance in place.

"The Office of Economic Development has seen increased interest of entrepreneurs to either start a food truck or bring their food truck to the community," she said. "To help promote this growing business and interest, city staff has spent more time on the permits and ordinances related to food trucks in our community."

The
Breeze

Serving the Whitewater Lake Area
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on the cover: The season of spending time out on the lake is here, from a day spent fishing – from the shore, pier or a boat, to kayaking or cruising around on a pontoon. Regardless of the activity, it's prime time to get outside and take in the lake breeze.

STOCK PHOTO *The Breeze*

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WUSD considering facilities survey

By **Dave Fidlin**
CORRESPONDENT

The Whitewater Unified School District is in the midst of a deep dive into short- and long-range facilities planning for each building, across all grade levels. A community survey could be on the horizon to help shepherd planning and next steps.

The WUSD School Board on July 22 had the first of multiple discussions with representatives from Bray Architects. The district is enlisted the firm for its expertise in assessing the condition of each school building and offering up recommendations.

“We have started to engage with some stakeholders to talk about some potential projects and some options for the potential projects,” Clint Selle, a vice president with the architecture firm, said in his discussion with the board.

Selle said Bray staffers began assessing WUSD’s school buildings last month, days after the school year wrapped. Preliminary conversations with district administrative staff also took place around the same time.

“Our team from Bray went through each of the buildings and verified a number of the different conditions,” Selle said.

Bray did submit to the district a still-in-progress report on the school buildings, rating a number of nuts-and-bolts features within each facility.

“This is still very much a draft version,” Selle emphasized as he combed through contents within the document.

The firm’s architects examined the condition of each school’s ceilings, flooring, exterior doors, exterior windows, roofs, overall accessibility, plumbing, mechanical, electrical and line safety.

Bray representatives also surveyed each site, examining acreage, site layout and other big picture details that are relevant to each property’s layout.

The firm’s findings are still being compiled, based on discussions at the recent board meeting, though the draft document did offer up a glimpse into what could be stated in the final inspection report.

Bray is expected to offer a number of technical recommendations for the

high school building for such features as plumbing, storm water infrastructure and fire suppression enhancements.

Alongside Bray’s review is a proposed community survey, which would be administered by an outside firm, School Perceptions. The board opted to hold off on moving forward with the survey until a cost estimate was determined.

“We just need a number before we write a check,” board member Maryann Zimmerman said.

There is a timeline in place for the review, and Superintendent Caroline Pate-Hefty urged the board to consider it when making motions on the survey and other next steps.

“I do want to point out that our timeline is extremely restrictive right now to get a survey out for the fall,” Pate-Hefty said.

Bray representatives are slated to return for two upcoming School Board meetings in the next month – one was Aug. 5 and the other will be on Aug. 26. Company representatives will provide additional information on the condition of each of the school buildings.

City signs off on dog daycare facility

By **Dave Fidlin**
CORRESPONDENT

A new dog daycare facility is slated to take root on a currently vacant parcel along Bluff Road, following a pivotal vote from Whitewater officials.

The Common Council on July 16 voted in favor of a developer’s agreement between the city and Fort Atkinson-based Whitewater Alpha Real Estate LLC, the developer behind the Royal Hounds dog daycare and boarding facility.

Representatives with Whitewater Alpha plan to house up to 40 dogs at any given time out of the proposed 44-by-44-foot metal-material facility with accompanying fencing, once it is up and running.

A minimum of two employees will be at the site during all business hours, according to a statement of purpose from company representatives.

“To ensure the well-being of our neighbors, dogs will be encouraged to play nicely and quietly,” Whitewater Alpha representatives wrote in the statement. “Problematic dogs will be placed in time out, or denied service if a problem persists.”

A key component to the doggie daycare proposal is a developer’s agreement that stipulates construction of the facility must begin by May 31, 2026. If this does not occur, the city has the right to purchase the property back.

At the July 16 meeting, City Manager John Weidl outlined why such a firm provision is being put in place.

“It is in a tax-increment financing district, so knowing that’s in the loop, this developer’s agreement requires that they complete the project,” Weidl said. “Otherwise, the city has the right to repurchase the property at the original sale price, plus the assessed value of any improvements they’ve made at the time.”

The developer’s agreement, Weidl said, “closes the loop” and serves as an assurance the project will help service some of the road improvements on Bluff Road, in association with the TID work.

SENIORS IN THE PARK

Fitness Drumming

Bring your exercise balls, buckets and drumsticks to beat to the rhythm of the music and get some exercise while you do it. Wednesdays at 10:30 a.m.

Travel opportunities

Adults of all ages are welcome on trips. Itineraries are available at the center by calling or emailing.

- Pacific Northwest and California, Oct. 7-14. Make your way from Washington to California on this eight-day trip. Enjoy the Washington State ferry, local winery, Redwood National Park, Golden Gate Bridge and more.

- Highlights of Italy’s Amalfi Coast, Oct. 8-15. Enjoy a walking tour of Sorrento and try some freshly made mozzarella cheese. Have a day to yourself or take an excursion to the Isle of Capri. Take a guided tour to Naples and enjoy a panoramic Naples City Tour. Experience a guided tour of Pompeii then continue onto the “Eternal City” of Rome.

Rockin’ Respite

Rockin’ Respite is in search of someone to volunteer this month and going forward. It could be one or two days per month, morning or afternoon.

A nurse is onsite and there is a volunteer assigned to each guest

(only four guests at this time). Sing, play games, do art projects, cook, or whatever is in the person’s wheelhouse to make a fun, active day for our guests. Please call 262-473-0535 if you are interested.

Dementia Friends

Dementia Friends is a campaign to tackle the stigma and lack of understanding around dementia. Dementia Friends session helps you learn about dementia and the small ways you can help. Please call 262-473-0535 to register.

Learn Mah Jongg

Interested in learning how to play? Join the group Mondays at 1 p.m. Reserve a seat by calling 262-473-0535.

Blood Pressure Checks

Every Tuesday from 11 a.m. to noon, stop in at the senior center to get your blood pressure checked. Bring in your at-home blood pressure cuffs to make sure they are accurate.

Activities at a glance

- Pickleball – Monday, Wednesday and Friday, from 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Thursday, from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. – at the Downtown Armory

- Indoor walking – Wednesdays and Fridays at 9 a.m.

- Sewing group – Fridays at 10 a.m.

- Warblers – Mondays at 11 a.m.

- Book Club – first Monday of the month at 11 a.m. Books are available at Starin Park

- Bingo – first, second and fourth Tuesday at 10 a.m.

- Canasta – first and third Monday at 1 p.m.

- Chicken foot dominoes – first Tuesday at 1 p.m.

- Pegs and Jokers – third Monday at 9:30 a.m.

- Mah Jongg – Mondays at 1 p.m.

- Sheepshead – Tuesdays at 12:30 p.m.

Office hours

The Seniors in the Park office hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m., Monday through Thursday; the office is closed on Fridays.

For more information or to sign up for any Seniors in the Park classes, activities or trips call 262-473-0535 or check out the newsletter available at the Starin Park Community Building, City of Whitewater Municipal Building, businesses in town or online at wwparks.org, whitewater-wi.gov (Departments, Seniors in the Park) or MyCommunityonline.com.

Whitewater man sentenced to prison for fatal hit and run

A Whitewater man was recently sentenced to prison for killing a Delavan man with his truck when the victim was returning home from work and collecting mail at the end of his driveway.

Walworth County Circuit Court Judge Philip Koss handed 35-year-old Travis Arlyn Brown a 15-year sentence in Wisconsin State Prison for the 2020 hit and run that left a man dead.

Brown will spend seven years incarcerated and eight years with extended supervision. He was facing 25 years for the Class D felony.

According to the criminal complaint, on Nov. 14, 2020, Delavan police were called to Fox Lane at 10:09 p.m. where a 59-year-old man was laying unresponsive near his driveway. The man's father, who also resides at the home, told investigators that the man usually arrives home from work at 10 p.m. and then retrieves the mail along the road.

Police noted the mailbox door was open with mail still inside, and one of the man's shoes was located near the road, as well as his cell phone. The GoFundMe page #justicefornoel identifies the victim as Noe Rendon Jr., a son, brother, friend, and uncle.

A medical examiner reported Noe died from blunt force injuries of the head and torso due to a pedestrian versus vehicle crash. He was pronounced dead at 12:17 a.m. on Nov. 15, 2020.

A woman told investigators she was on



Travis Arlyn Brown

the phone with Noe at approximately 9:41 p.m. and that during the brief conversation he told her he was getting his mail and then the phone went dead.

On Feb. 20, 2021, investigators spoke with a 26-year-old man who stated he, Brown and two other friends had been

drinking at the End Zone in Delavan and they left together at the same time. Brown followed behind two other vehicles in his truck. When they drove down Fox Lane, the man said he recalled Brown pulled over and asked Brown whether everything was OK.

Brown reportedly did not respond, only got out of his truck and checked the passenger side. When questioned again whether everything was OK, Brown shook his head and they all continued. Video surveillance obtained by investigators showed the three vehicles traveling in the area at 9:41 p.m.

A sister of one of Brown's drinking friends reported on March 4, 2021, she drove with her brother back to End Zone Bar to get his house keys. When they drove past the scene where Noe was laying, her brother told her to stop because he thought he saw something. She turned the vehicle around and located Noe, who she began giving CPR to until paramedics arrived.

The man denied knowing that Brown struck the victim.

Investigators learned that Brown reported a crash on Nov. 20, 2020, to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and claimed it occurred in Burnett County. The report included an image of Brown's truck, which shows damage to the driver's side hood of the vehicle. He reported hitting a deer and said that the deer also went under the truck.

Investigators further learned that Brown's truck was repaired at Kunes Country Collision Center and traded in on Jan. 29, 2021, after Kunes completed the repair work. Photos of the truck before it was repaired were shared with a crash reconstruction expert, who advised the damage was not consistent with striking a deer but rather, consistent with striking a pedestrian.

Brown was previously convicted in Walworth County for multiple charges relating to a hit and run, including failure to notify law enforcement of a crash, on or about April 29, 2018. In that case, Brown was involved in a single-vehicle rollover crash, leaving the crash scene, and walking to a relative's house.

Conditions of Brown's supervision, once released, includes mandatory five-year driver's license revocation, not to consume or possess alcohol or drugs; not to enter any bars, taverns or liquor stores, and no contact with the victim's family, among other conditions. He was also ordered to pay \$15,947.63 in restitution.

Couple hospitalized after being driven off roadway

An arraignment was scheduled Aug. 6 for a Beloit man accused of reckless driving that resulted in a couple being hospitalized.



Gavin J. Hernandez

Gavin J. Hernandez, 18, is charged with first-degree recklessly endangering safety, a Class F felony; hit and run and possession of THC.

According to the criminal complaint, Walworth County Sheriff's deputies were called to County Trunk A in the Town of Richmond on June 20 at 8:06 a.m. for a report of a hit-and-run rollover crash with injuries. Callers stated a Chevy Tahoe left the scene.

When a deputy arrived, the Tahoe was about 450 yards from the crash scene and had significant front-end damage. A Honda CRV was flipped onto its roof after what appeared that it struck a culvert, and an electrical pole, breaking the pole.

Witnesses reported that the Honda CRV was traveling eastbound before striking the pole, and the Tahoe continued eastbound past the crash at a high rate of speed, between 60 and 90 miles per hour, in the 40-mph zone.

Two people inside the Honda were transported to the hospital with injuries.

Deputies located open intoxicants inside the Tahoe and a THC vape cartridge.

Hernandez was arrested and taken to jail from the scene. During the transport, Hernandez said he continued past the scene because he wanted to see if his vehicle still worked.

One witness reported that before the crash, Hernandez was driving

COURT BLOTTER

The following people were charged with these Class H and I felony offenses in Walworth County Circuit Court recently:

Class H

Class H, punishable by up to six years in prison and \$10,000 in fines:

Bail jumping

- Karen A. Sequeira Romero, 38, of Whitewater; felony bail jumping.

According to the criminal complaint, Sequeira Romero was pulled over June 17 in the Town of Richmond for driving without a valid license.

On April 25, she was released on bond for two felonies of misappropriation and ordered not to commit any new crimes.

- Eric Joseph Escallier, 33, of Whitewater; felony bail jumping.

According to the criminal complaint, on April 16, Escallier was released on bond

for felony bail jumping cases in Walworth County.

Bond requirements included that he make a court appearance on May 3. On May 3, the case was called, and the defendant did not appear.

- Herti Nadir Martinez Quintanilla, 20, of Whitewater; three counts of bail jumping.

According to the criminal complaint, on June 22, Whitewater police were called to 177 N. Fraternity Lane to assist two other officers in locating two trespassers inside of a building. Inside was Martinez Quintanilla and three minors. Martinez Quintanilla had a silver iPhone 15 Pro Max, which he admitted belonged to him.

He has an open case for possession of child pornography and was ordered not to possess a device capable of accessing the internet and not to have any contact with minors.

Fleeing

- Nathan Scott Lynn, 21, of Whitewater; attempting to flee or elude an officer.

According to the criminal complaint, a Whitewater police officer attempted to pull over Lynn's motorcycle at the 500 block of South Wisconsin Street June 22 at 6:30 p.m.

Lynn rapidly increased speed to 80 miles per hour for a half a mile. When the chase stopped at South Wisconsin and East Clay streets, Lynn admitted he knew the officer was behind him and he chose to flee.

Bribery

- Amanda T. McCracken, 36, of Whitewater; bribery of public official and resisting an officer.

According to the criminal complaint, a sheriff's deputy responded to a home in

Wake-enhanced boats a timely topic

They're said to be causing shoreline, other issues on smaller lakes

By **Jennifer Eisenbart**

STAFF WRITER

A new trend in boating has created a need for new rules on area lakes.

Wake-enhanced boats – also known as wake surf boats – are boats that use ballast tanks, water sacks or fins to cause a boat to operate in a bow-high manner.

That, in turn, increases the wake behind a boat to increase the amount of water for tubers, water skiers or wake boarders being pulled behind a boat.

However, numerous different authorities throughout the state have begun to see the impact these boats have on lakeshores – mainly shoreline erosion and the destruction of fish habitats as well as damage to lake bottoms.

Wake-enhanced boats also create hazards for other boaters, kayakers, swimmers, paddle boarders and pleasure boaters.

Because of the use of ballast tanks, which cannot completely be drained, there is also the concern of invasive species being transferred from one lake to another.

According to Lakes at Stake Wisconsin, restrictions have been suggested for small and medium lakes for the following reasons:

- Large lakes are better resourced to monitor for invasive species.
- Most Wisconsin glacial lakes are irregularly shaped, with bays, kettles and critical habitat areas needing protection.
- The solution to pollution is dilution, which means that small and medium sized lakes are exponentially impacted by resuspension of bottom silt.
- Many lakes have sunken islands, bars

and reefs that come up to shallow depths, which in turn make them prime areas for fish habitats. They are also harder to navigate around with smaller and irregularly shaped lakes.

• The wake sports industry recommends that these boats limit repetitive passes against a single shoreline, which is more difficult with small and medium sized lakes.

Lakes at Stake has been working in the last year to put regulations in place for such boating activities. According to an article on WisBusiness.com, the group is led by Paul Gardetto, a 29-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force who owns lakefront property in Waukesha County.

In the article, Gardetto stressed that the group doesn't want to ban the boats, but instead limit the activity to larger lakes.

Numerous municipalities, lake authorities and organizations – both in the state and outside of it – have begun taking a stance against wake-enhanced boats.

Rick Siok, president of the Lauderdale Lakes Improvement Association, said the item was on the agenda at the June LLIA meeting, but not to take action because the LLIA cannot set policy.

“We don't have that power on the lakes,” Siok said. “It was more an educational meet, and it kind of turned into more than an educational meet.”

Steve Kessler from the Last Wilderness Alliance came to speak at the LLIA meeting, using a PowerPoint demonstration to show what the wake-enhanced boats can do to lakes.

“He thought it would be a great topic to bring up,” Siok said. “We were trying to do some education.



Wake boats, or wake-enhanced boats, create larger waves behind boats for wake surfing or tubing. The boats, however, have the potential to damage smaller lakes if the lakes aren't deep enough.

METRO CREATIVE *The Breeze*

BLOTTER • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

the Town of Whitewater for a 911 call. On arrival, McCracken refused to come outside and told the deputy to leave the property.

McCracken had a warrant through the City of Whitewater, and once outside, told deputies to leave again, and attempted to walk away from them. She was placed in an escort hold but continued to resist until she was Tased.

While being escorted to a police squad, the deputy reported that McCracken offered money multiple times to let her go.

Class I

Class I, punishable by up to 3-1/2 years in prison and \$10,000 in fines:

Unclassified

- Trevon L. Daniels, 25, of Lake Mills;

sexual intercourse with a child, as a repeater.

According to the criminal complaint, Whitewater police conducted a forensics interview on June 20 with a 16-year-old girl who stated that she had sexual intercourse with Daniels at her mother's home on June 16, after a bonfire party.

Daniels was convicted in Jefferson County of three counts of fourth-degree sexual assault. One count of second-degree sexual assault of a child was dismissed but read into the court case. The case involved Daniels, who was 23 at the time, in a sexual relationship with a 14-year-old.

If convicted of the Class A misdemeanor, Daniels faces up to 9 months in prison and \$10,000 in fines, plus an additional two years for being a repeater.

“If we can get a few people to recognize what they do to the shore and get them to use them in deeper water ... there was no heated information,” Siok said, adding that some in attendance didn't necessarily “believe” the information.

“They felt (the information) was one-sided from his group,” Siok explained.

Siok said the concerns are not about stopping these boats from using these lakes.

“But part of this group is to protect the beauty of these lakes,” he added.

COUPLE • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

more than 90 miles per hour, swerving, and passing other cars. The witness further stated that Hernandez rear-ended the Honda, which rolled and landed on the utility pole. The witness added that Hernandez walked back to the scene after his car broke down and, based on the noises coming from the vehicle, believes Hernandez was attempting to flee before his car broke down.

Another witness stated she was driving westbound on County Trunk A when it

He confirmed there are a number of these boats using the lake, but he also understands the boats are popular.

And he isn't sure how to come to a compromise.

The maximum depth of Lauderdale Lakes is about 54 feet, and most of the lakes in the chain are narrow – a total of 825 acres for all the lakes.

However, wake-enhanced boats also represent a significant portion of new boat sales in recent years.

The Boathouse, located on Lauderdale Lakes, could not be reached for comment.

appeared Hernandez was attempting to pass the Honda and she feared that his Tahoe would strike her vehicle head on. Instead, the Tahoe quickly jerked back into its lane and continued at the high speed before rear-ending the Honda.

A third witness admitted she was speeding at about 72 mph when the Tahoe passed her. She estimates it was going more than 100 miles per hour.

If convicted, Hernandez faces up to 13 years in prison and \$13,000 in fines.

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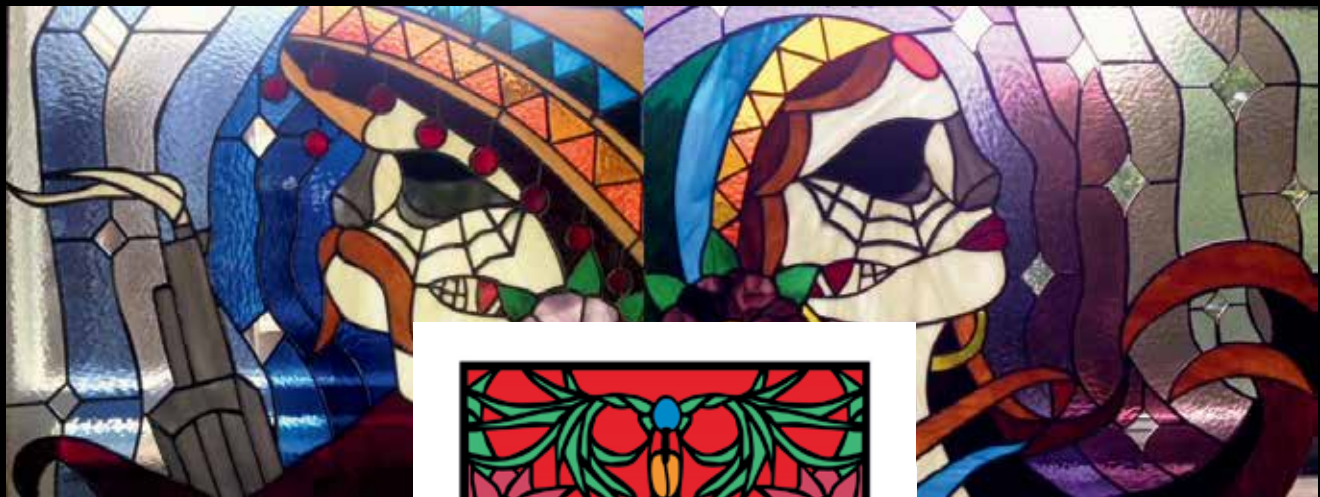



Savory Sounds

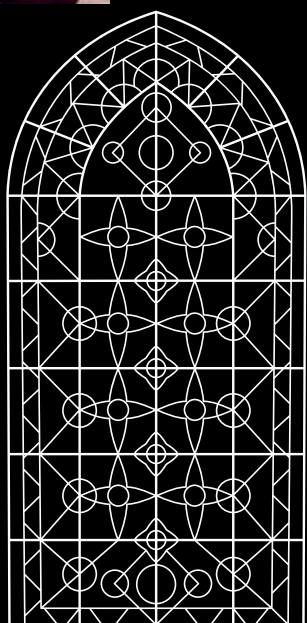
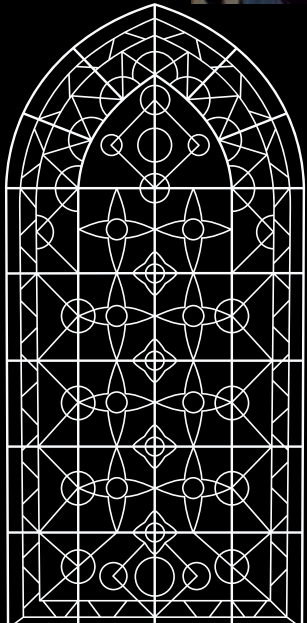


The Whitewater Arts Alliance wrapped up its summer concert series for the season. Shown performing June 27 is the Currach Irish Trio, to a nice sized crowd taking in the mid-day music. The concerts are held outside the Cultural Arts Center at Flat Iron Park, 402 W. Main St., Whitewater, and include a food vendor for those choosing to have lunch.

TOM GANSER *The Breeze*

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Natureland Park closed until early September

Natureland Park is closed to the public effective as of the last week in July. The park is set to reopen on Friday, Sept. 6. The park is located at W8338 Territorial Road in Whitewater.

During the closure, Walworth County Public Works staff will replace the two parking lots at the park, add concrete walkways at the log cabin, and install a concrete patio for a new ADA-accessible picnic table on the north side of the cabin.

Throughout the project, the park and parking lots will be closed to ensure public safety.

The public is asked to drive with caution and be mindful of contractor vehicles and equipment staging by the park entrance on Territorial Road.

During the closure of Natureland Park,

Walworth County's two remaining parks – Price Park Conservancy and White River County Park – will be open for use and scheduling of events. Jefferson County also has several parks available for public use.

For more information about Walworth County parks, visit co.walworth.wi.us/306/Parks. For details about Jefferson County Parks, visit jeffersoncountywi.gov/park/

Natureland Park, W8338 Territorial Road in Whitewater, is closed to the public until Sept. 6. Projects being done at the park include the replacement of the two parking lots, the addition of concrete walkways at the log cabin and the installation of a concrete patio for an ADA-accessible picnic table.

WALWORTH COUNTY PHOTO *The Breeze*



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The City of Whitewater celebrated the Fourth of July with a parade, festival and fireworks. **above:** Fireworks were set off over Cravath Lake. Among the parade participants were members of the Lima 4-H Club and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Chancellor Corey A. King.

TOM GANSER *The Breeze*



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City officials looking toward the future

TRANSPORTATION, HEALTHCARE INCLUDED IN UPDATED CITY PLAN

By **Dave Fidlin**
CORRESPONDENT

The City of Whitewater’s ongoing five-year strategic planning document is being refreshed to incorporate several disparate topics officials have honed in on in recent months.

The list of topics includes public transportation, emergent healthcare and communications.

City Manager John Weidl, who has been working with the Common Council on the large-scale strategic plan document, provided an update on its contents at a meeting July 16.

The three additional topics, Weidl outlined in a memo, were the end result of the council’s “input and feedback to better align with your suggestions and the broader vision for our community.”

Enhancing public transportations within Whitewater’s diverse community has been

a topic raised in more recent conversations between Weidl and the council.

Summing up the topic in his memo, Weidl characterized the item as “enhancements to the efficiency and accessibility of public transportation, aiming to facilitate easier and more sustainable transit options.”

The city currently has in place a years-long contract with Brown Cab for residents in need of public transportation services. Brown Cab’s drivers take residents to and from destinations on an on-call basis.

Discussing the city’s future with Brown Cab, Weidl said it is uncertain at this point because the broader issue needs to be fleshed out.

“I don’t know what this means yet, because you haven’t looked me in the eye yet and said, ‘Yes, this pivot is what we were asking for,’” Weidl said to the council at the July 16 meeting. “Assuming that it is, we’re

going to place a larger emphasis on public transportation options in and around the city.”

Councilmember Brienne Brown said there could be further avenues to pursue on the public transportation front. She indicated she reached out to the railroad commissioner’s office, and state money might be available to Whitewater for a public transportation project.

“If we have the capacity to write some grant proposals, it seems that there’s money available for that,” Brown said.

On the topic of emergent healthcare, Weidl characterized the strategic plan as follows: “This initiative reflects our commitment to improving health response capabilities across the city.”

The communications item is ongoing and was characterized by Weidl in the memo as “dedicated to strengthening citywide communication.”

The strategic goals document stretches

through 2028 and has been a work in progress. The existing document has touched on a range of issues, including recruitment and retention efforts, increasing affordable housing stock and assorted economic development growth opportunities.

“We’re on time, and we’re on target,” Weidl said of some of the specific milestones that already have been outlined within the document.

In his memo on the updates, Weidl reiterated the intent behind the short- and long-range planning exercise.

“Our goal is to ensure that our strategic planning is not only effective, but also forward-thinking, meeting the needs of the community and aligning with the council’s vision,” he wrote.

Officials are planning on posting the entire strategic planning document on the city’s website.

Developer to complete 25-year-old housing project

By **Dave Fidlin**
CORRESPONDENT

A southeastern Wisconsin housing developer is poised to complete the last phase of a Whitewater residential subdivision that has roots going back a quarter century.

At a meeting July 16, the Whitewater Common Council approved a developer’s agreement with Pewaukee-based Neumann Developments Inc. The document outlines the various provisions for the firm’s task for developing the remainder of the Park Crest site.

At its core, the developer’s agreement stipulates Neumann will build homes on the 19 remaining vacant lots within Park Crest that have been identified as ideal for single-family homes. The construction will take place on Tower Hill Pass and Stonefield Lane.

Economic Development Director Taylor Zeinert said Neumann’s proposal is beneficial to the city in multiple ways.

“These are going to be single-family homes, which is something that our strategic goals outline that we want to do a hundred of within five

years,” Zeinert said. “This would align ourselves with that strategic goal.”

Terms within the developer’s agreement stipulate Neumann is poised to receive financial assistance through an existing tax-increment district in the area for assorted infrastructure improvements.

In her discussion with the council, Zeinert said TID assistance was necessary for Neumann to complete the project.

“Neumann is kind of this one-stop shop, where they can do sewer, road,

building – all of it,” Zeinert added. “I think this project makes sense for the city, both financially and, additionally, in terms of our strategic goals.”

The TID provision within the developer’s agreement does include a pay-as-you-go clause, which means Neumann will first have to undertake the work before receiving the financial incentives through the TID.

“If they don’t build the homes, they don’t get anything back,” City Manager John Weidl said of that specific provision within the agreement.



BY THE NUMBERS

Waterfront Homes for Sale in the Whitewater Lake Area

N7317 Chapel Dr.....	\$329,000
Lt1 Cliffs View Ln.....	\$950,000
N7294 Krahn Dr.....	\$2,495,000

DATA PROVIDED BY LAKEHOMEINFO.COM

THE GOING RATE

HOMES RECENTLY SOLD ON WHITEWATER LAKE

N7352 Krahn Dr.....	\$757,000
N7569 Ridge Rd.....	\$820,000
N7431 Ridge Rd.....	\$943,500
N7767 Ridge Rd.....	\$1,343,500
N7409 Ridge Rd.....	\$1,395,000
N7416 Ridge Rd.....	\$1,425,000

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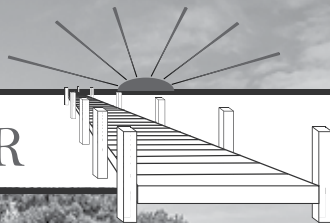
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Arrest warrant issued in fatal overdose case

An arrest warrant was issued June 28 for a North Chicago drug dealer accused of selling a lethal mixture of cocaine and fentanyl to an area man who died shortly after ingesting the narcotics he purchased.

Geoffrey G. Mitchell, 47, is charged in Walworth County Circuit Court with first-degree reckless homicide, a Class C felony punishable by up to 40 years in prison and \$100,000 in fines. Judge David M. Reddy issued Mitchell's arrest warrant.

According to the criminal complaint, on June 14, 2022, a man overdosed at a Town of Geneva residence after he and a friend drove to the Waukegan, Illinois, area to pick up \$250 worth of what the buyers believed to be cocaine and heroin, from a drug dealer called "Low."

A detective with UW-Whitewater police was investigating the potential drug homicide on June 15, speaking with the man who said the victim "basically died in (his) arms." The man said that he and the victim traveled to buy drugs from "Low." The witness intended on buying \$50 worth of cocaine and the victim intended on buying \$200 in heroin.

He said that the victim picked him up at 10 a.m. and they were meeting "Low" at around 11:30 a.m. in Illinois. At the meetup spot in Illinois, the victim got out of his vehicle and into Mitchell's vehicle before returning to the vehicle to drive back to Walworth County.

When the victim got back into the vehicle, he had

two separate bags – one for the witness and more than 3.5 grams of what he believed to be heroin for himself.

During the drive back, the victim, who was sitting in the passenger's seat, mixed some drugs he purchased with water on a spoon and injected it into his right arm. He then recapped the syringe and placed it and the spoon into the glove compartment before slumping over and turning blue. Once the victim began to overdose, the witness threw both bags of narcotics out of the window in Lake Geneva.

The witness further stated that he and the victim have known Mitchell for about three years, and he had been their drug source for the past year. He had purchased directly from "Low" in the past, but because he owes "Low" money, would have to go through the victim to obtain his drugs. He said "Low" would charge \$50 for a half gram of cocaine and heroin and \$80 for a full gram.

A forensics examination of the victim's phone revealed that the victim was planning to pick up drugs from "Low."

Investigators pieced together cell tower data and a timeline for the case. The direction of the calls, along with the times, were consistent with the call logs and messages with the victim and witness's phones.

Walworth County Medical Examiner Gina Carver on Sept. 11, 2022, told investigators that the cause of the victim's death was acute mixed drug intoxication, which included cocaine and fentanyl.

Holt takes over United Way of Walworth County

By **Jennifer Eisenbart**

STAFF WRITER



Brian Holt

After a year of instability, a new leader has taken over United Way of Walworth County.

In a recent new release, UWWC announced that Brian Holt – a long-time Elkhorn resident and Walworth County Board Supervisor – would take over as executive director.

The organization will have its third ED in the last year. Tammy Dunn resigned last summer, and the new hire, Jeff Pal, was in the position for less than three months.

Holt confirmed that he is "here for the long term."

"United Way of Walworth County stands at a critical juncture, and I am honored to lead an organization that has such a profound impact on the lives of our residents," Holt said. "I look forward to building on our past successes while introducing innovative strategies that will

expand our reach and deepen our community connections."

Holt has served as County Supervisor for District 3 since 2019. He also is significantly involved in the Elkhorn community and is serving as president of the Elkhorn Rotary Club and beyond, including filling the role of vice president of the Lake Geneva Jaycees.

He confirmed last week that he will remain in all three organizations, but will have a "diminished role" in running those groups.

Prior to joining United Way, Holt managed a successful dairy heifer operation and is a partner in Vacation Rental Property Partners, demonstrating his adeptness in business management and operational leadership. He said he will step back from his partnership in that business over the next few months, with the support of his business partner (who encouraged him to apply for the United Way position).

Holt said his transition from agriculture to focusing on community-oriented goals reflects his

No red flags in Whitewater's '23 audit

By **Dave Fidlin**

CORRESPONDENT

No alarm bells went off and no red flags were raised as outside auditors did their customary review of Whitewater's financial statements from the past year.

Representatives from certified public accounting firm Johnson Block and Co. recently combed through the city's financial statements from Jan. 1 through Dec. 31, 2023 and have been assembling their findings in a lengthy document.

Several Johnson Block representatives presented a draft of the 2023 audit report at the city's Finance Committee meeting June 19 in anticipation of official presentation this month before the Common Council for a vote.

Kevin Krysinski of Johnson Block discussed the company's scope of the audit. Under state statute, all governing agencies are required to have outside audits of financial statements on an annual basis.

"Our role as auditors is just to give an opinion on the financial statements to determine whether or not it's in what we call generally accepted accounting principles," Krysinski said.

Big picture, Krysinski indicated Johnson Block was giving an "unmodified opinion," meaning auditors did not have to make any substantive changes to the financial statements on record. The opinion was encapsulated in management's cover letter.

"In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the respective financial position of the governmental activities ... of the City of Whitewater, Wis., as of Dec. 31, 2023," a passage within the letter reads.

The draft audit report includes an assortment of financial highlights, including the city's total net position, which increased 1.5%, or \$1.08 million, from the year prior.

The Community Development Authority (CDA), which acts as a component of municipal operations, also reported an increased net position to the tune of \$48,373.

The city's fund balance – the portion of the broader budget set aside for reserve cash – also increased this year. As of Dec. 31, the city's fund balance clocked in at \$9.22 million, which was an increase of \$9,032 from the year prior.

Johnson Block in the report indicated 29% of the total fund balance, or \$2.68 million, "is available for spending at the government's discretion."

The city's water utility wound up in a negative net position this past year, according to the report. By year's end, the net position was \$11.36 million, which was \$36,106 less from the year prior.

"The city filed an application with the PSC (Public Service Commission), and new rates went effective April 28, 2023," the report notes. "Rates increased approximately 30%."

The wastewater utility's net position rose \$927,285 in the past year, according to the report.

Krysinski in his preliminary comments with the committee outlined several areas of the broader budget city officials might want to watch this year and in the immediate years ahead.

The Whitewater Aquatic and Fitness Center, which is run through a joint agreement between the city and Whitewater Unified School District, was one of the items singled out in the watch list.

"This has been, you know, kind of an ongoing comment that we've had in there. The aquatic center – its financial position has improved, based upon subsidies that have been provided by both the city and the school district," Krysinski said.

But, he added, "It's one of the things to monitor because it's going to require budget subsidies."

New online degrees offered at UW-Whitewater

Human resources, international business programs fully online

By **Jennifer Eisenbart**

STAFF WRITER

As the world has slowly transitioned out of the COVID-19 pandemic and back into its new normal, one thing has remained – the prevalence of online options.

For the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, that is none more evident than now, with two new, 100% online degree offerings. The university recently announced that both the human resources and international business degrees are now fully online as undergraduate options.

The HR program is designed to give students a comprehensive overview of the field as well as real-world experience with training and developing employees, managing benefits and compensation and handling employee relations.

The international business degree works to provide an in-depth understanding of global economics, finance, management, marketing and the supply chain.

Joshua Knapp, a professor of management/HR at UW-Whitewater, said the human resources field remains one of the most in demand for qualified applicants.

“HR is always at the center of the organization and is intimately involved with managing its most important asset: people,” he said.

Andy Ciganek, coordinator for the international business course, said online degrees are offering the kind of flexibility both students as well as businesses crave.

“Online learning allows students to study at their own pace and on their own schedule, making it easier to balance their education with work, family, and other commitments,” Ciganek explained.

“Students are increasingly seeking specialized skills, which is why there is an increase in online degree opportunities,” he added.

UW-Whitewater, Ciganek said, can

appeal for a number of reasons.

The international business program has a strong reputation – Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business accreditation and more than 25 years of online education experience – plus the competitive cost compared to other programs.

Ciganek, who is also the chair of the IT and Supply Chain Management department, said he is routinely working with local and regional employers to find out what kind of skills are in demand.

“Beyond critical thinking, communication, and problem-solving, these employers have regularly mentioned ‘global’ or ‘international’ as essential skills since the pandemic,” Ciganek said, going on to explain that the university’s international business programs directly addresses this need and complements UW-Whitewater’s other well-known majors.

“For example, marketing or supply chain students may open up new and more diverse career possibilities by majoring or minoring in international business,” he added.

According to Ciganek, UW-Whitewater offering the international business program fully online gives students flexibility, especially if they can’t be on campus for classes or are enrolling from a distance.

For more on the human resources degree, go to uw.edu/online/bachelors/human-resource-management.

For more on the international business program, go to uw.edu/online/bachelors/international-business.

UW-Whitewater offers the state’s largest College of Business and Economics and is home to the No. 1-ranked online MBA program in the state.

In addition, the College of Business and Economics is in the top 2% of world business schools.



While in-person education remains a popular option for college students, two new programs – international business and human resources – are being added fully online at the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. **above:** Professors and students still interact during online classes, just in different ways. **below:** College students work through an exercise in a classroom on campus.

PHOTOS COURTESY UW-WHITEWATER *The Breeze*



UW-WHITEWATER • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

– who made this achievement possible. We see you, and we thank you.”

Per 2022 data, of all Wisconsin public comprehensive universities, UW-Whitewater has the largest population of underrepresented minority students, is number one in total aid, and graduates the greatest percent of students in six years or less (Universities of Wisconsin standard graduation measure).

About the College of Business and Economics

The college ranked No. 1 in the state in the 2024 U.S. News and World Report re-

view of online programs. UW-Whitewater is home to Wisconsin’s top-ranked single school in the following categories:

- Best Online MBA
- Best Online Business Graduate Program
- Best Online Business Undergraduate Program
- Best Online MBA Program for Veterans
- Best Online Business Graduate Program for Veterans

For more information on the College of Business and Economics, visit uw.edu/cobe or email cobe@uw.edu.

HOLT • CONTINUED FROM PAGE 13

passion for public service and his desire to make a substantial difference in the lives of the residents of Walworth County.

As executive director, Holt said he plans to leverage his comprehensive experience to enhance United Way’s programs and outreach initiatives. His immediate priorities include increasing the organization’s visibility in the community, strengthening relationships with local businesses and nonprofits, and enhancing support systems for the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) population in Walworth County.

Many of United Way’s relationships with local businesses and nonprofits have flourished for years, showcasing the power of long-term collaboration. Holt said the organization will focus on crucial areas such as housing, next-generation housing and child care, aiming to support the local economy and help businesses thrive.

“I have seen firsthand that the right person in the right place can make a huge difference,” said in the release. “Forming these relationships is personally extremely rewarding. We all thrive together when the community is strong.”

City refreshing employee handbook

By Dave Fidlin
CORRESPONDENT

An extensive review of Whitewater's updated employee handbook is rounding the bend, with a draft document on benefits, expectations and other standard items included in the 60-plus page document.

Human Resources Manager Sarah Marquardt recently discussed the updated handbook and what steps were taken to bring the updated document into its current form.

"To be honest, we struggled a bit between the handbook and the policies and what was the best method to move forward," Marquardt said at a Finance Committee meeting on June 19 of the impetus behind the update.

Council President Patrick Singer, who serves on the Finance Committee, said he understood the complexities around bringing policies in municipal code in sync with documents such as the employee handbook.

"A struggle with governing bodies is sometimes you get stuff in ordinance, some stuff in an employee policy and a procedure manual that body may have to approve or a subset," Singer said.

At the recent committee meeting, Marquardt discussed the various steps that were undertaken to get the draft document in its current form, including employee focus groups nearly a year ago.

"Over two meetings, they took a look at what would you like to see in your handbook and, at the same time, what would you really like to have?" Marquardt said.

Department directors subsequently reviewed the handbook in the early months of this year and raised questions and offered up suggested changes.

"It was actually very good because there were a number of things people didn't understand, didn't use, whatever," Marquardt said of the exercise.

More recently, City Manager John Weidl and City Attorney Jonathan McDonell signed off on the draft changes.

There are a series of tweaks throughout the handbook, Marquardt indicated. She touched on a few of the financial-related ones at the committee meeting, including the designation of New Year's Eve as a paid holiday.



A COUNTRY FESTIVAL

St. Patrick Catholic Church in Whitewater recently held its annual Country Fest on the church grounds, with food, music, games and craft booths all available. From the top: A crafter is shown selling artificial flowers; The Marco Wence Trio performs at the event.

"Memories are Made at the Lake"



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