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JOHNSON SEE PAGE 7 NO-HITS AQUINAS

Tomah's Maddie Johnson



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MONROE COUNTY HERALD

Your Local State Award-Winning Newspaper

VOLUME 163 | NUMBER 27

THURSDAY, APRIL 7, 2022

TWO SECTIONS | 30 PAGES

SPRING ELECTION 2022

NO



SASD voters turn down operating referendum

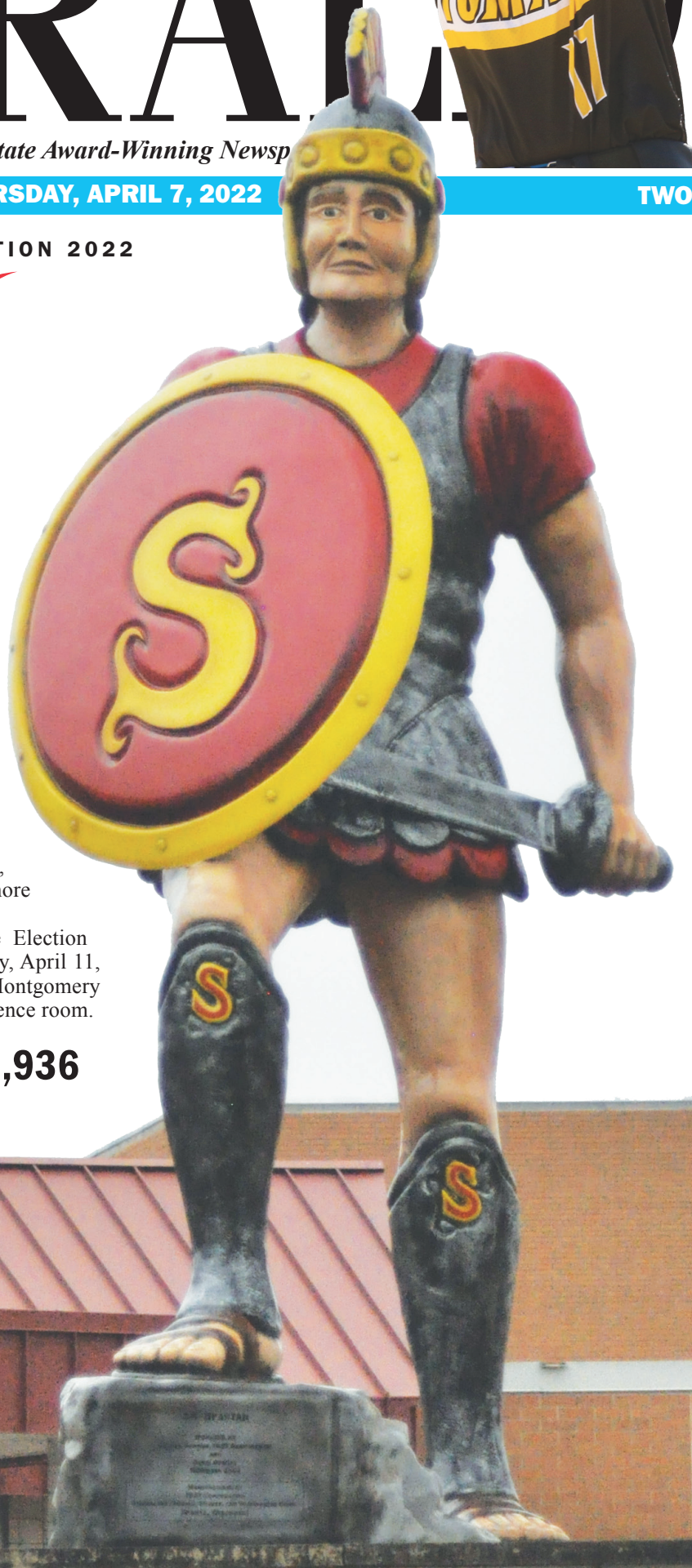
By KYLE EVANS
Interim Editor

Sparta Area School District voters were almost evenly split on the referendum for continuing current operations. The referendum asked voters "shall the Sparta Area School District, Monroe and Jackson Counties, Wisconsin be authorized to exceed the revenue limit specified in Section 121.91, Wisconsin Statutes, by \$2,100,000 per year beginning with the 2022-2023 school year and ending with the 2023-2024 school year, for non-recurring purposes consisting of funding staffing, technology and maintenance of district facilities?"

The unofficial tally, according to the Sparta Area School District, was 1,897 voted yes and 1,936 voted no to the referendum. All of the townships had more votes against the referendum, while the city of Sparta had more votes for the referendum.

The official Canvass of the Election Returns will be held on Monday, April 11, 2022, at 9 am at 900 East Montgomery Street, Sparta, WI in the conference room.

Yes: 1,897, No: 1,936



Riley unseats incumbent

Humphrey keeps City of Sparta council seat

By KYLE EVANS
Interim Editor

The unofficial results for Sparta mayor see Kevin Riley as the winner of the election. Riley received 978 votes, while Kristen Gust (Incumbent) received 835 votes.



Riley

The Herald asked Riley before the election, what are the most pressing issues the city needs to address? Riley stated, "growing the city's tax base, continued focus on the downtown area of the

SPARTA cont. pg. 4

Murray keeps mayoral seat

Two new faces on school board

By BOB KLIEBENSTEIN
Contributing Writer

Mike Murray will serve a third term as Tomah mayor.

The Tomah School Board has two new faces, Catey Rice and James Newlun, following the Tuesday election.

Murray was challenged by former Tomah alderman and current Monroe County supervisor Remy Gomez.

Of the 908 votes cast Murray, who owns Murray's On Main, earned 60% of the vote (548) to 39% for Gomez (360).

As in his previous bids for mayor, Murray indicated his experience as a business owner provided a solid base for municipal leadership.

In a candidate profile that ran prior the election, Murray said, "Being in the restaurant business, especially during Covid, has taught me

TOMAH cont. pg. 4

Public brings input to Sparta School Board of Education

By KYLE EVANS
Interim Editor

Closing Cataract School and eliminating teaching positions in the Sparta Area School District are topics of conversation after voters did not approve a \$2.1 million referendum during Tuesday's election.

The Sparta School Board had a special meeting in the Meadowview Middle School Auditorium on Wednesday evening to go over the menu of budget cut items. With the operating referendum not passing, there were nearly 75 people at the meeting to discuss and listen about the projected \$2.8 million shortfall in the 2022-23 budget.

"From the Sparta Area School District's perspective, obviously the district wanted the referendum to pass and it did not," Sparta High School Principal Sam Russ said. "We



Cody Morrow, of Sparta stands up to give input to the Sparta School Board.

now have a task to continue the Sparta Area School District with the resources we have."

One topic was closing the Cataract School to save money. Board member Ed Lakusek said, "After going to the meeting in Cataract last week, I learned a lot about the culture there. That is a culture we promote. Cataract students are just as important as Sparta students."

Another topic was eliminating some teaching positions. Some teaching staff

positions can be eliminated and still be in range of preferred class sizes, said Sparta Area School Director of Business Services Leah Hauser.

James Rasmussen, exiting Board Member asked Hauser about the annual staff raises which are based on consumer price index (CPI) cost of living analysis. "The administration hasn't negotiated the staff raises as of yet," Hauser said. "The preliminary budget for 2022-23 has a staff wage

increase of 4% built in, which is about \$500,000."

Residents had 2 minutes each to speak to the board during the meeting.

"Cuts should not come at the expense of our children," said Julie Ender, Sparta High School English teacher. "Us teachers need your support, board members. Do we really need all the middle management and administrators? I say no. It's

PUBLIC cont. pg. 4

Sparta School Board election results

According to the Sparta Area School District's unofficial election results, the two incumbents John Hendricks and Anthony Scholze were the top 2 vote getters for the Sparta School Board. Scholze and Hendricks will each receive 3 years terms.

Todd Wells and Patrick McKenna will be the two new faces on the Sparta School Board. Wells and McKenna each will receive a 1 year term.

Amy Lopez only missed out by 23 votes, while Marla Leverich, Jason

RESULTS cont. pg. 4

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Published by
Evans Print + Media Group
1302 River Road
Sparta, Wisconsin 54656
608-269-3186

Southeast Monroe County News by Myrna Fauska

April showers bring May flowers, according to the old adage. In the meantime we just have to suffer the wet weather and pray for some good sunny days to get the fields ready for planting.

Up the valley at Mary Parkhurst's, grandson Guy Parkhurst arrived Friday afternoon and spent the night before leaving on Saturday to go over the hill to the east to visit his other grandmother Elaine Woodard.

Here at the Feisty Fauska's, Christopher and Kit Young of Hillsboro joined me for Monday brunch at Club Chapparral. Tuesday afternoon, I was at the Kendall Public Library for book club where we discussed "Life of Pi" by Yann Martel.

And now we come to the meat of this column as I report on the lives and times of Lynette Vlasak and Sally Dana. Last Monday, the gals celebrated Monica Verbsky's birthday at Beezer's Bar and Grill in Hillsboro with Karen and Laura Theis, Shirley Richardson, Dory Stahlkoph, Deb Pesik and Mary Stanek.

Friday, Sally was at the public test at the town hall and Saturday morning the gals gave blood before attending the Solo Ensemble Contest at Hillsboro School, where Layla Marty performed in a sextet.

This week we are looking forward to Palm Sunday as we celebrate Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. We learn of His teachings during the last week of His mortal life, as recorded in the New Testament books of the Holy Bible in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.



Last Saturday, the Degenhardt family had a surprise 80th birthday party for Rueben and Shirley Degenhardt. Their family hosted the party at the Wilton American Legion. Pictured from left to right back row: Jim Degenhardt, Julie Paulson, Pete Degenhardt, Carol Ostrem. Front row: Mary Jo Ewing, Rueben Degenhardt, Shirley Degenhardt, and Jane Flock.

Museum director evaluates grants

Jarrold Roll, Monroe County Local History Room & Museum director, was recently selected to serve on a National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) panel for "Preservation Assistance Grants (PAG) for Smaller Institutions."



As a panelist, Roll reviewed and evaluated 13 grant applications submitted by historical organizations from around the United States wishing to obtain NEH funding for preservation projects. After reading each organization's application, Roll was directed to provide a thoughtful assessment of each proposal's strengths and weaknesses as measured against the goals and criteria for PAG grants.

offices, and colleges and universities — improve their ability to preserve and care for significant humanities collections. These may include special collections of books and journals, archives and manuscripts, prints and photographs, moving images, sound recordings, architectural and cartographic records, decorative and fine art objects, textiles, archaeological and ethnographic artifacts, furniture, historical objects and digital materials.

The 13 grant applications Roll reviewed came from organizations ranging from volunteer-run historical societies to research libraries with a handful of professional staff. "It makes sense that the NEH asks museum professionals who work at smaller-sized institutions, like me, to evaluate grants submitted by smaller-sized archives and museums, because we can relate to their preservation needs," Roll said.

care of what they have; real ground-level stuff.

"Even though it takes quite a bit of time to carefully review each grant proposal, I chose to be a panelist because the History Room may apply for a Preservation Assistance Grant in the future. Having evaluated over a dozen grant applications, I now have a much better idea of what goes into creating a quality grant application."

The Monroe County Local History Room & Museum is located at 200 West Main St., Sparta, and open 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday. Call 608-269-8680 or visit MonroeCountyHistory.org or Facebook.com/MCLHR for information.

Community input needed

Monroe County residents are invited to attend our virtual Community Stakeholder Meeting on April 12 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. We are looking to gather input on which community needs should be prioritized. The information collected at this meeting will help us to develop our Community Health Improvement Plan for 2023-2026.

The priority needs identified through the Compass Now Report to be discussed are: •Poverty and Livable Wages •Mental Health •Safe, Affordable Housing •Drug and Alcohol Use •Access to Health Care •Physical Inactivity and Obesity •Insurance Access and Education on Resources to Help Pay for Care

This is a critical time to have important conversations about the health and well-being of Monroe County. Our community can come together in this meeting to share ideas that will help us become stronger together.

Please RSVP by submitting your email in the following Google form: https://forms.gle/ur5PL75iC4HC8QB9 A meeting invite link will be sent to those who RSVP closer to the meeting date.

Duplicate Bridge

Winners at Duplicate Bridge on Tuesday afternoon, March 29th, were: First place - Doug Furnier and Sandra Schaefer. Second place - Ken Kuhn and Maila Kuhn. Third place - Jim Bloedorn and Ed Wendorf. This group meets regularly each Tuesday afternoon at 12:30 p.m. in the Hospitality House of St. John's Episcopal Church. Interested participants are welcome. Partnerships can be arranged. Contact Bev Wendorf at 269-6405 or 608-633-7655.

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SUDOKU Answers on page 12

Sudoku grid with numbers 1, 8, 7, 8, 2, 9, 2, 3, 6, 9, 3, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 6, 3, 9, 8, 2, 4, 5, 1.

Fun By The Numbers Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works: Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Tomah American Legion Post 201 Presents 2022 Spring Fling Car & Truck Show SATURDAY, MAY 28, 2022 Tomah Winnebago Park 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (rain or shine) Registration 9:00 to 12:00 No Classes - Open to all years \$5 per show vehicle Dash Plaques to the 1st 30 entries Show Plaque Awards to Car & Truck Door prizes, 50/50 cash award Food & drink available Todd Steffel 608-315-0077 for more information

Wanted: YARD/CRAFT SELLERS Tomah American Legion will be offering spaces to the public to rent for the annual Tomah City Wide Yard Sale - Saturday, May 7, 2022. Outside spaces: 2 - Parking (8'w x 15'd) Spaces @ \$20. (No electricity for Outside. Canopies allowed.) Indoor space: 6' tables @ \$20, add electricity @ \$5. *This is a 1-day event.* *No Firearms, Ammunition or Alcoholic beverages will be allowed on premises for sale by sellers/vendors.* Time of event: Saturday, May 7, 2022 8:00 - 4:00 *Seller/Vendor setup starts at 6:00* For information please contact: Todd Steffel - 608-315-0077 (Outside Sellers) Helene Stein - 608-343-3008 (Inside Sellers)

Crossword puzzle grid with numbers 1-70.

- CLUES ACROSS 1. Midway between south and southeast 4. Celebrations 9. Pulpits 14. Pin 15. Rare laughing 16. Parts of the circulatory system 17. Financial term 18. Pearl Jam frontman 20. Cores of vascular plants 22. Strong sharp smell or taste 23. City in S. Korea 24. One from Damascus 28. Short message at the end of an email 29. It cools your home 30. Towards the mouth or oral region 31. Intestinal pouches 33. Boys and men 37. The 12th letter of the Greek alphabet 38. Former CIA 39. A way to arrange 41. Body cavity 42. The Great Lake State 43. A type of seal 44. Stop for a moment 46. Ancient kingdom 49. Of I 50. White clerical vestment 51. Songs to a lover 55. Prices 58. Sun-dried brick 59. Where to park a boat 60. One who values reason and knowledge 64. Partner to feather 65. Sailboats 66. Actress Zellweger 67. Type of screen 68. Country singer Haggard 69. Puts together in time 70. When you hope to arrive

- CLUES DOWN 1. An involuntary muscular contraction 2. PA transit system 3. Leaves a place 4. Sweet greenish fruit 5. Lends support to 6. Chap 7. Singer Di Franco 8. Water at boiling temperature diffused in the atmosphere 9. Asserts to be the case 10. Doctor (Spanish) 11. Auction attendee 12. Characterized by unity 13. Soviet Socialist Republic 19. Way to analyze video (abbr.) 21. Nonclerical 24. Tree resin 25. The academic world 26. Khoikhoi peoples 27. Infer from data 31. Arrives 32. Apart 34. Takes on cargo 35. Beloved Hollywood alien 36. Takes apart 40. Dorm official 41. Secondary or explanatory descriptor 45. Relating to wings 47. Speaker 48. Situated in the middle 52. Loop with a running knot 53. Alaska nursing group (abbr.) 54. Beloveds 56. Establish by law or with authority 57. Border river between India and Nepal 59. Millisecond 60. Revolutions per minute 61. They 62. ESPN broadcaster Bob 63. A place to stay

- Meetings The Monroe County Board of Canvassers will convene on Mon., April 11, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Justice Center. The Sparta Area School District Board of Education will have their Committee of the Whole meeting at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday April 12 at the Meadowview Middle School Auditorium. The Monroe County Administration & Personnel Committee will meet on Tue., April 12, 2022 at 9:00 a.m. at the Justice Center. The Monroe County Economic Development and Tourism Committee will meet on Thur., April 14, 2022 at 8:30 a.m. at the Justice Center.

Sparta American Legion Ladies Auxiliary Spring CRAFT & VENDOR SHOW Saturday, April 9 • 9 a.m.-3 p.m. In the American Legion Banquet Hall 1116 Angelo Rd., Sparta, WI PROCEEDS: Area Children's Charities Food & Refreshments Available Ladies Auxiliary Bake Sale Great NEW Vendor Items: Jewelry, Wood Crafts, & MORE!

Letters to the Editor

This isn't about you – get vaccinated

Dear Editor:
In the late '40s and '50s, polio disabled about 35,000 people a year, most of whom were children. My cousin Anita, who contracted polio when she was 2, was one of the lucky ones because it only affected her left leg. Others we knew weren't so lucky.

Summers for Anita meant another round of surgery and being in a cast and a wheelchair. To prevent her unaffected right leg from growing too much longer than the left, doctors broke every growth plate in that leg. Doctors inserted a permanent metal rod in her left leg so she could walk, and there were numerous surgeries to correct the deformity in her left foot and ankle. When she recovered from a surgery, she had to wear a heavy metal and leather leg brace — think Forrest Gump. Anita was in her early teens when the doctors had finally done all they could for her.

In 1955, when the Salk vaccine became available, my parents couldn't wait for me to get my first polio shot and I admit to being scared silly. The entire school was lined up by grade alphabetically and those of us at the end of the alphabet got to watch all the crying kids in front of us get their shots. The syringe they used then was the size and shape of an Atlas rocket, but it did the job.

When the COVID vaccine was approved, I was so ready for it. I'd heard from friends who'd already gotten their shots that I'd probably feel really lousy for a day afterwards, and I did with each shot. Feel lousy for a day or get sick and possibly die? Not a tough choice.

COVID was officially declared a pandemic on March 11, 2020, and is still taking lives and wreaking havoc on families and businesses. Fully vaccinated people are getting COVID and people who've had COVID are getting it again. Why? Because only 65.5% of Americans are fully vaccinated, meaning each of the 114 million unvaccinated is a walking viral mutation factory. Every new variant puts us at greater risk of ever reaching herd immunity, of ever getting back to normal.

Most who claim, "It's my right to not be vaccinated," haven't had to worry about measles or polio or diphtheria because they were routinely vaccinated for these diseases as children. It makes no sense that people who wouldn't think twice about running into a burning building to save a puppy won't get a shot to save their own lives.

We used to trust science and were willing to get a jab if it meant we could stop polio, and we did. Because we were vaccinated then, we aren't dealing with polio now, except in small pockets of the unvaccinated.

This isn't about politics, it's about public health. This isn't about you, it's about us, and your decision to be unvaccinated is literally killing people. If you want to stop the COVID variants and truly get back to normal, just get the shots.

Danell Sulik
Kendall

New Years resolution broken

Dear Editor:
Gosh, I made it all the way to April before I broke my New Year's Resolution never to answer another Bob Janovick letter, especially with the new rules of only one letter per month. However, his latest and greatest made me laugh so loud and long, the cats scattered to opposite ends of the house, I peed my pants, and my husband looked at me like I was losing it, which in some respects I was. I did change my pants, though.

Oh Bob....were you trying to be obtuse? Do you not think your Humpty Dumpty quote applies more to the five years we had to put up with the 45th president's daily falsehoods? Or his continuing denial of his loss to Joe Biden? So much more than it applies to Kentaji Brown Jackson, who is a brilliant legal scholar and jurist, and more than merits the vote of every single Senator? But the preening Republicans on the Judiciary Committee played foolish games with their questions that basically blew up in their faces. Particularly Lindsay Graham who voted to confirm her a year ago for United States Circuit Judge in DC, but simply had the vapors about the treatment of the last three nominees, and voted against her this year. The Senate confirmed her three previous times for lesser judicial appointments. She is "supremely" more qualified than the last three Trump nominees to the Supreme Court, and she will be confirmed. That will be a good thing for our country, and for the court.

One more point. You said you only listened to "portions" of the hearings. You must have watched the showboating republicans with glee, but you missed the part where Jackson Brown stated that "new laws are the purpose of Congress, not the judiciary". Also, did you miss republican Senator Ben Sasse's rebuke of the showboating? It was in response to a question about having cameras in the Supreme Court, and his stand against that. "We should recognize that the jackassery we often see around here is partly because of people mugging for short-term camera opportunities." Well said.

Maria Lichter
Cashton

Governor Evers' fails to help rural EMS

Dear Editor:
On March 31 Governor Evers vetoed SB 89; this legislation would have aided struggling rural EMS agencies across the state. This bill would have made the requirement for the National Registry Emergency Medical Technician (NREMT) testing for Emergency Medical Responders (EMRs) optional.

The NREMT certification allows all levels of EMS personnel to operate in other states. In my case, as with many other volunteers, we have no desire to work in another state; we just want to help our rural communities.

The concern that removing the NREMT would lessen the standards for EMS personnel in the state of Wisconsin is unwarranted. The State Department of Human Services ensures that all EMS personnel in the state are trained to the high standards required to perform the tasks required. The abilities of EMS provider's qualifications should be left up to the Service director of the local ambulance service. This person will ensure all EMS personnel who work for the service are qualified and current in their capabilities. Should they wish to require their personnel to take and pass the NREMT, that should be their decision!

Governor Evers' veto of SB 89 is tragic for the residents of rural Wisconsin; it will only make the problem of getting and keeping qualified EMS personnel worse.

Raye Walz
Kendall



Jared Smith (left), of Cataract, gets his ID checked at the Town of Little Falls town hall to cast his vote on Tuesday. Poll workers included Sharon Jacobson (middle) and Carolyn Stuessel (right).

9th grade Sparta honor rolls

High Honor Roll: Daniela Altamirano Cruz, Addison L. Alvarado, Owen A. Berendes, Makayla J. Blount, Brennan L. Buchanan, Natalia Y. Campos, Lily K. Davis, Nyla Dilley, Aubrey Ebert, Logan M. Eilers, Ava G. Erickson, Kylee R. Ernsberger, Brooke E. Evans, Ellie S. Falkner, Io X. Forsberg, Maryjane A. Fulton, Grant D. Geier, Lillian B. Gilbertson, Conner R. Greeno, Graham R. Halverson, Keira J. Jerome, Arianna S. Kress, Stella B. Larock, Trey R. Manske, Hannah M. Mclendon, Hailey M. Merritt, Ellie M. Meyer, Leah L. Modjeski, Geynallys Moreno Rodriguez, Taran S. Muehlenkamp, Emma G. O'neil, Libby M. Oswald, Madison M. Pedretti, Logan J. Pena, Lillian G. Peterson, Tamara A. Pollack, Madalynn L. Polus, Lloyd T. Schindler, Amber M. Schlessler, Landon J. Steidl, Rowan P. Yourell.

Thompson, Zachary J. Treu, Gabriella L. Warthan, Emily E. Woodworth.

Regular Honor Roll:
Braxton F. Anderson, Hunter P. Austin, Ty T. Baseman, Madyson R. Beals, Hannah F. Bloyer, Bridget B. Brockman, Grace L. Buchen, Kylie D. Burton, Keli R. Castro Bautista, Tristin M. Chapman, Iris A. Charles, Gracie A. Corton, Jocelyn E. Evans, Isabella M. Floyd, Craig A. Goodenough, Abigail J. Greeno, Lily J. Gronemus, Madysen E. Henry, Derek J. Hetzel, Alexander Ibarra Garcia, Ashley G. Jaeger, Justin R. Kimpel, Grace L. Larson, Addison A. Leis, Rylee G. Losacker, Connor Matson, Delton L. McGinnis, Lucas G. Mckee, Tiffany R. Moe, Holden L. O'neill, Vanessa B. Ornes, Noah J. Peterson, Nathan M. Poss, Jordyn K. Rebeck, Gavin R. Rhead, Natalie J. Richardson, Christian M. Roche, Rebecca R. Schaitel, Loren A. Schanhofer, Anneliese M. Schmude, Gideon T. Scott, Brianna M. Sparks, Luke J. Tempiski, Jacob C.

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Sparta Citizens for Real Progress Committee

After four successful passages of Operating Referendum since 2007 Sparta Area School District's \$4.2 million Operating Referendum FAILS!

Sparta, WI • The voters have spoken. After four previous Operating Referenda for the Sparta Area School District passed by the voters since 2007, last night the voters turned down this \$4.2 million proposal. The unofficial tally was 1,936 No to 1,897 Yes votes. Sparta Citizens for Real Progress Committee (SCRPC) trusts the school board will now listen to the majority voters and actively seek to set examples of better spending for our children.

We commend our opponents for the vigorous campaign they put up but remain thankful the majority voters saw a better way than spending \$2.1 million annually for the next two years.

The committee thanks all those Sparta citizens who went door-to-door passing out fliers and putting up yard signs, to the those who worked the phones and to those who financially contributed to get our message out. We see this vote as a step toward real progress in our community for most families and households.

It's time for the school board, administration and teachers to get serious about providing a quality education at more affordable costs. Their pattern of rapidly increased spending over the last seven years, documented during our campaign (with rapidly increased property taxes), and with such poor academic scores (finding us in the lower 50% of all Wisconsin schools) has proven that "more resources" is not the answer. Someone in the district needs to lead in finding how to better use the generous resources that taxpayers already provide them and to provide higher quality educations to the children of Sparta.

We intend on staying organized and with available resources will work to educate the large number of voters who didn't turn out last night. If the school board tries this foolish high-dollar proposal again in August, we will be ready to mobilize even more voters and hope to beat them by an even greater margin at that time. And if they won't lead children to a higher quality education, we will commit to helping interested parents look for a better educational alternative for their children.

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St. Pat's Archery Team scores highest bullseye in their divisions

St. Patrick's School in Sparta recorded the highest bullseye team score, in the Wisconsin DNR's State National Archery in the Schools Program tournament, for the elementary and middle school divisions.

Held virtually between March 11th and 27th, 12-hundred archers competed with teammates from their homes or nearby schools. Tatum Weir and Casey Grunseth, juniors from Gilman, were the top female and male bullseye tournament scorers. Cadott High School had the highest bullseye score in the high school division.

The National Archery in the Schools Program tournament is normally held annually in the Wisconsin Dells.



Front row-Kamron Rouse, Shelby Schwarz, Hudson Nading, Kai Jacobson, Ian Puzach, Ellee Miller, Michael Gallucci Jr., Jackson Schwarz, Jackson Wenthold. Middle-Jacob DelaRosa, Parker Benish, Joceyln Jacobson, Amaya Nastor-Middleman, Ellee Schanhofer, Meisha Hostetler, Matthew Bores, Teddi Nastor, Hera Kim, Noah DuCharme. Back-Aiden Schumacher, Camryn Schwarz, Blake Wenthold, Joe Maciosek, Eleanor Paulsen, Allie Martinson, Devin Leis, Cadin Leis, Olivia Bores, Kaden Olivares, Madysen Schwarz, Jack Schanhofer, Trygve Schanhofer. Contributed photo



St. John's March Students of the Month

Tayden (8th grade); Haley (6th grade); Gabriel (4th grade); Wendy (3rd grade); Reece (1st grade); Emmett (Kindergarten). Contributed photo

Report shows children's financial hardship

In 2019, 468,453 children in Wisconsin — 38% of all children — lived in a household with income below the ALICE Threshold of Financial Survival, according to a report. These households have incomes that don't meet the basic costs of

housing, child care, health care, transportation and a smartphone plan.

According to the ALICE (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) report, 73% of Black children, 64% of American Indian/Alaska Native children and

57% of Hispanic children in Wisconsin lived in households below the ALICE threshold, compared to 42% of Asian children and 29% of white children.

The report finds traditional measures of poverty have severely undercounted the

number of children of all races ages 18 and younger in Wisconsin who are growing up in financially insecure households.

While 12% of all children in the state were deemed in poverty in 2019, the report shows that 26% lived in

families defined as ALICE. ALICE households earn more than the federal poverty level, but less than what it costs to live and work in the modern economy.

"Undercounting the number of children who are at risk can have lifelong consequences," said Charlene Mouille, United

Way of Wisconsin executive director. "Thousands of children are locked out of receiving critical supports for stable housing, food and quality education, all of which can inhibit healthy child development."

Because ALICE households often earn too much to qualify for public assistance, the report finds that just over 297,000 at-risk children didn't access the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program or SNAP. SNAP coverage of children below the ALICE threshold varied among neighboring states, from 29% in Minnesota to 42% in Illinois; Wisconsin fell in the middle at 37%.

Other findings:

- Having two working parents didn't guarantee financial stability: 20% of Wisconsin's children lived in a home with two working adults whose income didn't meet the cost of basic needs in 2019.

- Among households below the ALICE threshold, families of Black children had the lowest homeownership rate at 9% in comparison with 59% of families of white and Asian children.

- More than 132,000 children in households earning below the ALICE Threshold had no high-speed internet access at home.

"Having accurate, complete data is the foundation for designing equitable solutions," said United For ALICE National Director Stephanie Hoopes. "COVID-19 hit ALICE families so much harder than others because they struggle to build savings yet often don't qualify for financial assistance."

According to the research, 32% of Wisconsin families below the ALICE threshold reported in the fall of 2021 that their children "sometimes or often" didn't have enough to eat. While this was less common in higher-income households, a substantial 14% of respondents above the Threshold also struggled to afford food for their children.

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Tomah's Johnson pitches no-hitter; offense unloads on Aquinas in 24-0 blowout

By MAURICE SAVAGE
Sports Writer

Tomah softball pitcher Maddie Johnson pitched a fantastic game on Tuesday, pitching a no-hitter as the Timberwolves were able to shut out Aquinas in a 24-0 victory.

Johnson fanned 9 across the five inning affair and walked just one. Behind the junior pitcher, the defense played error free to keep the Bugolds disadvantaged all game long.

Offensively, Tomah could do no wrong.

During the first inning, the Timberwolves scored 9 runs on 6 hits and 1 error.

Hannah Van Treese led off with a free trip to first after taking a pitch to the body. Olivia Wall then singled a bunt to third base. Lauren Noth followed with a single on a bunt to third base to load the bases. A wallop by Maddie Johnson ended in a double

and drove home 3 runs to give the visiting Timberwolves a 3-0 lead.

Libby Mathison took first on an error, then stole second to move to scoring position.

Kennedy Noth lined a double to left field to score Johnson and Mathison.

Kennedy Noth would eventually move to third and score on a wild pitch. Asha Eckelberg drove in another run and a triple by Wall produced the last two runs of the frame.

In the second inning the Timberwolves were able to hit five singles.

Lauren Noth hit a double that drove home two runs in the second inning and returned in the third to belt out a grand slam to lift Tomah to a 20-0 lead.

The junior wasn't done, however as she drove in two

more in the fourth and walked in her final at-bat.

Tomah scored 2 runs in each of the final two innings, the last of which came on a Wall single.

Lauren Noth had four hits and tallied 8 total RBI.

Wall went 3-3 and produced 3 RBI. Kennedy Noth finished with three hits and three runs.

Other multi-hit players include Van Treese with 3 hits and Eckelberg with a pair of hits and 2 RBI.

Tomah ended with 4 stolen bases. Kennedy and Lauren Noth each had one as did Mathison and Mackenzie Kohn.

Tomah's contest with Holmen tonight, April 7 has been postponed due to weather.

The Timberwolves are scheduled to play at La Crosse Central on Monday, April 11.

HIT PARADE

19 Tomah finished with 19 total hits in Tuesday's slugfest at Aquinas.

8 Lauren Noth ended with 8 total RBI after going 3-4 at the plate. Noth hit a pair of doubles and also a grand slam.

1 Madison Johnson pitched a not-hitter in Tuesday's win at Aquinas. Johnson struck out 9 and walked just one batter in the team's first win of the year.



Tomah's Lauren Noth went 4-5 with a pair of doubles and a grand slam in Tuesday's 24-0 win at Aquinas. Herald photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media. Illustrations by Logan Everson

THROUGH MY LENS

Save it for a rainy day

By NATE BEIER
Sports Reporter

I know it's not new news, but it's raining outside.

This week, last the last two, have produced plenty of precipitation, and thus, has all but halted the spring sports season for the next few days.

Sure, I think it's ridiculous

to think that playing base/softball in the spring is a good idea.

The fact that you can't get into a scheduling rhythm isn't just hard on the athletic directors and fans who are scrambling to figure out each day's schedule, but it's nearly impossible to expect players to actually grow and develop the right way when you play for two days and then stop for half a week.

However, I'm going to force myself to refrain from discussing the alternatives to our current spring season format. I want to, and I will again, but instead I want to focus on something else. After all, if I want real high school base/softball, all I have to do is wait until late May when Iowa starts playing their high school schedule. Their May/June/July schedule allows their kids to actually progress properly and it happens in predictable weather with sunshine and grilled meat to boot.

Today I want to talk about what to do with our rainy days

(BEIER) cont. pg 8



TAKE me out to the Ballgame

Sparta suffers season-opening loss as Central offense lights up dreary afternoon

By NICK LEONARDELLI
Sports Writer

After a delayed start to the 2022 season, the Sparta softball team finally took the field for the first game of the season on Tuesday, April 5.

Sparta's first opponent: La Crosse Central. Despite taking a pair of losses prior to Tuesday's meeting with Sparta, the Central Riverhawks showed no signs of throwing in the towel as the team combined for 18 runs on 13 hits in a three-inning contest.

Play began on the overcast afternoon with an intermittent light rain falling. Central made its own rain storm happen by knocking out 10 hits and scoring 11 runs in the first inning. The visitors added four runs in the second and third innings.

Sparta struggled at the plate, mustering just 4 hits in the shortened affair.

Hallie Burton singled in the second and scored on a walk later in the inning. Emma Blackdeer led off the third with an inside-the-park homerun. The team would score its last run on a Madisynn Bolen single and would strand one batter on the bases to end the game.

Central claimed an 18-3 win to improve to 1-2 on the year while Sparta moves to 0-1.

Burton went 2-2 with a double. Teammate Emma Blackdeer went 1-2 with an inside-the-park home run. Finally, Payton Jones went 1-2 at the plate accounting for one of Sparta's four hits in the game.

Bolen allowed 11 hits in two innings of work. Elivia Shepherd gave up 2 hits and struck out one in the third inning.

Central's Carmen Peterson picked up the win after striking out 5 and walking 3.

Sparta is set to play at Richland Center Friday, weather permitting. The Spartans will travel to G-E-T Monday and will host Onalaska Thursday.

Sparta's Emma Blackdeer takes a cut during her first at-bat of Tuesday's game with La Crosse Central. Blackdeer belted out an inside-the-park home run in her second at-bat during the third inning of the season opener. Herald photo by Nate Beier/GX3 Media.

BANGOR SOFTBALL

Defending SBC champs quell Cashton

By ZACH RASTALL
Sports Writer

The defending Scenic Bluffs champion Bangor softball team is hoping to make it three conference championships in a row in 2022. That repeat bid for the Cardinals this spring got off to a strong start in their season opener.

Bangor (1-0 overall, 1-0 Scenic Bluffs) slugged its way to an 8-1 victory over rival Cashton (1-2, 0-1) to kick off the 2022 campaign Monday, April 4 in Cashton.

In the top of the first, Bangor's Emma Fortier drew a walk, stole a base and then was driven in by Madelyn England's RBI single. The Eagles responded in the bottom of the first with three straight singles by Grace Leis, Taylor Lukaszewski and Chelsie Paulsen to start the inning that brought Leis around to score to knot the score at 1-1.

However, Bangor starting pitcher Aliyah Langrehr set the next three batters down in order to get out of the jam without any further damage. From there, the Cardinals seized control.

Bangor scored two runs in the second inning, one run in the third, three runs in the fourth and a final run in the sixth to push its lead out to 8-1. The Cardinals wound up with six extra-base hits in the game.

Madeline Janisch finished 3 for 4 for Bangor with a home run, a double, 2

(BANGOR) cont. pg 8

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Foundation helps Tomah Lions purchase SPOT device

The Etzenmueller Foundation helped the Tomah Lions Club purchase a new SPOT device for eye screening in area schools. Eye screening is conducted every year by the Tomah Lions as a service to the Tomah School District.



Sparta Robotans team

Left to right, by faces: Abbigail (Abbi) Brix, Charlie Anderson, Hayley Oswald, Kaelan Sharp, Lucy Schwarz, Christopher Wells, Josh Schmitz, Mathew Ward, Christian Perez, Charles Anderson, Shealan Settles, Derek Poss, Ciara Settles, Nathan Puzach. Not Pictured Irene Cho and Jaddan Schwarz.

Sparta Robotans come home 2nd place finalists

On March 23-26 the Sparta Robotans (The Sparta Robotics team) had some success in Cedar Falls Iowa at the FIRST Iowa Regional. The team earned rank 14 of 45 competing teams. The Robotans came home as 2nd place finalists.

New state law aimed at emergency responder safety

According to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, a new state law emphasizes that drivers must provide a safe work zone for emergency responders on the roads.

The new, Act 115, aims to protect first responders by banning cell phone use in an emergency response area and creating new penalties for drivers who injure or kill a worker on the side of the road.

Wisconsin Act 115 defines an emergency or roadside response area as the section of road within 500 feet of an authorized emergency vehicle with a visible signal, or a tow truck with flashing red lights.

PENALTIES Fines double for certain traffic violations where crews are working on:

- Highway maintenance
•Construction
•Utility work
•Emergency response
•Roadside response

If a driver causes bodily harm to a worker, they may be fined up to \$10,000 or jailed nine months, or both. A court may also order 100 to 200 hours of community service and mandatory traffic school.

CELL PHONE USE

The law states drivers cannot use a handheld phone while passing through a highway maintenance or construction area, or in a utility work area or emergency or roadside response area.

MOVE OVER OR SLOW DOWN

The emergency response area law improves protections for first responders to supplement the state's Move Over Law. Drivers are required to move out of the lane closest to an emergency vehicle with its lights flashing.

Learn more at http://wisconsindot.gov/Pages/safety/education/emergency-area/default.aspx

The NCAA March madness bracket challenge finished up Monday evening with Kansas defeating North Carolina. The winner of the bracket challenge was Harold Oaks of Cashton, second place was Ross O'Neil of Sparta, and third place was Ken Becker of Sparta.



Harold Oaks (left) of Cashton, accepts \$250 from Kyle Evans for his 1st place win.



Ross O'Neil (left) of Sparta, accepts \$150 from Kyle Evans for his 2nd place win.



Ken Becker (left) of Sparta, accepts \$100 from Jeff Harvey for his 3rd place win.

County Board seats election results

By KYLE EVANS Interim Editor In the County Board election results, the voters have seated 6 new faces to the County Board of Supervisors. The new faces include Jason Jandt, David Kuderer, Zachariah Zebell, Todd Sparks, Joey Esterline, and Doug Rogalla. The graph below shows each district and their results for County Board supervisor and also voter turnout.

Table with columns for Districts 1-16, Candidates (e.g., Cedric Schnitzler, David Pierce, Nodji VanWychen), and Voter Turnout percentages for various towns and villages.

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Sparta High School Junior Class Prom Court
 The Sparta High School Junior Class invites you, "To the Moon & Back" at Sparta High School in the Alton Ask Gymnasium. Prom is on Saturday, April 9th. Doors will open at 6:30 p.m. Spectator tickets are \$5 at the door. Grand March at 7:00 p.m. Dance 8:00-11:00 p.m. Front Row L-R: Nadia Tovar, Rylee Rebeck, Lily Hemmersbach, Payton Eilers, Maddi Sprain, Alyson Sprague. Back Row L-R: Levi Hanson, Sam Parent, Jordan Hyler, Charlie Anderson, Layden Ott, Matthew Zanon. Contributed photo

Careful with Easter eggs

Make sure to keep food safety in mind if you have a tradition of dyeing Easter eggs. Eggs can contain bacteria such as salmonella. The Partnership for Food Safety Education provides the following tips for keeping Easter eggs safe:

- Only use eggs that have been refrigerated and discard eggs that are cracked or dirty.
- Be sure to use food-grade dyes. It is safe to use commercial egg dyes, liquid food coloring and fruit-drink powders. When handling eggs, be careful not to crack them. Otherwise, bacteria could enter the egg through the cracks in the shell.
- Keep hard-cooked eggs chilled on a shelf inside the refrigerator. Be sure your refrigerator is 40 F or less by using a refrigerator thermometer.
- Hide the eggs in places that are protected from dirt, pets and other potential sources of bacteria.
- Remember the two-hour rule. Eggs should only be out of the refrigerator for a maximum of two hours. Make sure the "found" eggs are back in the refrigerator or consumed within two hours.
- Hard-boiled eggs are only safe to eat for one week after cooking.

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National Work Zone Awareness Week

Monroe County officials remind drivers to stay safe this construction season

hashtag, but please always refrain from using electronics while driving. Work Zone Safety Awareness Week is sponsored by federal, state and local transportation officials to draw attention to the safety of public service employees, during construction season and throughout the year. Generally, crashes occur when drivers speed through a work zone, do not pay attention to changing road conditions, run into other vehicles or highway equipment or drive off the road completely.

"We ask everyone on the road to eliminate distractions and be mindful of speed" Ohnstad said. "Even in areas with reduced speed limits, things can happen in an instant. Always expect the unexpected".

All Monroe County Highway Department field employees have completed training as Traffic Control Technicians and all Leadership Team members are certified as Traffic Control Supervisors. The work zones they establish are designed to protect both employees and motorists. The Highway Department asks that highway users do their part by driving slowly and carefully through work zones and following the directions of traffic control flaggers.

While typical construction work zones are prevalent throughout the county and state, there are also significant numbers of maintenance operations that may be short-term or moving operations. Drivers are reminded of the state's Move Over Law which requires drivers to shift lanes or slow down to provide

a safety buffer for a squad car, ambulance, fire truck, tow truck, utility vehicle or highway maintenance vehicle that is stopped on the side of a road with its warning lights flashing.

In addition, emergency or work zone areas are protected by laws that aim to keep workers safe. Fines double in construction zones and cell phone use is banned. A new state law took effect in December 2021 that expands these protections to areas surrounding emergency response vehicles with flashing lights. Please see related news release for details.

Before traveling, drivers are encouraged to check 511 Wisconsin (511wi.gov and @511WI on Twitter) or use the 511 Wisconsin smartphone app for updates on road conditions and traffic flow.

Giving undivided attention to the road:

- Don't fool around. Eliminate distractions like eating, drinking, talking on the phone or fiddling with electronic devices.
- Expect the unexpected. Speed limits may be reduced, traffic lanes may be changed and people and vehicles may be working on or near the road.
- Slow down. A car traveling 60 mph travels 88 feet per second and the faster you go the longer it takes to stop.
- Give yourself room. Rear-end collisions are the most common work zone crashes so don't tailgate.
- Allow about three seconds of braking distance. Look for signs. Orange, diamond-shaped signs usually give you ample warning of lane

closings, construction areas and flaggers and other workers ahead.

- Be patient. If you don't see workers, that doesn't mean they're not there. Observe the signs until you see one that says you've left the work zone.
- Plan ahead. Leave early or map out an alternate route. Find the latest road conditions and work zone news at 511 Wisconsin.
- Follow the law. Slow down and move over, if possible, when you see flashing lights.
- Consider turning off the phone until you reach your destination.
- During a long drive, consider leaving a voice mail explaining how long you'll be unavailable.
- If you have to make a call, find a secure place, such as a wayside or a gas station, to pull over and stop.

Learn more at <http://wisconsin.gov/Pages/safety/education/workzone/default.aspx>

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