May Member Clips

ATC

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- For 21 years, Herlitzka helped keep Waunakee's lights on



May 07
2026
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Clip resized 33%

State utilities join effort to curb power line competition

MITCHELL SCHMIDT
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After repeated failed attempts by some of the state's largest utility companies to eliminate out-of-state competition on massive energy infrastructure projects, several of those same companies have now asked federal regulators to suspend competitive bidding rules for such projects in several states, including Wisconsin.

Proponents of competitive bidding immediately blasted the effort as "tone deaf" at a time when customers across the country face rising energy rates, and an effort by utility companies to strengthen their monopoly on the nation's power grid under the guise of development needed to feed energy-hungry data centers.

Nine transmission companies — including American Transmission Company, ITC Midwest and Xcel Energy Services, which serve customers in Wisconsin — on Tuesday filed an 88-page complaint with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission targeting FERC's Order 1000, a rule adopted in 2011 that lays out competition rules and planning processes for high-voltage line projects.

The companies assert that the process for soliciting bids for certain regional transmission projects enforced by the Midwest grid operator MISO and central U.S. grid operator SPP are "unjust and unreasonable."

"This Complaint is about whether our country will seize, or squander, a generational chance to own the next century while also fulfilling the most fundamental obligation of utilities — to ensure all customers receive timely and affordable electric service," the companies wrote in the complaint. "To meet spiking load growth, we must build the transmission needed to connect new large loads and generation."

"If we succeed, we will win the race to achieve dominance in artificial intelligence, rebuild our nation's manufacturing base, and ensure we have the infrastructure needed to extract our nation's oil and gas resources," the complaint states.

The companies assert the solicitation process can delay large-scale transmission projects by as much as 20 months. One year of delay can increase construction costs by as much as 20%, for every $1 billion spent, the companies argue.

"There is zero question that the solicitation process adds an 18-month to a two-year delay in moving projects forward, and that there is a cost to that," said Ellen Nowak, former PSC commissioner and current vice president of regulatory and government affairs for ATC.

"The world is different now than it was in 2011" when the rule was adopted, Nowak said. "Energy needs are different now, and speed is the name of the game — and more regulation does not equate to speed, and the slower the connections take place, that has an impact to the customer at the bottom line."

The federal government does not directly control the grid but sets ground rules for entities such as MISO, a nonprofit established in 2001 to operate electricity markets and oversee regional planning in 15 states, including Wisconsin, and one Canadian province.

The companies are asking the commission to temporarily suspend the solicitation process for five years, or exempt competitive bidding for certain regional projects that, "if delayed by solicitation, would delay service to new generation or load." They ask the five-member commission to act on the matter by July 16.

Pushback

Paul Cicio, chair of the Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition, a nationwide group that promotes the benefits of competitive bidding on large-scale transmission projects, said in a statement the complaint is "tone deaf to the electricity affordability crisis facing Americans."

Cicio said suspending competition for five years "would expose consumers in these regions to unchecked cost escalation for years, guaranteeing higher utility bills." The coalition also asserts the complaint falsely claims that competition delays transmission development and adds costs.

The effort by some of the region's largest utility companies to curb competitive bidding on large-scale projects was first reported in March by E&E News.

Ari Peskoe, director of the Electricity Law Initiative at Harvard University, told the Wisconsin State Journal last month the companies' effort "is just the next front of this longstanding campaign, but it's all the same issue, which is they want a monopoly on interstate transmission."

"The utility business model is to build stuff, and that's how they profit," Peskoe said. "This is all about utility profits, expanding their monopoly for the benefit of their investors and, to the extent there's any benefit for consumers, it appears to be limited to the world's wealthiest corporations and no one else."

The federal filing comes as Wisconsinites continue to face rising energy rates and an influx of high-profile and secretive data center projects — enormous facilities that require considerable power to store, process and distribute applications, oftentimes artificial intelligence programs — spearheaded by companies like Microsoft and Meta.

Tom Content, executive director with the Citizens Utility Board of Wisconsin, said in an email "competitive bidding to keep costs down is a common-sense strategy that should be expanded, not abandoned."

"And to think this is being proposed at a time when affordability is a top tier issue and data center companies are not yet living up to their pledges that they will pay their own way for the massive amounts of infrastructure needed to make them go," Content said.

Wisconsinites have grown increasingly leery of data centers in recent months. Last fall, about 55% of registered voters in a Marquette Law School poll said the costs of data centers outweighed the benefits. When they were asked again in February, that had increased to 70%.

Wisconsin has at least 40 data centers, according to the industry-tracking website Data Center Map, with several being proposed or in the process of being constructed. The size and cost of those facilities can vary considerably.

Meghan Sovey-Lashua, spokesperson for the state Public Service Commission, said the federal filing is separate from the commission's ordinary regulatory authority to review utility construction applications.

Federal position

In their complaint, the companies lean into efforts by President Donald Trump's administration to accelerate the speed of large-scale transmission and generation development, most notably through the administration's Speed to Power initiative.

But the administration has also cautioned against so-called "right of first refusal" proposals, which essentially block out-of-state companies from building long-distance power line projects, in a number of states like Iowa and Texas.

In early 2025, Trump's justice department sent a letter to Iowa lawmakers expressing concern over plans to advance right of first refusal legislation in that state.

"By restricting the construction of new power grid infrastructure to incumbent electrical transmission owners, the bill can harm consumers by reducing or eliminating competition," Assistant U.S. Attorney General Abigail Slater wrote in the letter.

An executive order Trump signed last April also appears to caution against right of first refusal efforts. The order purports to underscore Trump's commitment to "unleashing American energy, especially through the removal of all illegitimate impediments" to development, production and use of domestic energy resources, according to the document.

"American energy dominance is threatened when State and local governments seek to regulate energy beyond their constitutional or statutory authorities," according to the order. "For example, when States target or discriminate against out-of-State energy producers by imposing significant barriers to interstate and international trade, American energy suffers, and the equality of each State enshrined by the Constitution is undermined."

Officials with the Electricity Transmission Competition Coalition argue the latest filing is inconsistent with Trump's Ratepayer Protection Pledge, which proposes that consumers not pay higher energy rates to power data center projects.

Peskoe said FERC does face some legal constraints on the matter, as the agency has in the past found that state right-of-first-refusal laws are illegal under federal law for being "unduly discriminatory."

"I don't see how FERC can get around that because data centers want to come online faster," Peskoe said. "That's not a way to get out of the undue discrimination conclusion."

If the commission approves the request, it would almost certainly end up in federal court.

ROFR in Wisconsin

The federal complaint comes after multiple years of failed efforts in the Wisconsin Legislature, backed by some of the state's largest utility companies, to implement measures that would regulate who can build massive power lines in Wisconsin.

Wisconsin's right-of-first-refusal proposal was by far the most-lobbied bill during the 2023-24 legislative session.

Groups backing the bill include American Transmission Company — which is owned by a group of distribution utilities including Alliant and Madison Gas and Electric and owns most of Wisconsin's transmission network — and Xcel Energy and Dairyland Power Cooperative, which operate most of the transmission lines in the western part of the state.

Those opposed include Americans for Prosperity, Wisconsin Institute for Law & Liberty, Citizens Utility Board, Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group and Clean Wisconsin.

Despite repeated attempts to pass the bill, amend it and completely redraft it, the measure appears dead after state lawmakers concluded their final scheduled floor periods last month.

MISO received multiple bids on the two Wisconsin-based projects late last year, with American Transmission Company submitting proposals for each project.

In January, the agency announced that Transource, a partnership between Ohio-based American Electric Power and Kansas City-based Evergy, and Viridon Midcontinent LLC, owned by New York-based Blackstone Energy Transition Partners, had been awarded the two projects.

Todd Stuart, executive director of the Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group, called the federal complaint a "sore loser version of ROFR" and "another effort by the utilities to defeat competition."

"When they lose in state legislatures and then lose out on competitive bids, then I guess they go back (to) FERC," Stuart said. "It would probably be better to spend time and resources working on a competitive bid than lobby with more excuses to eliminate competitive bidding."

The state's increase in data center development has also prompted state lawmakers to introduce multiple bills to regulate the facilities, though none of the proposed measures managed to cross the finish line this session.

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Hudson Star-Observer

$400 FOR NEW CHECKING ACCOUNTS!

May 14 2026 Page A03 Clip resized 35%

ENERGY

Balanced approach to generation sources is key to Wisconsin's growth, experts say

TOM STILL

Editor's note: The Wisconsin Newspaper Association is sharing with its members a comprehensive package of articles about the increasing demand for electricity and the ongoing challenge to efficiently transfer that energy where it's needed in the state. The articles are provided by Competitive Wisconsin Inc., a nonpartisan coalition that engages business, education, agriculture and labor in strategic collaborations to strengthen and grow the Wisconsin economy.

Balance is important in many aspects of life … the food we eat, the politics we preach, the work habits we follow and the exercise routines we do (or don't do).

Balance is also critical when it comes to how electric energy is generated and transmitted to our homes, businesses, hospitals and more.

That theme emerged in recent interviews with utility executives gathered through Competitive Wisconsin Inc., a nonpartisan group of business, labor, agriculture and education leaders focused on improving Wisconsin's economic competitiveness.

Their wide-ranging conversations covered the need to balance generation sources — from coal to wind, from natural gas to solar, and from nuclear to emerging technologies that may still be decades away.

They also extended to the tricky balancing act of transmitting electric power from where it's generated to where it's needed in an increasingly energy-hungry society.

"As a state, we have to embrace every form of energy," said Brent Ridge, president and chief executive officer of Dairyland Power Cooperative, which is based in La Crosse, Wis., and operates in parts of four states. "We have to find balance."

Rising energy use in Wisconsin is in part driven by the rise of large data centers, but it's also fueled by other trends.



KAITLYN DOOLITTLE/STAR-OBSERVER

The City of River Falls community solar panels.

Overall use has grown in the industrial sector, which includes agriculture and food manufacturing. Industry accounts for about 30% of the state's total energy consumption and has finally passed pre-COVID levels. Electric vehicles are here to stay. More housing is being constructed. Residential use in existing homes has climbed, led by heating and cooling units, but other systems and devices are a growing part of the picture.

"Everything in our house is getting plugged in," quipped Karl Hoesly, president of Xcel Energy – Wisconsin and Michigan.

The rise of the digital economy isn't new, added Teresa Mogensen, chair of the board of directors, president and chief executive officer at American Transmission Co. (ATC), who noted data centers have been around for years to power the internet as well as fundamental changes in how people live and how industry functions.

"This is a digital revolution that has followed on the industrial revolution of the past. We are absolutely experiencing an increase in demand … and I view it as a long-term trend," she said.

All these trends are not only complicating the generation side of the equation, but the transmission side, as well.

Alliant Energy President and CEO Lisa Barton described the electric grid as "the largest synchronous machine in the world" and offered a picture that would be familiar to many people.

"An analogy that works well is the U.S. highway system," Barton said, which is constantly evolving with new on- and off-ramps on interstate highways, efficient secondary highways, other roads and streets, and constant construction and repairs.

For travelers of all types, that system must work efficiently 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The electric transmission grid is similar: It is never static; requires regular construction and repairs; and it must be reliable and cost-effective for users. Today's electric transmission world is complicated by the need to juggle those needs in an environment dominated by regulatory hurdles that are sometimes inconsistent.

"[Transmission line siting] processes were put together decades ago and don't necessarily match the urgency of today," ATC's Mogensen said. Delays and lawsuits can slow transmission projects that are needed to match rising demand for power.

Such delays can "really stifle the economic growth for the state," she added.

ATC is a part of the Midcontinent Independent System Operator (MISO) network, which extends from Manitoba, Canada, to Louisiana. It balances the power grid throughout, shipping power to where it's needed when there are spikes in demand. Those spikes can be triggered by weather and even natural disasters.

Alliant Energy's Barton likened the system to a "Rubik's Cube" for solving questions of reliability, system resiliency, growth and affordability. But it is not without its problems.

Dairyland's Ridge noted that certain energy sources can be hundreds of miles from where the power is needed. It took 13 years to win permits for a transmission line to carry wind power about 100 miles and only two years to build it.

"The very same groups that focus on renewable energy being our sole source of energy are the same type of groups that are suing us as we try to build these projects," Ridge said. He added Dairyland works in four states that have "four very different state regulatory and climate-related laws," which suggest federal regulatory coordination could be better.

ATC's Mogensen noted Wisconsin should adopt a "right of first refusal law" that gives incumbent utilities the right to build transmission projects that connect to existing infrastructures, potentially without a competitive bidding process. Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota and North Dakota have such laws. Similar laws in Wisconsin have yet to clear the Legislature.

Despite the complex nature of expanding the transmission grid to meet today's energy demands, Jeff Keebler, chairman, president and chief executive officer of Madison Gas and Electric (MGE), thinks it's the job of utilities to do so. Public utilities cannot pick up and move like a retail store or factory — they're here to serve the needs of people in their respective territories in a balanced manner.

"We have been planning this system for 100 years," Keebler said. "Do we need to build more? Absolutely. Are we capable of doing that? 100 percent."

It's all a matter of balance.

Tom Still is the past president of the Wisconsin Technology Council.

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Milwaukee, Journal Sentinel

May 24 2026 Page E08 Clip resized 66%

WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

Data center funding isn't the same as financing home addition

Bill Marsan, executive vice president and general counsel of American Transmission Company (ATC), compared our comments about using Construction Work in Progress (CWIP) to financing a home addition: payments when the contract is signed, when construction begins and when the job is done ("Data centers might cost us now, but they could pay off later," April 17).

His analogy is disingenuous and needs three corrections. First, Wisconsin households pay installments for infrastructure they never ordered and have no say in, so it's not really their "addition," more like their neighbors'.

Second, ATC estimated this project at $109 million. Before a single transmission line was strung, with the project only 5% complete, ATC revised that estimate to $191 million. This means with CWIP financing, someone else controls the budget, and there is no recourse for cost overruns.

Third, over 200 acres of private land will be taken permanently through eminent domain to build lines that primarily serve someone else. So, this neighbor is also taking others' property.

CWIP and AFUDC (Allowance for Funds Used During Construction) are not the only options. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is proposing that large load customers pay the full cost of the infrastructure their connections require, so the costs are paid by those who cause them.

Wisconsin ratepayers deserve to know the full story.

Jason M. Walter and Eric Olson, University of Tulsa, Tulsa, OK

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May 13
2026
Page B001
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Pines awards more than $343,000 during scholarship night

BY NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

Community generosity was on display May 4 at Northland Pines High School's annual Scholarship and Awards Night, where graduating seniors received a total of $343,350 in scholarships from local Lions clubs, service organizations, resource groups, and individual and memorial donors.

The ceremony also recognized the top 10% of the graduating class, pictured to the right, along with junior and senior members of the National Honor Society, who received the Feed Our Rural Kids Crimson FORK Award.

The total does not include additional scholarships students may receive from the colleges or universities they plan to attend.

The following is a list of awards, recipients and scholarship amounts:

Feed Our Rural Kids Crimson Fork Award: National Honor Society

WHEAB Academic Excellence: Jordyn Hahn, $9,000

WHEAB Technical Excellence: Cody Price, $6,750

AirPro Jean Johnson Memorial: Milan Chobanov, $2,500

American Red Cross Blood Drive: Kylie Lester, Lily Rushman, $500 each

Andrew Schaffer Science: Vayda Barber, $1,000

Andrew Schaffer Science: Jordyn Hahn, $750

Andrew Schaffer Science: Miana Miller, $500

AWI Welding: Milan Chobanov, John Hyrczyk, $1,000

Badger Boys — Eagle River Lions Club (awarded to Juniors): Miles Kirschbaum, $500

Badger Boys — Conover Lions Club (awarded to Juniors): Hudson Warner, $500

Badger Girls — ER Rotary Club (awarded to Juniors): Giada Bass, $500

Berklee Strong — Our Angel: Aiden Minx, $2,500

Bunter Baseball & Softball: Milan Chobanov, Jordyn Hahn, $1,000 each

Conover Lions Club: Miana Miller, $2,000

Conover Lions Club — In Memory of Raymond (Ray) Johnson: Megan Barnekow, $2,000



The Northland Pines School District Class of 2026 top 10% students are, top row from left: Connor Zabel, Brendan Ceckiewicz, Jonah Will and Tanner Romaker (SOAR); bottom row from left: Breann Molle, Jordyn Hahn, Leah Verkuilen, Julie Wojtusik and MJ Busha (SOAR). Not pictured: Maria Krueger.
—Contributed Photo

Conover Lions Club — In Memory of "Bud" and Kathryn Reed: Ava Carillo, $2,000

Dairymen's Foundation, Inc.: Josh Graves, $10,000 ($2,500 per year)

Dale S. Mehr Memorial: Taylor Maillette, Sarah Nordine, $1,000 each

John Mark Price Memorial: Milan Chobanov, John Hyrczyk, Bella Nowak, Leah Verkuilen, $1,000 each

Walter S. Mehr Memorial: Ava Carillo, Milan Chobanov, Josh Graves, Jordyn Hahn, Isabelle Renkes, Michael Schmidt, $1,000 each

Dr. Peter Painless: Brendan Ceckiewicz, $2,000

Dunnie and Roselynn Richter: Josh Graves, Jordyn Hahn, Sarah Nordine, Bella Nowak, Michael Schmidt, $2,000 each

Eagle River Chain of Lakes Assoc. (ERCLA): Miana Miller, Chloe Tabbert, $1,250 each

Eagle River Chamber of Commerce — Business: Isabelle Renkes, $500

Eagle River Chamber of Commerce — Cranberry Fest: Aiden Minx, Sarah Nordine, $500 each

Eagle River Light and Water Customer: Josh Graves, $1,000

Eagle River Lions Club — Technical Program: Milan Chobanov, $1,000

Eagle River Lions Club — University: Josh Graves, Jordyn Hahn, $1,000 each

Eagle River Rotary Club: Miana Miller, $1,000



Jordyn Hahn won a number of scholarships presented throughout the night. —STAFF PHOTOS

Eagle River Rotary Club — Nicolet College: Clayton Glen, $1,000

Eagle River Union/NP Athletic Hall of Fame: Mylo Albrecht, Ava Carillo, Ryyn Darr, Aiden Minx, Bella Nowak, $1,200

John Wainwright Memorial: Sarah Nordine, Isabelle Renkes, $1,200 each

Eleanor Royal Scholarship ($1,000 Renewable): Leah Verkuilen, $4,000

Eva Schmidt Memorial — Eagle Chapter #218 Order of the Eastern Star: Mason Minaudo, $1,000

First Congregational UCC Bird's Nest: MJ Busha, William Gregersen, Kylie Lester, $1,000 each per semester

To AWARDS, Pg. 5



Kathy Huber presents Milan Chobanov with an award on behalf of AWI Welding.



Donald Mehr shakes hands with Josh Graves after announcing his scholarship given in honor of Walter S. Mehr.

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WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

Awards

FROM PAGE 1

First Congregational UCC General Education: Eden Gaulke, $2,500

First Congregational UCC Kranz: Breann Molle, Maria Krueger, Isabelle Renkes, $2,000 each

Forward Bank: Samantha Nampel, $1,000

GNC Scholar Athletes: Mylo Albrecht, Ava Carillo, Brendan Ceckiewicz, Ryyn Darr, Mykala Felesena, Joshua Graves, Jordyn Hahn, John Hyrczyk, Maria Krueger, Kylie Lester, Samantha Nampel, Bella Nowak, Isabelle Renkes, Carsen Saari, Brett Schalinske, Leah Verkuilen, Jonah Will

Jacob A Scheible Golf: Aubrey Davis, $1,500

John C. Pastori: Milan Chobanov, Cody Price, $500 each

Karen Reed: Megan Barnekow, Luke Dulay, Kylie Lester, Aiden Minx, Samantha Nampel, $2,000 each

Ken Liesegang/Class of 1971: Brendan Ceckiewicz, $2,000

Land O' Lakes Memorial Golf Outing: Jacob Beer, $1,000

Land O' Lakes Historical Society: Kylie Lester, $1,000

Lower Nine Mile Lake Association: Chloe Tabbert, $750

Marian Pasholk Hendrickson Memorial: Sarah Nordine, $2,000

Marshfield Clinic: Emma Thoma, $500

Masonic Foundation/ Eagle River Lodge #248: Megan Barnekow, Ava Carillo, Kylie Lester, Sarah Nordine, $500 each

Michael J. Obrodovich Memorial: Akyah Eldridge, $2,000

Miss Sno-Eagle: Brianna Sullivan, $1,000

Nancy J. Sweetack — Future Teaching: Breann Molle, $750

National Honor Society: Ryyn Darr, Eden Gaulke, $500 each

Nelson Ace Hardware Building Trades: Cody Price, $500

Nick Parins Memorial: Eliza Brunton, $600

Nicolet National Bank: Ryyn Darr, Isabelle Renkes, $500 each

Northern Horizon Scholarship: Natalia Lopez, $80,000

NP Senior Volleyball Player: Mykala Felesena, Maria Krueger, Bella Nowak, Brianna Sullivan, $500 each

Northwoods Children's Museum: Mykala Felesena, $500

Northwoods Land Trust: Vayda Barber, $1,000

Northland Pines Music Boosters: Katie Swendson, Chloe Tabbert, $1,000 each

Northland Pines Youth Football & Cheerleaders: Josh Graves, Isabelle Renkes, $750 each

Northland Pines Youth Football & Cheerleaders: Aiden Minx, $500



District Administrator Scott Foster welcomed parents and congratulated students on their excellent work at the start of the ceremony.

Peoples State Bank: Ava Carillo, $500

Pepsi: Vayda Barber, Mason Minaudo, $500

Peter Kable Memorial Trap (Sponsored by Boulder Junction Shooting Range, Inc.): John Hyrczyk, $2,000

Phelps/Land O' Lakes Lions Club: Kylie Lester, $1,000

Plum Lake Lions Club: Milan Chobanov, Luke Dulay, $1,000 each

Plum Lake Woman's Club: Luke Dulay, Aiden Minx, $1,000 each

R & S Winter Family Fund: Alexandra Oas, Sarah Nordine, $5,000 each

Richard Martinson Memorial / Conover Fire Department: Sarah Nordine, $500

Robert W. Martinson Sr. Memorial Scholarship / Conover Fire Department: Kaylyn Heigl, $500

Robert Patrick Gaffney Memorial Teaching Scholarship: Mykala Felesena, Breann Molle, $2,500 each for eight consecutive semesters

Sam Larsen Memorial: Aiden Minx, Michael Schmidt, $750 each

Sam Larsen Memorial: Eliza Brunton, $500

Sayner Star Lake Lions Club: Luke Dulay, Aiden Minx, $1,500 each

Sayner/St. Germain Fish and Wildlife Club: Miana Miller, $2,000

Schilleman Bus Service of Eagle River: Kaiden Lagueux, $500

Secret Chocolate Society (SCS): Sarah Nordine, Bella Nowak, Julie Wojtusik, $500 each

Senior Eagle River Volunteer Enterprises, Inc. S.E.R.V.E: John Hyrczyk, $750

St. Germain Community Thrift Shop: MJ Busha, Milan Chobanov, Aiden Minx, William Gregersen, $1,000 each

St. Germain Women's Service Club: Emma Bacon, Aubrey Davis, William Gregersen, Ava Hamblen, Aiden Minx, Samantha Nampel, Isabelle Renkes, $1,500 each

St. Germain Elementary and Montessori PTO: Isabelle Renkes, Bella Nowak, $500 each

St. Germain Lions Club: Jordyn Hahn, Julie Wojtusik, $2,000 each

St. Germain Lions Club: Aubrey Davis, William Gregersen, $1,000 each

St. Germain Northwoods Lions Club: John Hyrczyk, Kaiden Lagueux, Kylie Lester, $1,000 each

Steven R. Koskelin Memorial: Ryyn Darr, Kylie Lester, $500 each

Student Council: Vayda Barber, $800

Student Council: Chloe Tabbert, $300

Student Council — American Citizenship (2 years or more): Vayda Barber, Natalia Lopez, Miana Miller, Chloe Moran, Bella Nowak, Lily Sellnow, Chloe Tabbert, Connor Zabel

Veterans Resource Center: Milan Chobanov, Eden Gaulke, $1,000 each

Veterans Resource Center: Ryyn Darr, Kira Sandberg, $500 each

Vilas County Tavern League: Jordyn Hahn, Samantha Nampel, Isabelle Renkes, $1,000

WIAA Student Athlete: Ryyn Darr, Joshua Graves

Top 10% SOAR: MJ Busha, Tanner Romacker

Top 10% NPHS: Brendan Ceckiewicz, Jordyn Hahn, Maria Krueger, Breann Molle, Leah Verkuilen, Jonah Will, Julie Wojtusik, Connor Zabel

Notice of Meeting to Adjourn Board of Review to Later Date

Town of Three Lakes, Oneida County

Board of Review will meet on the 19th day of May 2026 at 5:15 p.m. at 6965 West School Street for the purpose of calling the Board of Review into session during the forty-five day period beginning on the 4th Monday in April, pursuant to Sec. 70.47(1).

Due to the fact the assessment roll is not completed at this time, it is anticipated that the Board of Review will be adjourned until the 15th day of September 2026 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Instructional material about the assessment and

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Three Lakes community awards more than $140,000 to seniors

BY NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

The Three Lakes School District held its annual Senior Awards and Scholarship Night May 13 to honor the class of 2026.

Thanks to the generosity of community organizations and businesses, $140,550 in scholarships was awarded.

Since 2000, the community has awarded a total of $2,291,559, including this year's amount.

The ceremony also recognized the top 10 seniors of the graduating class, students who completed 100 or more hours of community service, and recipients of Presidential Excellence and Presidential Achievement awards.

The following is a list of scholarships, awards and recipients:

Dorothy Louise Stein Memorial Scholarship: Raqual Gebele, Ethan Potrykus, Sawyer Szews and Camryn Vanderwegen

Garbowicz-Boers Science Scholarship: Jasmyn Joslin

Three Lakes Waterfront Association Scholarship: Sawyer Szews

Doug Koshuta Memorial-TL Fish & Wildlife Scholarship: Sawyer Szews

Eagle River Rotary General Scholarship: Matthew Klein

Eagle River Rotary Nicolet Scholarship: Hope Eisel

Edith Reiter Trust Scholarship: Libby Eppler and Melanie Stauffer

Eugene Step Memorial Scholarship: David Littleton

Father William Horath Memorial Scholarship: Paige Brafford, Kaylee Cornelius, Ethan Potrykus and Sawyer Szews

Forward Bank Scholarship: Melanie Stauffer

Headwaters Builders Association STW Grant: Cruz Melton

Hurvis Family Scholarship: Ayla Connor

Oneida County Tavern League Scholarship: Raqual Gebele, Jake Siedschlag and Melanie Stauffer

Red Suspenders Society Scholarship: Guinn Blaylock

Red Suspenders Society-Tom Connelly Scholarship: Libby Eppler



From left are valedictorian Melanie Stauffer, valedictorian Sawyer Szews and salutatorian Jasmyn Joslin.

—Photo By Jennifer West

Red Suspenders Society-Becky Moe: Camryn Vanderwegen

Ripco Credit Union Scholarship: Jake Siedschlag

Secret Chocolate Society Scholarship: Raqual Gebele

Sugar Camp Fire Department Scholarship: Libby Eppler

Union Congregational Church of Three Lakes Scholarship: Melanie Stauffer

Three Lakes Lions Club Scholarship: Ashton Boehm, Raqual Gebele, Ayla Connor and Tessa Christophersen

Sugar Camp Lions Club Scholarship: Hope Eisel, Jasmyn Joslin, Levi Lurvey and Camryn Vanderwegen

Sugar Camp-Three Lakes Lions Club Combination Scholarship: Sawyer Szews

Three Lakes American Legion Post 431 Memorial Scholarship: Grayson Polcaster and Sawyer Szews

To AWARDS, Pg. 2

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May 20
2026
Page B002
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From B001



The top 10 students of the Three Lakes High School Class of 2026 were recognized during Senior Awards and Scholarship Night May 13. Pictured in the back row, from left, are Levi Lurvey, Matthew Klein, Libby Eppler, Sawyer Szews, Camryn Vanderwegen, Ayla Connor and Jasmyn Joslin; front row, Melanie Stauffer, Raqual Gebele and Hope Eisel. —Photo by Jennifer West

Awards

FROM PAGE 1

Three Lakes Class of 1978 Scholarship: Matthew Klein

Three Lakes Community Foundation-Rising Star Scholarship: Raqual Gebele

Three Lakes Community Foundation-Building Our Community Scholarship: Levi Lurvey

Three Lakes Women's Club Scholarship: Kaitlyn Andrews, Guinn Blaylock, Paige Brafford, Tessa Christophersen, Ayla Connor, Kaylee Cornelius, Libby Eppler, Kailyn Fogerty, Raqual Gebele, Jasmyn Joslin, Madeleine Mahlerwein and Melanie Stauffer

Carol Yahr Memorial Scholarship: Christian Forss, Raqual Gebele and Ethan Potrykus

Three Lakes Crew Foundation Scholarship: Paige Brafford and Kailyn Fogerty

Headwaters Chapter of Muskies, Inc: Sawyer Szews

FH Himes Scholarship: Guinn Blaylock, Paige Brafford, Tessa Christophersen, Kailyn Fogerty, Christian Forss, Jasmyn Joslin, Madeline Mahlerwein, Grayson Polcaster, Jake Siedschlag and Sawyer Szews

Eagle River Masonic Lodge Scholarship: Ashton Boehm and Cruz Melton

Josephine Motylewski Scholarship: Guinn Blaylock, Tessa Christophersen and Jasmyn Joslin

R&S Winter Family Fund-Vocational/Technical/Trades Scholarship: Hope Eisel and Matthew Klein

School District of Three Lakes Community Scholarship: Ashton Boehm, Kaylee Cornelius, Hope Eisel, Levi Lurvey and Cruz Melton

Jerry "Coach Koz" Koslowski Scholarship: Grayson Polcaster

Joey Wojtusik Memorial Scholarship: Kylee Wilson

Bob Wojtusik Scholarship: Sawyer Szews

Walter's Technical Scholarship: Levi Lurvey

American Red Cross Blood Drive Scholarship: Kaitlyn Andrews and Melanie Stauffer

Education Association of Three Lakes Scholarship: Guinn Blaylock

Diane Sabrowsky Memorial Award: Melanie Stauffer

Randy Ruby Memorial Award: Sawyer Szews

Art Pertile Memorial Award: Christian Forss and Sawyer Szews

First Congregational United Church of Christ-Kranz Scholarship: Raqual Gebele

Nicolet College Foundation-Employees Scholarship: Camryn Vanderwegen

Nicolet College Foundation-John Gambill Scholarship: Elizabeth Boogren, Kaylee Cornelius and Kylee Wilson

Eagle River Light & Water Scholarship: Matthew Klein

TL Brule River & Northern Lights Snowmobile Club: Raqual Gebele

College scholarships:

Concordia St. Paul, President's Scholarship, Lutheran Heritage Scholarship & Church Work Guarantee: Christian Forss

Michigan Tech, National Scholars Gold Level, Distinguished Leading Scholar Finalist, Summer Youth Scholars Award: Raqual Gebele

UW Green Bay, Eileen & Robert Gallagher Scholarship: David Littleton

Colorado State University, Fort Collins, Green & Gold Scholarship: Aedyn Sorenson

Colorado State University, Green & Gold Scholarship: Paige Brafford

UW La Crosse, Academic Excellence: Melanie Stauffer

UW Stevens Point, Melvin R. Laird Youth Leadership Scholarship: Sawyer Szews

YMCA Teen Character Awards: Isabella Cruckson, Sawyer Szews and Melanie Stauffer

National Football Foundation Scholarship Program: Sawyer Szews

U.S. Figure Skating Graduating Senior Skating Scholarship: Julia Eaker

WIAA Scholar Athlete Nominees: Melanie Stauffer and Sawyer Szews

Tom Ainsworth Award: Sawyer Szews

Outstanding Community Service Awards: Christian Forss, Kaitlyn Andrews, Ethan Potrykus, Sawyer Szews and Raqual Gebele

Presidential Excellence Awards: Ashton B. Boehm, Tessa Christophersen, Ayla Connor, Hope C. Eisel, Elizabeth Eppler, Christian J. Forss, Raqual Gebele, Jasmyn Joslin, Matthew Klein, Levi Lurvey, Cruz M. Melton, Grayson Polcaster, Melanie Stauffer, Sawyer Szews, Camryn Vanderwegen and Thompson Wallschlaeger

Presidential Achievement Awards: Kaitlyn Andrews, Guinn Blaylock, Paige Brafford, Isabella Cruckson, Kailyn Fogerty, Kassidy Higgins-Williams, Ian Lamon, Madeleine Mahlerwein, Ethan Potrykus, Jake Siedschlag, Aedyn Sorenson, Annabella Steinbach, Mira West and Kylee Wilson

Top 10 Recognition Awards: Melanie Stauffer, Sawyer Szews, Jasmyn Joslin, Elizabeth Eppler, Raqual Gebele, Levi Lurvey, Camryn Vanderwegen, Ayla Connor, Hope Eisel and Matthew Klein

Salutatorian: Jasmyn Joslin

Valedictorians: Melanie Stauffer and Sawyer Szews

Technical Excellence Scholar: Ashton Boehm

Academic Excellence Scholar: Melanie Stauffer

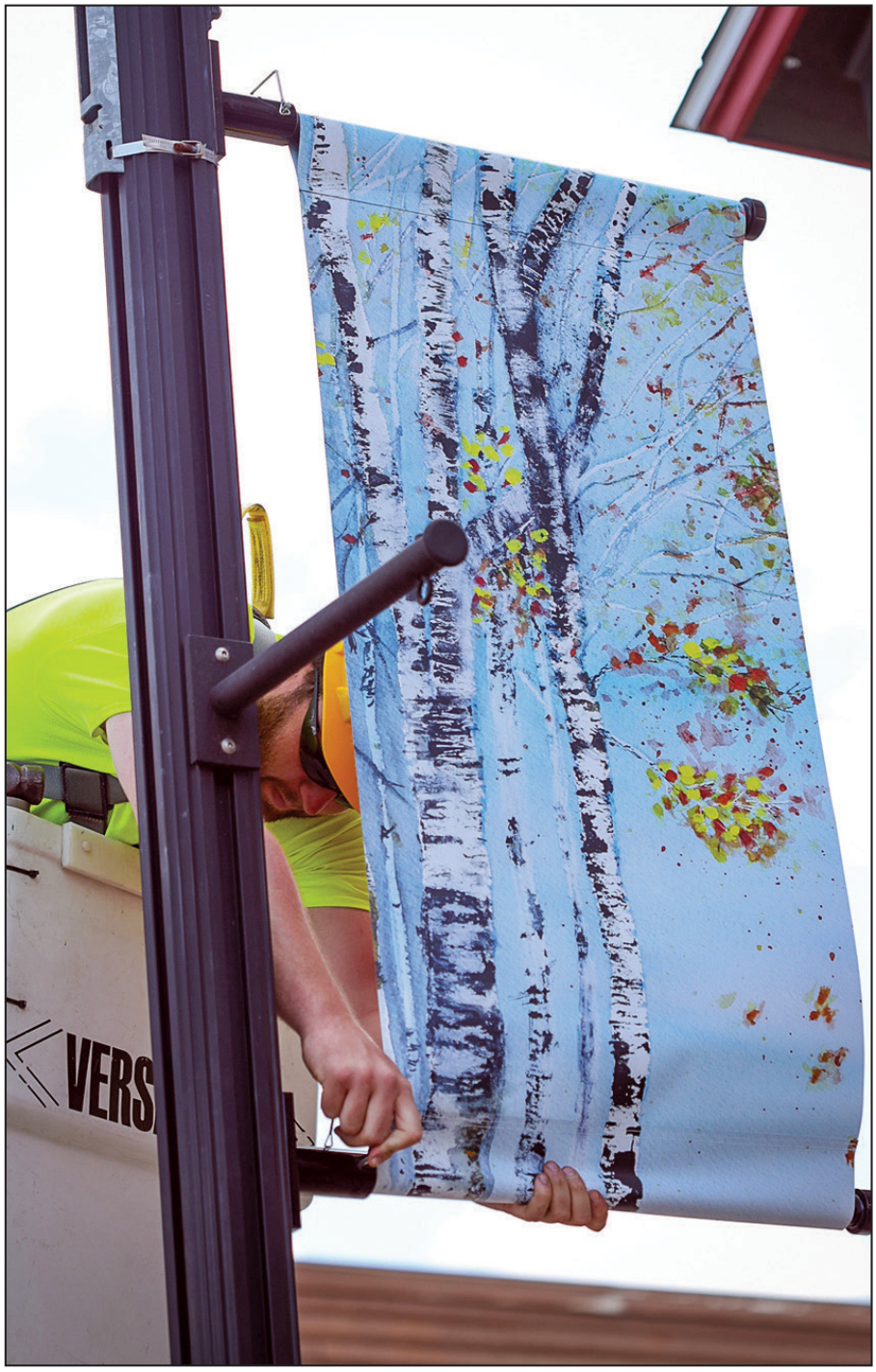
Senior Craft Shop donates to Tri-County Council

In recognition of National Sexual Assault Awareness Month in April, domestic violence and sexual assault throughout the Northwoods and coincided

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May 27
2026
Page B004
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OUTDOOR ART GALLERY — Artscape banners are once again transforming the downtown Eagle River area into a vibrant outdoor art gallery. The banners showcase artwork created by local artists and are displayed on Wall and Railroad streets through the Eagle River Revitalization Program. Eagle River Light and Water staff were out last week placing the decorative pieces on Wall Street.

—Staff Photo By MICHELLE DREW

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Eagle River awarded grant money for McKinley Blvd project

By Fred Williston
SPECIAL TO THE LAKELAND TIMES

Eagle River will receive roughly $385,000 in grant money for repairs to McKinley Boulevard, administrator Robin Ginner announced to the city's common council during its meeting on Tuesday, May 12.

The grant is part of the state's Local Roads Improvement Program (LRIP), administered by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation (DOT).

"We finally got some money for McKinley," Ginner announced, which elicited cheers from the council dais and audience members alike.

"This is a 50 percent grant," Ginner told the council. "The last estimate that we got just for resurfacing from Railroad (Street) all the way up to the terminus, was at $771,220."

Ginner said the estimate was issued last October, "so who knows where the prices are now."

"It's taken a few years," Ginner said. "This is not for the full project that I had envisioned, but this will get us probably at least a dozen years — if not more — out of the surface. ... They'll just be resurfacing it."

She also said Eagle River's light and water utility may use the opportunity to relocate some of its infrastructure beneath the road-bed.

"They could get DNR (Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources) grants — they could get grants or low-interest loans — to try and see if they can move some of the utilities that are under the roadway while we're there," Ginner said.

Mayor Deb Brown pointed out the project will not likely be undertaken this year. Ginner concurred, but was hopeful the project could proceed "at some time in the next year or two."

Brown described the experience of driving on McKinley Boulevard as being "Like a roller coaster".

Following the meeting, Ginner spoke with *The Lakeland Times* and explained the need for — and the scope of — the project.

"One of the big problems is that every time we go over a culvert, there's a big hump, then a drop — like a dip — after it, making the ride down there pretty arduous and probably pretty dangerous to people with smaller cars," she said. "It's caused because it's along the river there and there's a whole bunch of clay under there, which causes everything above it to basically slide around. We get heaving and then dropping of the culverts, depending on the weather. It makes it really bad. And that's not to mention all of the potholes and everything that are there between just a little past Indiana Street and (US Highway) 45.

"It's a really rough ride. The structure of the road is just bad, is what it comes down to."

Ginner explained the quote for the project will include the installation of a new base consisting of aggregate and other reinforcing materials.

"So that should help with the structure of the road moving around," she said. "That will help solidify the base of it. They're not just doing like a pulverize-and-resurface: they are doing a little more work than that."

Ginner said while the project is more than a simple Band-Aid fix, "it's not the complete project that we'd originally envisioned, because that meant moving all of our utilities out from under the roadway and putting in a bike/ped path along one side. So some of those things aren't going to be done with this, but the roadway itself should be dramatically improved."

She explained the project's starting-point will be at the intersection of Mill Street, McKinley Boulevard, and Highway 45 near the Ripco Credit Union.

"They're going to be going all the way up to the far end of the golf course," Ginner said, "Where the road starts to take a turn to the left and goes up a hill. It will end there at that hill."

The repairs will cover roughly a quarter or a fifth of the total length of McKinley Boulevard.

"That's because a majority of (the road) is in the town of Lincoln," Ginner explained. "We're doing probably 90 percent of what's in the city, but once you get up that hill — because you get a little bit further away and the soils are better — above that hill, the roadway is not nearly as bad, so we're not going to touch that right now, because it doesn't need it. It's from the hill down to (Highway) 45 where it's really bad."

"Most of that road is not even in our jurisdiction," she said. "So we're just taking care of what's in ours.

"We've been working hard for a number of years to try and find funding. I know people have approached me numerous times about the condition of the road. I'm just really happy that this LRIP money came through. We're looking forward to getting the roadway repaired for our taxpayers and our visitors."

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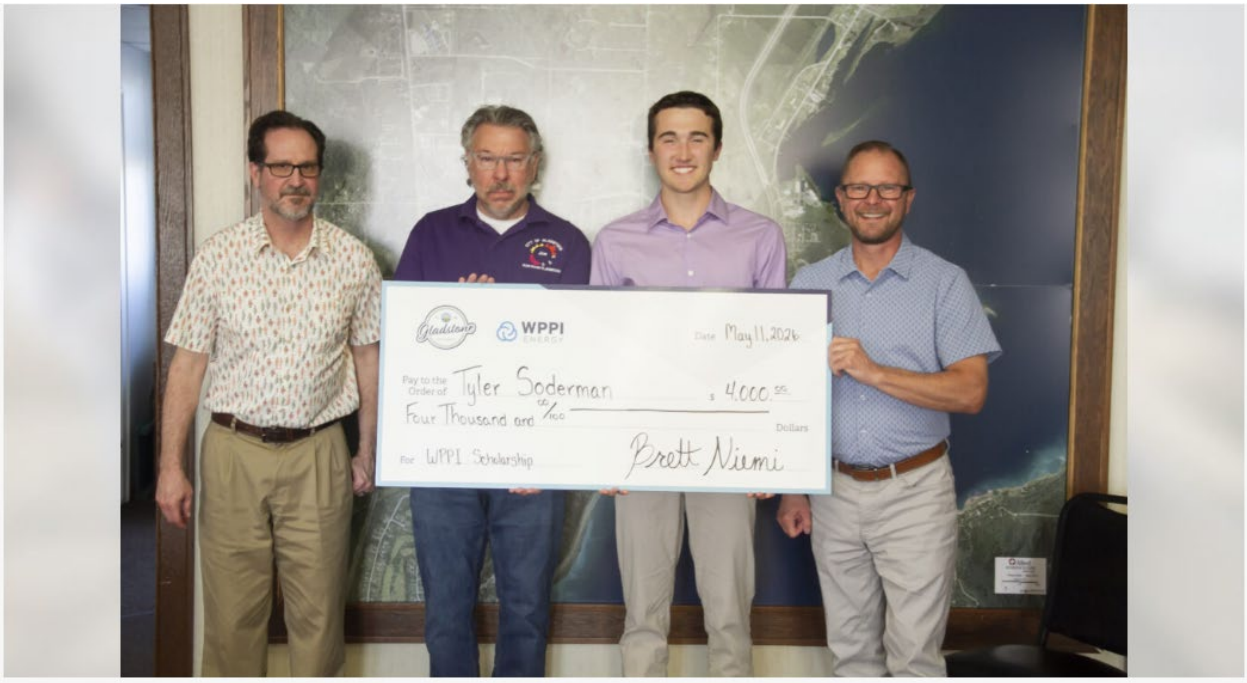
May 13, 2026 | Today's Paper | Submit News | Subscribe Today | Welcome: Rasha

Soderman awarded Public Power scholarship

May 13, 2026

GLADSTONE — Each year, member-owned WPPI Energy, which supplies electric power to the City of Gladstone, awards a scholarship to a local teen.

This year's winner was 12th-grader Tyler Soderman from Gladstone Area High School, who wrote a stand-out essay.



From left, Gladstone City Manager Rob Spreitzer and Mayor Joe Thompson present a giant check to Gladstone High School senior Tyler Soderman. The scholarship donation was made possible by WPPI, represented by Brett Niemi at right.

"Each year, WPPI provides funds to the city to use for donations and other good things for the community. And one of the things that the city chose to do with some of that money is to fund what's called a Public Power scholarship," explained Brett Niemi, Senior Energy Services Manager with WPPI.

“How we run it is — we bring advertising to the schools, and for students to apply, they have to write a short essay on what the value of having a publicly owned utility is. This year we chose Tyler Soderman as the recipient of this year’s scholarship. He did a great job putting the essay together, and we’re really happy to be able to present him with a check for $4,000 tonight,” said Niemi, congratulating the student before posing for a photograph of the check presentation to Soderman alongside Gladstone City Manager Rob Spreitzer and Mayor Joe Thompson.

Last year, two students — Max Wilson and Victoria Mantela — earned the Public Power Scholarship, which was split between them.

West Bend, Daily News



Hartford Electric receives national safety award from APPA

HARTFORD — Hartford Electric was recently honored with the American Public Power Association's Safety Award of Excellence, a prestigious annual honor for community-owned electric utilities that demonstrate industry-leading safety practices.

The award recognizes companies with low injury/incident rates, according to a news release. Public power utilities from across the United States were placed in categories according to their number of worker hours and safe operating practices in 2025, and were ranked based on each utility's incident-free records and overall state of safety programs and safety culture over the course of the year.

Hartford Electric was one of 240 public power utilities to earn the award during its Engineering & Operations Conference, held from March 29-April 1.

"The wellbeing of our workers is vital to keep our utility running at its best," said Utility Director for Hartford Electric Brian Rhodes. "This award shows that we work hard to ensure everyone gets home safely."

According to the release, APPA has conducted the safety awards program annually for more than 68 years. The association is the voice of not-for-profit, community-owned utilities that power 2,000 towns and cities nationwide.

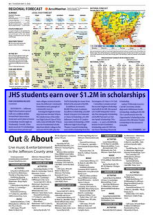
"In Public Power, safety excellence isn't achieved by chance; it's earned through unwavering discipline, strong leadership and a culture where every team member looks out for one another," said APPA's Safety Committee chair Jon Beasley,. "These Safety Award recipients stand as proof that commitment and consistency save lives, strengthen communities and set the benchmark for our entire industry."



Photo courtesy of Hartford Utilities

Hartford Electric and its line crew was recently recognized by the American Public Power Association with a 2026 APPA Safety Award of Excellence.

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May 21 2026 Page A06 Clip resized 77%

Fort Atkinson, Daily Jefferson County Union (1870-2005 & 2005-current)

WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

JHS students earn over $1.2M in scholarships

PAM CHICKERING WILSON
Contributed

JEFFERSON — Jefferson High School seniors earned well over a million dollars toward their future educational and career plans at Senior Scholarship Awards night on Wednesday. Overall, 54 students received 155 scholarships and honors from private and state colleges, technical institutions, the Jefferson Community Foundation and a panoply of community sources.

Earning the highest scholarship total was Michael Wilson, the valedictorian of the Jefferson High School Class of 2026, with a total of $208,400. Wilson won the Presidential Scholarship from Beloit College in the amount of $192,000, plus the Neff Scholarship for music from Beloit in the amount of $4,000.

In addition, he earned a $9,000 Wisconsin Academic Excellence scholarship, a $2,000 Randy Schopen Give Someone a Chance Scholarship, a $1,000 Jefferson County 4-H Leaders Association Scholarship, a $300 Jefferson High School Eagle Theatre Council Scholarship, and a $100 scholarship from the Farmington All-Stars 4-H Club.

Carmelina Gonzalez earned the second-highest scholarship total with $142,500. She earned a $116,000 Marquette University Pere Marquette Scholarship, a $20,000 Paul and Lee Didion Family Scholarship (Wisconsin — 4-year), a $3,000 Kikkoman Foods Foundation Scholarship, and a $3,500 Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship.

Aubrey Witkowski won two Carroll University scholarships and a Kikkoman Foods Scholarship, totalling $109,500. The Carroll awards were the Opportunity Scholarship in the amount of $2,500 and a Trustee Scholarship in the amount of $104,000.

More **STUDENTS** | **A7**

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WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

May 21 2026 Page A07 Clip resized 55% From A06

Students/ from A6

The Kikkoman Foods Foundation Scholarship came to $3,000.

Nyah Marin earned $108,000 in scholarships, all from Milwaukee School of Engineering. She earned the MSOE Academic Merit Scholarship in the amount of $104,000 and an MSOE Future Business Leaders Scholarship in the amount of $4,000.

Maya Warborg won a total of $105,000 in scholarships, including a Carroll University Trustee Scholarship in the amount of $104,000 and a Jefferson High School AFS Scholarship in the amount of $1,000.

Melanie Warner won a total of $104,000 in scholarships, all in the form of a Carroll University Trustee Scholarship.

Trinity Topel also earned $104,000 in scholarships, including a Carroll University Voorhees Scholarship in the amount of $96,000, a Carroll University Hilger Tradition Award in the amount of $2,000, the Dylan's Dream Scholarship from Carroll in the amount of $3,000, a Fort HealthCare Partners Wood Finn Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $2,000, and a Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $1,000.

Gavin Berge won $90,000 in scholarships, including an $88,000 Carroll University Charles Carroll Scholarship and a Carroll University Hilger Tradition Award of $2,000.

Benjamin Armstrong won two scholarships from Grand Valley State University totaling $45,944. These were the Grand Valley Excellence Award in the amount of $41,944 and the Grand Valley Laker Lane Scholarship in the amount of $4,000.

Bennett Lehman earned $30,500 in scholarships, including a $4,000 Francis F. Carnes Educational Charitable Trust Scholarship, a $1,000 Hamilton Relay Scholarship, a $500 Jefferson Lions Club Robert Cowley Memorial Scholarship, a $1,000 Jefferson Utilities/WPPI Energy Public Power Essay award, a Lighthouse Guild Scholarship in the amount of $10,000, a National Federation of the Blind Scholarship in the amount of $10,000, a Randy Schopen Give Someone a Chance Scholarship in the amount of $2,000, and a Wisconsin Council of the Blind & Visually Impaired Scholarship in the amount of $2,000.

Hannah Werning amassed the highest number of individual scholarships this year for a total of $25,800. These included the Adam Lee Memorial Scholarship for engineering in the amount of $5,000, the Dr. John L. Phelps Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $500, the Francis F. Carnes Educational Charitable Trust Scholarship in the amount of $4,000, the $1,000 Jefferson Optimist Award, a $2,500 Jefferson Rotary Club Scholarship, a $1,000 Student Council Leadership Award, a $3,500 Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship, a $8,000 Academic Merit Scholarship from the University of Wisconsin-Platteville, and a $300 award from the Yellow Thunder Officials Association.

She also won Jefferson Lions Club Senior Athlete of the Year honors, a non-monetary award and plaque.

Jayden Ridgeman won a total of $22,500 in scholarships, including a $6,000 Gaylin Morgan Memorial Scholarship, a $2,500 Jefferson Rotary Club scholarship, a $6,000 Michelle and Craig Auerbach Memorial scholarship, and the $8,000 Sheri Sell Nero Scholarship.

Breanna Buchholz won a total of $13,500 in scholarships. She earned a $4,000 Brett Magritz Memorial Scholarship, a $1,000 Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship, a $500 Jefferson Eagles Athletic Booster Club Scholarship, a $500 Jefferson Lions Club Robert Cowley Memorial Scholarship, a $4,000 Paul and Lee Didion Family Scholarship (Wisconsin — 2-year), and a Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $3,500.

Kyler Pulkrabek, the salutatorian of the Jefferson High School Class of 2026, won a total of $12,100 in scholarships, including a $1,500 American Red Cross scholarship in recognition of her serving as the Jefferson High School Blood Drive Coordinator, an Emma, Esther and Marcella Friedel Scholarship in the amount of $500, a $1,000 Gemuetlichkeit Days Scholarship, a $100 John Phillip Sousa Award, and a Wisconsin Academic Excellence Scholarship in the amount of $9,000.

Adam Nobling earned $10,500 in scholarships. These included the Foundation Stone Scholarship of $2,500, a Jefferson Rotary Club Scholarship worth $2,500, a Reinel Law Enforcement Scholarship award of $2,000, and a Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship worth $3,500.

Evan Sukow earned $9,250 in scholarships, including a Wisconsin Technical Excellence award of $6,750, a Brad Russell Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $1,000, a Ryan's Auto Care Scholarship in the amount of $500, and the Oscar and Junerose Beale Scholarship worth $1,000.

McKenzi Coplien won $9,000 in scholarships. These include the Brett Magritz Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $4,000, the Burkert-Dooge Scholarship worth $2,000, and a Kikkoman Foods Foundation Scholarship worth $3,000.

Madeline Dehnert won a total of $9,000 in scholarships, including the Fern Fernolz Goff Scholarship worth $1,500, a Fort Community Credit Union Scholarship worth $2,000, a Fort Memorial Hospital Dr. Robert G. Handeyside Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $2,000, a Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $1,000, and a Jefferson Rotary Club Scholarship of $2,500.

Johannah Kraus won $8,900 in scholarships. These include a $1,000 Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship, a $2,500 Jefferson Rotary Club Scholarship, a $1,000 Jefferson Sno-Hawks Snowmobile Club Scholarship, a $2,000 Jefferson Sportsmen's Club Scholarship, a $2,000 Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship, and a $400 Student Council Senior Leadership Award.

Kiernan Kawleski won $7,900 in scholarships, including a $1,000 scholarship from the American Legion Auxiliary associated with the Local Reinhardt Windl American Legion Post #164, a $4,000 Brett Magritz Memorial Scholarship, a Fort Memorial Hospital Dr. Robert G. Handeyside Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $1,000; a Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $1,000, a Ryan Keuler Memorial Award worth $500 and a Student Council Senior Leadership Award of $400.

Andrea Mejia received $7,500 in scholarships. These included a $5,000 Adam Lee Memorial Scholarship for medical studies, the ALCHA Foundation Scholarship worth $1,500, and a $1,000 Sheri A. Biwer Memorial Scholarship.

Maddie Schumann won $7,000 in scholarships. These include the American Red Cross Top Donor award of $500, a Francis. F. Carnes Educational Charitable Trust Scholarship in the amount of $4,000, a Jefferson County Retired Educators' Association Scholarship of $1,000, a Joseph P. Houston Jr. Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $500, and the $1,000 Kenneth and Sonja Leipold Memorial Scholarship.

Ayden Mitchell won a $6,750 Wisconsin Technical Excellence scholarship.

Saige McWilliam earned $6,200 in scholarships, including a $200 FFA Alumni Scholarship, a $500 Jefferson County Master Gardeners and Volunteer Association Scholarship, a $2,000 Steven H. Lipperer Memorial Award, a $2,000 Stuart and Stanley Hake Agricultural Scholarship, and a $1,500 Vietnam Veterans of America Blackhawk Chapter 409 Richard L. Bowers Memorial Scholarship.

Katelyn Abendroth received a total of $5,700 in scholarships, including the Badger Truck Pullers Glen Koeppel Memorial Scholarship of $1,000, the Boos Brothers scholarship in the amount of $1,000, a Class of 1960 Scholarship in the amount of $1,000, an FFA Alumni Scholarship in the amount of $300, and a $2,400 Thomas E. Cheesebro Memorial Scholarship.

Abby Ostopowicz won a total of $5,684 in scholarships, including a $2,500 Jefferson Rotary Club Scholarship, a UW-La Crosse Alumni and Friends Foundation Scholarship worth $500, and a UW La Crosse Department of Mathematics and Statistics Scholarship worth $2,684.

Easton Hansen won a total of $5,100 in scholarships, including a $300 FFA Alumni Scholarship, a $300 Jefferson High School Eagle Theatre Council scholarship, the $1,000 Jelli's Market Jody Knoebel Honorary Agriculture Scholarship, and a $3,500 Stuart and Stanley Hake Agriculture Scholarship.

Carmen Cortes won a total of $5,000 in scholarships, including a $1,000 Gemuetlichkeit Days scholarship, a $500 Legacy Auto Sales Scholarship, and a $3,500 Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship

Ronan O'Reilly won $3,500, all in the form of a Urania Henry Bienfang Memorial Scholarship.

Jake Kerkenbush won $3,000 in scholarships, including a Kiwanis Citizenship Award of $2,000 and a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3589 Scholarship of $1,000.

Carlie Wagner won $2,900 in scholarships. These included a $1,000 County City Credit Union Scholarship, a $500 Donald D. Dunnington Memorial Scholarship, a $400 FFA Alumni Scholarship, and a $1,000 Scott E. Skalitzky Memorial Scholarship Fund Award.

Brady Jacobson earned $2,500 in scholarships. These included a $500 Jefferson Eagles Athletic Booster Club Scholarship and a Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship in the amount of $2,000.

Naomi Conigliaro won $2,500 in scholarships, including a Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship of $2,000 and a Norman and Carolyn Stoner Scholarship to the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater in the amount of $500.

Ava Collins won $2,300 in scholarships, including a $300 FFA Alumni Scholarship and a $2,000 Stuart and Stanley Hake Agricultural Scholarship.

Alex Gehrmann won a $2,000 Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship.

Francesca Sustae won $2,000, all in the form of a Kiwanis Citizenship Award.

Mason Merz won a $2,000 Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship.

Alexis Rue won a $2,000 Jordan Vogel Memorial Scholarship.

Nathan Harmon won $1,950 in scholarships, including a $1,250 David F. Veith scholarship and a $700 Jefferson High School Eagle Theatre Scholarship.

Landyn Alvarado won $1,950 in scholarships, including a $1,250 David F. Veith scholarship and a $700 Jefferson High School Eagle Theatre Scholarship.

Alyce Schultz won a total of $1,500 in scholarships, including a $500 Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Laura Jacobson Nursing Scholarship and a Fort Memorial Hospital Foundation Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship.

Jennifer Vasquez Lopez won $1,000 in the form of a Dr. Brian T.S. Turley Health Care Profession Scholarship.

Xavier Lueker won a $1,000 Senior Class/Alumni Gift Scholarship.

Eva Torres won $1,000 in the form of a Fort Memorial Hospital Scott W. Hulstein Memorial Scholarship.

Adellyna Wiedenfeld won a total of $700, including a $200 FFA Alumni Scholarship and a $500 Jefferson County Deputy Sheriff's Association Scholarship.

Jaden Golisch won a $500 Legacy Auto Sales Scholarship.

Ella Kuklinski won a $500 Jefferson Sno-Hawks Snowmobile Club Scholarship.

Justin Schnarsky won a $400 Student Council Senior Leadership Award.

Addy Nelson won a $400 Student Council Senior Leadership Award.

Brianna Horton won a $300 Jefferson High School Eagle Theatre Council scholarship.

Cesar Isael Valadez-Abrego won recognition as a Top Donor for the local Red Cross Blood Drive, earning a $250 honorarium.

Tyler Altermatt also won recognition as a Top Donor for the local Red Cross Blood Drive, earning a $250 honorarium.

Non-monetary recognitions:

Bentley Wagner won recognition as the male Senior Athlete of the Year, while Hannah Werning won recognition as the female Senior Athlete of the Year, an honor given out by the Jefferson Lions Club.

Olivia Miller earned military recognition for her plans to enlist in the U.S. Army and to serve as a combat medic.

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Kaukauna, Heart of the Valley Times-Villager



Little Chute Area School District recognized for outstanding energy efficiency by KU

The Little Chute Area School District has been named the recipient of Kaukauna Utilities' 2025 Energy Efficiency Improvement Award, recognizing the district's commitment to energy conservation and operational efficiency.

Kaukauna Utilities evaluates key accounts annually by analyzing energy-saving measures completed through the Focus on Energy program and comparing those efforts to total energy usage.

In 2025, LCASD achieved the highest percentage of energy savings among all key accounts, reducing consumption by 6.04 percent, which equates to 93,672 kilowatt-hours (kWh) saved.

"Our maintenance team has worked hard to implement efficient solutions, starting with LED lighting upgrades, which provide immediate impact," said Nathan Frailey, director of buildings, grounds, and energy. "Additionally, we have spent considerable resources at the elementary school to make sure HVAC equipment is tuned in as lean as possible without sacrificing indoor air quality or safety, a process that will be implemented at the 5-12 complex in the future."

These efforts resulted in an estimated $10,483 in cost savings, demonstrating the meaningful financial and environmental impact of strategic energy management.

"I am completely humbled by being recognized for work that I simply see as part of my role. I know that any energy savings ultimately lower, or at least stabilize, our annual operating costs. I consider projects based on long-term impact, where every little bit counts. Our goal is to build long-term energy savings over time. This frees up funds to focus on continuously improving our facilities."

Additional improvements include installing occupancy sensors to reduce unnecessary lighting, adjusting lighting and HVAC schedules to minimize runtime, and operating systems outside peak energy demand periods.

The award was presented at Kaukauna Utilities' Key Account event on May 6, where Frailey, Sr., District Administrator Heidi Schmidt, and Elementary Principal Rudy Botz joined other regional leaders in celebrating advancements in energy efficiency.

LCASD remains committed to responsible energy management and will continue pursuing opportunities that reduce costs, conserve resources, and support a sustainable future.

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THE MINING Journal
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Negaunee High School scholarships – Class of 2026 listed

May 29, 2026

NEGAUNEE — Recipients of scholarships from Negaunee High School have been named.

• Lee Robert Byman

Frank Matthews Memorial Scholarship

LaCosse Family Work Ethic Scholarship

Mike Trewhella Trades Scholarship

Miner Moving Forward Scholarship

Negaunee High School Class of 1989 Memorial Scholarship

City of Negaunee/WPPI Energy 2026 Public Power Scholarship

Negaunee High School Class of 1970 Scholarship

SET SEG Skilled Trades Scholarship

Marquette Builders Exchange Scholarship



May 14 2026 Page 001 Clip resized 135%

Board approves June 13 festival

Memorial Day Parade route authorized

By Chris Mertes
Post Messenger Recorder

The New Glarus Village Board on April 15 approved the New Glarus Chamber of Commerce application for the New Glarus Beer, Bacon & Cheese and Polkafest on Saturday, June 13, in downtown New Glarus.

Alcoholic beverages will be sold at the event, which will also feature 10-by-10 tents on Fourth Avenue between Second and Railroad streets; on Second Street be-

continued on page 20

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WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

May 14 2026 Page 020 Clip resized 44% From 001

FEST

Continued from page 1

tween Fourth and Fifth avenues; on Fifth Avenue between Second and Railroad streets; and on First Street between Fifth and Sixth avenues.

No fireworks will take place during the event, which will feature live polka bands in a tent located on First Street.

Five New Glarus Police Department officers will patrol the event from 11 a.m.-8 p.m. on June 13. June 12 will be used for set-up.

Memorial Day Parade Route authorized

The board also approved the 2026 Memorial Day Parade route. Sponsored by American Legion Post 141, the parade will begin at 8:30 a.m. and begin on Second Street from Third Avenue in front of village hall, south to Fifth Avenue turning east to First Street, continuing along First Street south to 11th Avenue, west to Second Street, turning left on Second Street before continuing south to Veterans Park, where the parade will conclude.

Library Opening set for June 4

The opening of the New Glarus Public Library has been scheduled for June 4 in the evening; more details will be announced by the village as the date approaches.

Among the updates Library Director Amy Trumble provided were the installation of shelving inside the library and the installation of fence around the outside landscaping at the new building.

Proclamations presented

Village President Roger Truttmann presented two proclamations during the April 15 meeting: One for National Linemen Appreciation Day, and the other in honor of Arbor Day.

According to the proclamation, in honor of National Lineman Appreciation Day on April 18, 2026, the Village of New Glarus and New Glarus Utilities joined utility companies across the nation in recognizing the efforts of the men and women who risk their lives daily to keep electricity flowing to our nation's homes and businesses.

"Lineworkers construct and maintain electric transmission and distribution facilities that deliver reliable electricity to millions of homes, factories and commercial and retail businesses. Lineworkers are essential in order to quickly and safely restore service following an outage, often in difficult conditions and away from their families," the proclamation reads.

Village line workers are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and are required to be ready for any situation, often serving as the first responders during storms, making the scene safe for other public safety workers. "We value the work they do and their commitment to service and safety," Truttmann read from the proclamation.

In addition to proclaiming April 18 as Lineman Appreciation Day in the village, the proclamation also extended appreciation to Electric Foreman Pat Blair, and Lineman Bill Kosmeder for their hard work on behalf of New Glarus Utilities.

The Arbor Day proclamation recalled the history of the observance: In 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and that the holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than 1 million trees in Nebraska.

The proclamation also served as a reminder that the Village of New Glarus has been recognized as Tree City USA by the National Arbor Day Foundation and desires to continue its tree-planting ways.

In addition to proclaiming April 24 as Arbor Day in New Glarus, the proclamation designates May 1 as Tree Planting Day in the Village of New Glarus and encouraged "all citizens to plant trees to gladden the hearts and promote the well-being of present and future generations."

Both proclamations were approved by the board.

Mexican food truck permit approved

Acting on a staff recommendation, the board approved a food truck permit for Epazote to operate its Mexican food truck on Tuesdays along Fourth Avenue near Village Park. Epazote paid the fee of $100 per year for food trucks to operate in the Village of New Glarus.

Police cameras purchased

Acting on staff and police chief recommendations, the board approved a recommendation from Police Chief Sturdevant and the Public Works Public Safety Committee to award the bid for new police squad car cameras to Safe Fleet for $42,290.

The village board approved the capital project purchase as part of the 2026 Capital Improvement Plan, with a budgeted amount of $45,000.

LTEs hired for the summer

Acting on a staff recommendation, the board approved Resolution R26-12, to hire three limited term employment (LTE) positions for the summer of 2026.

Village Administrator Kelsey Jenson said the three worked for the village last year and are returning to the same positions they had in 2025. The workers are: Owen Palmer, Parks & Recreation LTE at $16.39/hour; Mike Colney, Parks & Recreation LTE at $15.99/hour; and, Thomas Marty Johnson, Public Works LTE at $15.53/hour.

Board OKs special assessment for curb and gutter

Acting according to village ordinances, the board approved Resolution R26-13 Resolution of the Village Board, pursuant to Section 66.0703 of the Wisconsin Statutes Relating to Special Assessments and Charges, that requires Third Avenue property owners to petition the village for replacement of curb and gutter.

A staff report states that per Village ordinance, any resident seeking curb and gutter replacement must petition the Village Board for approval, and then is responsible for the cost of the replacement. The village is responsible for hiring the contractor for the work. The resolution outlines the payment process because it is considered a special assessment.

Board OKs new Public Works Shop roof

The board acted on recommendations from Public Works Director Scott McNett, Building Inspector Jelle, and the PWPS Committee to approve a bid for the Public Works Shop. The bid authorizes a conventional ceiling with blown-in insulation ($79,350) with additional approval of up to $90,000 total for the project to include any purlin repair and/or fascia repairs.

Jenson said there are additional capital funds available to coverage the difference in cost. She added that she believed the board and the committee reviewed the roof replacement against building a new shop and decided this option is much more fiscally conservative and will give the building extended life.

Eleventh Avenue residents petition against street widening

A group of neighboring residents on 11th Avenue spoke during the board meeting and submitted a petition against widening the street during construction.

Jenson said after the meeting that the street is being widened, but to the village standard of 32 feet.

Two of the residents also voiced displeasure with special assessments for the street project.

The board referred the item to the Public Works/Public Safety Committee for disposition, but because the street is being widened to the village minimum it is unlikely the village board will side with them.



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Qualified candidates should have an Associate or Technical degree in a related field and 5–7 years of professional IT systems administration experience, including in IT support, help desk, or a similar role. Candidates should have strong working knowledge of Microsoft systems including Windows OS, Office Suite, Active Directory, and Exchange, as well as familiarity with iOS devices and virtualization platforms such as Hyper-V or VMware. The ideal candidate will possess strong troubleshooting and organizational skills, the ability to manage multiple priorities, and the ability to work both independently and collaboratively. Applicants should also be able to safely stand, bend, and lift equipment as needed.

General work hours are Monday–Friday, 8:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m., with flexibility as needed to support brewery operations.

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May 07
2026
Page A016
Clip resized 53%

Chamber has new events, committee

The New Holstein Area Chamber of Commerce has seen a significant amount of change in the past year, including the election of a new president and vice president to create an all-female executive team for the first time in the Chamber's long history.

At the organization's annual meeting in January, Vickey Anhalt (Mae Rylie's) was elected president of the Chamber and Karlyn Schneider-Meyer (New Attitudes Dance Company) was elected vice president. They join Secretary Kathy Kovach (New Holstein Utilities) and Treasurer Sonny Schaar (Premier Financial Credit Union) on the Chamber's executive team.

Also new in the past year is the creation of the Chamber's Economic Development Committee (EDC), created when the New Holstein Economic Development Corporation ceased operations. The corporation transferred its funds to the Chamber of Commerce which has them in a separate fund earmarked for economic development efforts.

The EDC is open to anyone who has an interest in aiding economic development in New Holstein. Non-Chamber members are asked to pay a $25 annual special membership dues if they wish to be active in the committee which meets monthly on the third Thursday starting at 1 p.m. in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Anyone interested in helping economic development efforts in New Holstein can email msherry@orourkemediagroup.com.

In forming the committee, the Chamber made the City of New Holstein administrator and the chairman of the New Holstein Community Development Corporation automatic members of the EDC to encourage cooperation and communication between those three entities who have a stake in economic development in the city.

City Administrator Scott Depies has attended every EDC meeting to date. One of the EDC's first action items has been to get Depies—in his first year in New Holstein—into local businesses to visit with owners to talk to them about their businesses and see if there is anything the chamber or city might be able to do for them. A number of businesses already have been visited and that effort will continue with newly elected Mayor Jeff Hebl also being invited to future visits as that is one of his goals as well.

The EDC also applied for New Holstein to become part of the Connect Communities program through the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) and just learned on Friday, May 1 that it has been accepted. Connect Communities is a networking program through the WEDC which gives communities tips on best practices implemented by other Wisconsin communities as well as expert information from the WEDC. Jon Bartz of the WEDC was a speaker at a meeting of the New Holstein EDC and encouraged the chamber to join, as did Jason Pausma, economic development director for Calumet County, who has been a regular attendee at EDC meetings and a strong supporter of New Holstein's efforts.

Beyond the chamber's ramped up economic development efforts, the new administrative team recently held a special meeting of the board at which they reviewed all their current community and fundraising activities. Some changes, deletions and additions were made to the list, such as the Around Town Adventure held in early April and the new fundraising meat raffle held April 30 which was deemed a success. The chamber also offers a community calendar on its website, newholsteinareachamber.com.

The chamber also is seeking to hold professional improvement events for businesses such as the May 7 digital marketing seminar. More networking/social events also are being planned.

The New Holstein Area Chamber of Commerce continues to be the coordinator of many of the city's biggest annual events. It coordinates the Christmas lighting project in Kiwanis Park and the Christmas Parade and Country Christmas. The chamber also organizes the New Holstein Firefighter's Parade as a way to take some of the burden off the Fire Department when it runs its annual July picnic.

The Chamber generally meets the first Wednesday of each month starting at 7:15 a.m. at City Hall, although some evening meetings also are held during the year. To learn more about the New Holstein Area Chamber of Commerce, check out its website or find it on Facebook.



New Holstein Area Chamber of Commerce Board members this year are (front, from left) Phil Kubichka, Mark Sherry and Vice President Karlyn Schneider-Meyer; and (back) Executive Secretary Renee Jaeckel, President Vickey Anhalt, Dave Braun, Treasurer Sonny Schaar, Secretary Kathy Kovach, Dave Amel and Tom Schneider.

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Plymouth Brings Back Annual Electronics Recycling Event

May 13, 2026

Residents in the City of Plymouth will have the opportunity to dispose of their old electronics this week.

The City, in partnership with WPPI Energy, will be holding its annual electronics recycling event tomorrow (May 14th) at the Plymouth Utilities facility from 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

During the event, residents are invited to responsibly recycle a plethora of electronics, like personal devices, including cell phones, DVD players, and computers, as well as large items like microwaves, freezers, refrigerators, air conditioners, and more, free of charge.

However, there will be fees to dispose of select items, including batteries, incandescent, fluorescent, and LED bulbs, and plasma, projection, and console TVs.

Payment is required at the time of drop off, and cash or check will be accepted. A complete list of free and paid accepted items, as well as pricing, is available by visiting the Plymouth, Wisconsin Facebook page.

Those unable to attend tomorrow's electronics recycling event are encouraged to contact the recycling center vendor by calling 920-349-6495 for drop-off or pick-up availability.

Meanwhile, those who will be participating are asked to enter the Plymouth Utilities facility, located at 900 County Road PP, via County Road O.



May 07 2026 Page A001 Clip resized 74%

Richland Center, The Richland Observer

City council streamlines park board

The Richland Center City Council dismissed members of the Park Board to further streamline the city'seffort to put things under the control of the city council during a two-hour session at the Municipal Building Tuesday night.

The council voted, 4-3, in support of an ordinance dismissing the Park Board which will mean the Parks and Grounds will report to the city administrator instead of the Park Board.

The council also passed a resolution commending the five members of the Park Board for their efforts .

The council also recognized three former members who did not seek re-election. They included former alderman and mayor Todd Coppernoll and former alderpersons Tom McCarthy and Ron Fruit.

The council also filled the vacated alderperson chair in the First District when Karin Tepley became the mayor in the April election. Brad Wegner will be the new alderperson from the First District.

In other action, Utility Administrator Scott Gald announced that he had been chosen to become a member of the WPPI Board of Control. He became the first person from Richland Center chosen to sit on the board in the city's long history of acquiring power from WPPI.

Justin Running reported on the shared ride taxi service which operates in the city.

The city also aapproved three new stop signs in the city. Two will be on Sheldon Street, and the third on Jefferson Street.

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Sun Prairie, The Star

May 08 2026 Page A02 Clip resized 54%

Vehicle crash into Sun Prairie senior condominium results in fire

Chief says response exemplified 'Sun Prairie Strong' spirit

STAFF REPORT

The Sun Prairie Fire & EMS Department was dispatched to a condominium on Hunters Trail on the evening of Monday, May 4, after a vehicle struck the building, causing a structure fire.

A release from the department that evening at 11:12 p.m. stated that the vehicle left the road on Hickory Hills Street and struck two three-unit residential buildings on the 900 block of Hunters Trail in the Olympic Village development.

Sun Prairie Medic Unit 74 was first on scene and reported the driver was out of the vehicle and the fire was spreading to the building.

Sun Prairie Engine 3 stretched a hose line to extinguish the fire while Truck 1 searched the units to confirm everyone was out of the building and the fire had not spread to the interior of the building.

Madison Engine 11 assisted Sun Prairie Fire & EMS with connecting to a fire hydrant for water and forcible entry through a garage door.

The driver of the vehicle was transported for medical treatment from the scene. As of the morning of Tuesday, May 5, the extent of their injuries is unknown to Fire Chief Chris Garrison.

The release does not mention any injuries for the residents of the affected units. While the fire spread from the vehicle to the building, all residents were able to return and stay in their homes.



Sun Prairie Fire Chief Christopher Garrison

Sun Prairie Building Inspection assisted on scene and confirmed no eminent structural compromise. Sun Prairie Utilities assisted with isolation of electrical hazards and Sun Prairie Police assisted with the temporary evacuation of residents and scene control.

Chief Garrison took some time on May 5 to expand on the teamwork shown by the multiple departments and entities who assisted in managing the situation.

"I feel it is important to share the details of a significant incident from Monday evening that truly exemplified the 'Sun Prairie Strong' spirit. Our departments handled an incredibly difficult call with a level of professionalism and compassion that deserves recognition," an email from Chief Garrison to Sun Prairie city leadership read.

He added that in addition to the multiple Sun Prairie departments who responded to the call, the Dane County Sheriff's Office, Madison Fire Department and American Red Cross aided in handling the situation.

"While the tactical response is never flawless, the human element of this call was particularly complex. Because this occurred within a 55+ senior living community, many elderly residents were forced from their homes for an extended period. The success of the operation was rooted in the seamless partnership between our Fire, EMS, and Police departments. Our teams worked with extreme thoughtfulness to ensure these residents were kept comfortable and cared for throughout the ordeal," Garrison said.

He closed his message by highlighting how the crash, and subsequent response, can show what's possible with efficient, compassionate cooperation.

"This incident proved that when our departments and partners work together, we can manage even the most high-pressure situations with dignity and efficiency. I am incredibly proud of the Sun Prairie teams involved; their hard work ensured that our senior residents were treated with the utmost respect during a very stressful displacement," Chief Garrison said.



ETHAN FERRELL

A photo taken of the residential building in Sun Prairie's Olympic Village that was struck late on Monday, May 4 shows the extent of the damage to its rear exterior.



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May 08 2026 Page A03 Clip resized 66%

Sun Prairie, The Star

Sun Prairie Utilities' new building designed for the future

Sustainability another emphasis

ROBERTA BAUMANN
rbaumann@hngnews.com

Sun Prairie residents cut the ribbon on the new Sun Prairie Utilities Operations Facility Tuesday, celebrating an energy efficient addition to the community that will serve the city for many years to come.

Realizing the city's rapid growth, the utilities and construction partners broke ground on the new 83,000-square-foot building in July 2024, and the utility crew moved in in December.

At the May 5 ribbon cutting, Mayor Steve Stocker called the building "an investment in Sun Prairie's future and a reminder that our utilities are not just behind-the scenes infrastructure– they are a vital asset to this city. They power our homes, support our businesses, protect public health and make growth possible."

Later in the day during an open house, residents had a chance to tour the new building.

Sun Prairie Utilities Manager Jill Weiss said the operation had outgrown its previous 29,000-square-foot Main Street location. The garage there, in particular, could no longer contain all of the vehicles.

Cody Conrad, Sun Prairie Utilities accountant who served as the project manager on the new building, added that the crew sometimes had to play "Tetra" when they needed to access a certain vehicle, moving others that were parked surrounding it.



ROBERTA BAUMANN

Mayor Steve Stocker chats with members of Sun Prairie Utilities staff at the new facility's open house on May 5. At the ribbon cutting earlier in the day, Stocker called the building "an investment in Sun Prairie's future."

Designed by Kueny Architects with Miron Construction Co. as the general contractor, the new building also has indoor space to store sensitive inventory, such as transformers, along with wire reels, which are more flexible when kept out of snow and cold temperatures, Conrad and Weiss said. Added space to maneuver vehicles has also increased the operation's safety overall.

And, the location can accommodate new growth, they said, adding Sun Prairie Utilities is among the fastest growing. The site was designed to serve the city for the next 30 to 50 years, and land is available for building expansions, Weiss said.

Another goal was to have the building achieve LEED Gold Certification, using the most sustainable building practices possible, and Conrad noted the building is on target for the certification.



ROBERTA BAUMANN

Sun Prairie residents had a chance to chat with utility staff and pick up lightbulbs, water bottles and other items during the May 5 open house. The new building also offers space for community organizations to meet and host events.

The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design is a framework used to measure sustainability. The all-electric facility makes use of solar and geothermal energy, and has eliminated the use of fossil fuels, Conrad said. A Sun Prairie Utilities brochure explains other considerations, including the reuse of a previously developed site, light pollution reduction, landscaping, construction materials and indoor environmental quality.

Some of the vehicles that staff uses are electric or hybrid, but Weiss pointed out that a fully electric fleet was not feasible.

"We have to make sure it makes sense financially," Weiss said

The new building also offers space for community organizations to meet. It contains a board room for the utility commission, and if needed, the city council can use it as their chambers.

Civic groups can use the training room for events and meetings, as well.

"We wanted community space, too, especially because we're so interconnected," Weiss said.

The new building also acknowledges the public utilities' long history in Sun Prairie, with photographs of some of the first water towers and other sites.

It had operated out of its Main Street location for more than 50 years before moving into the new 510 Linnerud Drive facility.

Stocker noted the city's responsibility to plan ahead and build thoughtfully for the future as it grows.

"That's exactly what this utility represents. It's about reliability, capacity and resilience," Stocker said. "It's about making sure that as our neighborhoods expand and new opportunities emerge, the foundation beneath it is solid."

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May 05 2026 Page A003 Clip resized 47%

Madison, Wisconsin State Journal

WISCONSIN NEWS TRACKER

SUN PRAIRIE | ELECTIONS

Plan reduces polling sites

CHRIS RICKERT
crickert@madison.com

Citing changes in voting behavior and technology, Sun Prairie officials are considering cutting the number of polling places in the fast-growing Madison suburb in half.

Under an ordinance to be introduced during Tuesday's City Council meeting, the city of about 39,000 would have one polling site per each of its four council districts, instead of the current two, as of the upcoming primary election on Aug. 11.

Sun Prairie expanded to have eight polling places in late 2019, but all of those were only in use for the February 2020 spring primary, according to City Clerk Elena Hilby.

Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, and the city consolidated into one polling place for the April, August and November elections of 2020, Hilby said. It then went to four polling places for the elections in February and April of 2021 and returned to eight for 2022.

Lessening the need for eight polling sites is the increasing popularity of absentee voting, according to a city report on the ordinance proposal. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic — which made large gatherings in public potentially dangerous — only about 15% to 20% of city voters voted absentee, Hilby said. That percentage has since increased to about 40%, she said.

There are currently 22,955 people registered to vote in Sun Prairie.

The city in 2018 also stopped using printed polling books and switched to electronic polling books known as Badger Books. That's streamlined voter check-in, Election Day registration and the overall voting process and reduced administrative delays, the city says.

The city estimates that reducing polling places to four would save $4,000 to $5,000 in personnel costs per election, or about $25,000 to $30,000 in savings every two-year election cycle. Another $3,680 in savings would come from fewer equipment and programming needs.

Switching to four polling places is not specifically a cost-cutting measure, as Hilby said her office has been looking at the change since before the failure last month of a $3.95 million city operating referendum.

"A lot of thought went into this," she said. "I would have never brought this forward if I thought it at all endangered democracy. … It is all very data-driven."

The City Council is expected to vote on the plan to reduce the number of polling places during its May 19 meeting.

Proposed locations

Here are the four proposed polling place locations for Sun Prairie. (At present, there are eight.)

District 1: Sun Prairie Utilities, 510 Linnerud Drive

District 2: United Methodist Church of Sun Prairie, 702 North St.

District 3: Sun Prairie Public Library, 1350 Linnerud Drive

District 4: Westside Community Service Building, 2598 W. Main St.

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Fort Atkinson, Daily Jefferson County Union (1870-2005 & 2005-current)

May 07 2026 Page A01 Clip resized 109%



ABIGAIL KARBUSICKY

Contracted workers took off pieces of the Waterloo water tower and carried them by crane to the ground on May 6.

PIECE BY PIECE

Controversial Waterloo water tower dismantled

ABIGAIL KARBUSICKY
akarbusicky@hngnews.com

WATERLOO — The Waterloo water tower was dismantled May 6, following years of discussion and objections from some residents.

Waterloo Utilities hired contractors to take down the water tower this week and finished the work on May 6.

The over 100-year-old water tower has been inactive since 2023, and Utilities Director Barry Sorenson said the repair cost would be too high given the structure's age.

More **TOWER** | **A2**

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May 07
2026
Page A02
Clip resized 66%
From A01

DAILY JEFFERSON COUNTY UNION



ABIGAIL KARBUSICKY

The Waterloo water tower was dismantled May 6 in pieces, with a crane taking down pieces one by one.



ABIGAIL KARBUSICKY

After taking pieces off the Waterloo water tower, contractors would use heat to flatten the pieces to be taken to a site to be melted.

Tower/ from A1

Some members of the historical society strongly opposed the project, though the society itself said in February that it did not intend to fundraise to save the tower.

Historical society researcher Heather Yohn and curator Maureen Giese attended several city meetings this spring voicing concerns about losing the historical water tower.

They expressed concerns that utilities voted to seek bids for dismantling the water tower this year, instead of next year as originally planned. Giese and Yohn argued residents needed more time to try to save the water tower, despite the historical society saying it wouldn't fundraise for it.

Sorenson noted that starting the demolition earlier could lead to potential cost savings if utilities isn't using the water tower anyway.

While the utilities considered giving the water tower to the city as a historical marker last summer, ultimately, the city found keeping it was not worth the cost.

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Wednesday, June 17, 2026 | e-Edition

For 21 years, Herlitzka helped keep Waunakee's lights on

ROBERTA BAUMANN rbaumann@hngnews.com

May 27, 2026 Updated Jun 2, 2026



As Tim Herlitzka prepares for retirement June 5, he speaks fondly of his 21-year career as Waunakee Utilities manager. The only thing he won't miss is getting up so early for the workday, which starts at 7 a.m., he said.

Herlitzka previously was the utilities' finance manager, and after a transition in the general manager role, was appointed to that post in October of 2005. He'd previously worked in public accounting for 12 years and had a specialty in municipally owned utilities. That involved a lot of travel, he said, so when he and his wife were expecting their first child, he felt finding a job with a more predictable schedule was "the right thing to do."

Several area municipalities had their own utility, but Waunakee's finance director was retiring, creating an opening.

“It just worked great. I feel really fortunate to have worked for such a great utility,” he said.

Municipal utilities differ from investor-owned companies. They are guided by a utility commission with members from the community.

“We’re basically here to provide a service; we’re not here to make money,” Herlitzka said. “An investor-owned utility like Alliant Energy or Madison Gas & Electric, they are there to provide a return to shareholders, and our shareholders are our customers, the people that live in the community.”

Herlitzka spoke proudly of the service Waunakee Utilities provides.

“A customer can call us, and you’re going to talk to a person if it’s normal business hours,” he said, adding the customer service staff are friendly and helpful.

The differences in the business models can also be seen in the utility rates. Herlitzka said Waunakee Utility residential rates are generally 25% to 45% lower than investor-owned utility rates; that’s true for commercial rates, as well, he said.

“Our businesses and schools are saving a lot of money by being served by Waunakee Utilities,” Herlitzka added.

Looking back at his career in Waunakee, Herlitzka said he is struck by how much the community has grown. In 2005, it served 4,700 customers and today has 7,700.

That’s created a need for additional infrastructure, such as the new water tower at Kilkenny Farms West currently under construction. The utility is also currently constructing a new well, Well No. 6. A large project at the Division Street substation involves adding a new and “very expensive” transformer.



Pictured is Waunakee’s new water tower under construction in the Kilkenny Farms West subdivision. This pictures was taken in April. Once completed, it will be 115-feet tall and hold 500,000 gallons of water, according to Tim Herlitzka, Waunakee Utilities manager. It is expected to be online in October.

“A lot of what we’re doing right now is related to growth and being able to stay ahead of the growth in this community,” Herlitzka said. “I think we’ve been very successful at that.”

He also credited the village's utility commission for its support in ensuring the village has adequate facilities.

Electric and water rates are set by the Wisconsin Public Service Commission, Herlitzka explained, although sewer rates are set by the village board.

The application process for an electric or water rate change through the PSC can be several months long, he said, and similar approvals are needed for new water towers and wells.

Herlitzka said the work has been satisfying.

"I greatly enjoyed working for our community. The people I work with are realy amazing and so dedicated," he said.

The customers have also been supportive, and Herlitzka credits the local citizen commission for that support.

Along with sleeping in a little more, Herlitzka is looking forward to spending more time with his family, including his wife and their 16- and 20-year-old daughters.

He plans to relax this summer and enjoy the outdoors, saying he is passionate about fishing.

His replacement is a familiar face in Waunakee. Caitlin Stene, who previously served as clerk and human resources director, has returned after working with the City of Sun Prairie. She began on May 18.

As Herlitzka looks at Waunakee Utilities' future, he sees continued growth ahead, he said, but said the utility is prepared.

"I feel like the infrastructure is very well positioned to support growth for the next five to 10 years, which is a great feeling to know that we've all worked together here to get us to that point," he said. "And I feel like the new general manager will be able to slide into a pretty good situation."