

## Local group raises concerns after broker discusses Pine Crest sale in Portage County meeting

BY JALEN MAKI  
TOMAHAWK LEADER  
EDITOR

A local group is raising concerns after a broker contracted to facilitate a sale of a Lincoln County-owned nursing home discussed details of the potential sale during a public meeting in another county.

People for Lincoln County UA, a new unincorporated association formed by county residents aiming to promote “responsible and responsive” governance, said it has been following the ongoing Pine Crest saga for the past two years, during which time a sale of the Merrill facility has fallen through, and the process to sell the nursing home has been restarted.

In a Thursday, April 10, 2025, letter to Lincoln County Clerk Christopher J. Marlowe,

Lincoln County Board of Supervisors Chair Jesse Boyd, and Lincoln County Corporation Counsel Karry Johnson, People for Lincoln County said that after conferring with legal counsel, it believes the Lincoln County Board has violated state open meetings statutes, as well as public records laws and ethical codes.

The organization pointed to several closed sessions conducted by the Lincoln County Administrative and Legislative (A&L) Committee that focused on the sale of Pine Crest. Through “informal and formal avenues,” People for Lincoln County said it has unsuccessfully sought information about what was discussed during the closed sessions.

The group said it believes the public has

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Speaking from the heart is the best way to make that much-needed human connection.  
Draco Fink photo.

## MAPS Great Speaker Forum: Human connection matters

### Beckman connects with Merrill-area high school and middle school students, delivers powerful message

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

The Merrill High School Fieldhouse buzzed with energy Tuesday morning, April 22, 2025, as nationally-recognized youth speaker Joe Beckman delivered a powerful message about the importance of human connection to students and community members at this year’s Great Speaker Forum.

Beckman captured the audience’s attention immediately with his straightforward approach, kicking things off by challenging volunteers from the audience to a dance-off and then getting the entire student body in the bleachers dancing. He also had everyone singing along to well-known John Denver and Journey hits along the way, keeping energy at a high level until the very last minute.

#### The power of human connection

Beckman said if he could summarize his entire presentation in three words, it would be these: “Human Connection Matters.”

The Minnesota-based speaker and co-founder of Till360 didn’t shy away

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## Senator Baldwin stops at businesses in downtown Merrill



Mayor Steve Hass, Senator Tammy Baldwin, and Merrill Chamber Executive Director Clyde Nelson walk together visiting about progress in Merrill.  
Tina L. Scott photo.

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin was in Merrill on Wednesday, April 16, 2025, to meet with Mayor Steve Hass and Executive Director of the Merrill Chamber of Commerce Clyde Nelson. One of Wisconsin’s two U.S. Senators since 2013, Baldwin met with the community leaders at Auntie Ray’s Coffee House where she also visited with owner Rachel Beyer and her mother before Baldwin and her entourage joined Mayor Hass and Nelson for

a walk through Merrill’s downtown to Johnsons of Merrill. There Baldwin also visited with Johnsons’ owners Robbie and Trina Johnson.

“As Mayor, it’s a tremendous honor to welcome a United States Senator to our city,” Mayor Hass said in response to her visit. “We were proud to host Senator Tammy Baldwin and give her a firsthand look at some of our incredible local small businesses. Having worked at a small business myself, I understand both the challenges they face and

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MERRILL FOTO NEWS

Student of the Week

This Week's Featured Student is

Rhys Hoffman

Son of Cory and Kara Hoffman

Rhys is in the 1st grade at New Testament Church Christian Academy. He was nominated by Pr. Paul Hohman.

What is your favorite subject in school? Why?

English, because I like to write.

What is your favorite part of school? Why?

Gym class, because you can play with your friends.

What would you like to do/become someday? Why?

Veterinarian, because I like to help animals.

Rhys is a very bright student. He always has a smile on his face. He loves to play outdoors and use his imagination. He is a great speller and loves to write.

~ Pr. Paul Hohman

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PUBLISHER'S LETTER

The Human Condition And Its Many Variations

Dear Reader,

Remember the song “Just Dropped In (to see what condition my condition was in)” by Kenny Rogers and the First Edition? In today’s world, rare indeed is the person who enjoys what we might call perfect health. It seems that nearly everyone is managing some condition, whether it’s asthma, high blood pressure, cholesterol issues, diabetes, heart disease or one of countless other ailments. The human condition itself appears fraught with conditions, ranging from the mild to the severe.

We try our best—eating well, exercising, following doctors’ orders—but even with all our efforts, good health isn’t guaranteed. It can be elusive, slipping through our fingers no matter how tightly we try to hold on. And so, we adapt. We manage. We roll with the flow, accepting that our bodies, like our lives, are imperfect.

Perhaps it’s this imperfection that makes the human experience all the more poignant. Life is never entirely smooth, nor is health, but we endure and continue on, adjusting as we go. In a way, the conditions we face are just part of the larger condition we all share: being human.

PATRICK J. WOOD

Publisher

Author of “Reflections” a new book now available on Amazon.



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Joe Beckman's animated expressions and lively demeanor keep attendees engaged.

Draco Fink photo.

MAPS

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from addressing concerning trends he's observed in his work with over one million students across 2,000 schools worldwide.

“I don’t wanna waste your time,” Beckman said. “I am not the ‘Cell phone is bad’ guy. I am not the ‘We’re going to hell in a hand basket because of technology and life was better 30 years ago.’ None of that stuff. I believe our lives are incredibly more efficient because of technology [and] in some ways more connected.”

“However, when you start to peel back the data, which is starting to come back in droves ... you start asking yourself, ‘Are these serving a greater purpose?’ We start seeing increases in nearly every single mental health condition: stress up, anxiety up, depression up, self-harm up, ideation up, all while human connection over the last 10 years has gone down,” Beckman said.

His presentation focused on three core themes that align with three chapters in his bestselling book: Love You, Push Through, and Just Look Up.

Love You: Embracing self-worth

“When it comes to this idea of seeing the good in ourselves, when it comes to this idea of seeing our lights, we are really, really good when we’re really, really young,” Beckman said. “But at some point, somewhere along the way, we start to shift our focus.

Instead of seeing all the things that we *are*, slowly but surely, we start seeing and feeling all the things that we are *not*. Somewhere along the line, we start comparing ourselves to other people, and instead of focusing on everything we are, we start seeing all the things that are wrong or imperfect, or what we would say is ‘incorrect.’”

“In fact, they did a study around this to prove this. They polled thousands of first grade students and they asked these first grade students, ‘How many of you believe you have light that you can share in your heart?’ Every single hand went up in the air,” Beckman said. “They asked the same question to a group of 10th graders: ‘How many of you believe you have light in your heart that you can share with others?’ A few sporadic hands up in the air.”

Somewhere along the line, between that time, the voice of NE kicks in, he said. “What do you mean NE? — Not Enough.”

“It’s that voice in your head this morning, just like every morning, when you look in the mirror and you say, ‘I don’t look good enough,’” Beckman said. “Or you make an error on the field and you say, ‘not athletic enough,’ ... ‘not smart enough,’ ... ‘not popular enough’ ... these messages of not enough that start into our brain, they filter out into our hearts.”

“And if you don’t think that that has an impact on how you treat yourself or how you treat others, guess again,” he said.

“The not enough started for me pretty early—second grade, eight years old,” Beckman said. “I’m the youngest in my family, and I always grew up on the heavyside of things, and I always got made fun of for it.”

He shared his personal story of how that year he received a hurtful gift—a t-shirt with “Human Garbage Disposal” written on it—and everybody starts laughing at me—a moment that kicked off his struggle with body image.

“That is the moment where I started focusing on all the things that I *wasn’t* versus all the things that I *was*,” Beckman said. “That was the moment where I told myself that, ‘Joe Beckman, your value has nothing to do with what you give and everything to do with other people’s opinions.’”

This mindset led to destructive behaviors, including making himself



throw up after meals during ninth grade.

“Some of you are looking for happiness and joy in the opinions of other people, and it feels so good when you get it, but I gotta tell you, if I could go back and give myself any advice so I could go back and do things over again, I would tell you that true joy, true happiness, has nothing to do about somebody else’s opinion,” Beckman said.

“It matters to all of us when we see the light, but it’s incredibly hard to do that when every voice in our head for the last so many years has been telling us a different story,” Beckman said. “Stop comparing yourself to everybody else.”

“You might not ever look how she looks. You might not ever have what they have. You might not have their athletic skills or whatever it is that you want from them, but guess what?” he said. “They don’t have what *you* have.”

“And I don’t care who you are or where you come from. I don’t care what rank in the class you feel you are at. *Every single one of you* brings something to the table, something to the school, some kind of light that could somehow help somebody who’s going through a little bit of dark.”

“So stop focusing and comparing yourself and your life to everybody else’s. It’s pointless,” he said. “See the light in you. Focus there.”

“The second thing I would say is, ‘Change the script. Your brain.’”

One suggestion he offered was this: Get a post-it note, write down something positive your brain needs to hear daily [You Are Enough], place it where you’ll see it, and read it aloud every day.

“Think about the amount of time we waste every day, focusing on all the things that we are not, instead of pouring that energy into all the things that we *are*,” Beckman said.

Push Through: Finding resilience in difficult times

The second part of his message addressed how to handle life’s inevitable difficulties. After suffering a sports injury that threatened to end his athletic career, Beckman learned valuable lessons about resilience.

“The question should not be, ‘How do we avoid pain and tragedy when life punches us in the mouth?’ The question is, ‘When it does, what do we do next?’” Beckman said. “And I believe we always have two options: We can live in the low or we can find a way to grow.”

He emphasized the importance of allowing yourself to process grief, especially for young men who are often told to suppress their emotions.

“Here’s where weirdo motivational figures screw it up,” he said. “They look at a group of students or they look at a group of adults and they say things like, ‘Chin up, buttercup. Life was better after the tragedy,’” Beckman said.

“When life punches you in the mouth, I challenge you to live in the low, to cry it out, to grieve it out, to process it out,” he said. “Gentlemen, I hope you are listening to me right now, because we’re fed a different narrative in our society, what it means to be a man—Stuff it down, push it down, don’t talk about it. I think that’s the worst advice anyone could ever give.”

“I think living in the low is a very important part of the process, but here’s what I also think—that living in the low has an expiration date,” Beckman said. “If you live in the low and define yourself by the tragedy that you are going



Busting some dance moves was a great way to kick off his presentation before hitting the high points of his message to “Just look up!” **Draco Fink photo.**

through right now, you are giving your soul, your heart, a chance to sour.”

“Limit the low,” he said. “But when you are ready. It’s different for everybody.”

“Don’t get me wrong, I’m not trying to tell you when this is gonna happen,” Beckman said. “But when you get that tug on your heart that says, ‘Life is meant to be lived’ down here, I urge you to take step number two, which is find a way to grow.”

Just Look Up: Reconnecting in a digital world

The third part of Beckman’s presentation focused on technology addiction and its impact on mental health, comparing today’s smart phone dependence to cigarette addiction in previous decades.

“Big tobacco” was simply replaced by “big tech,” Beckman said. “... There are people making millions of dollars, putting things in these phones—every ring, every ding, every notification you get has been strategically designed to make us look down. Why? Because it makes somebody else money.”

He shared alarming statistics about screen time and its correlation with mental health issues.

“The data is coming back—to tell us is that all of this looking down and this lack of looking up is having a significant impact on how we show up—a significant impact on our happiness and a significant impact on our purpose and our legacy,” Beckman said. “We are addicted.”

“The fact is 8.5 hours a day is the average amount of time a 10th grader is looking down at a screen. This is non-academic time. That is addiction,” he said.

“The average age of depression used to be 30 years old in our society. Today ... all the isolation, all the looking down, all the lack of human connection, I believe plays a significant role in how this age of depression has dropped significantly. The average age today is less than 15 years old.”

He shared a powerful story about Sam, a high school quarterback who had attempted suicide, to illustrate how everyone struggles, sometimes invisibly. Every day, 5,400 youth between the ages of 12 and 18 attempt suicide, he said.

“Sometimes it’s really easy to know the kids who are struggling,” Beckman said, “but oftentimes we do a really good job of putting on that mask and acting like everything’s okay.”

“What I think we forget—and I need everyone listening to me on this one, please: Every single person in this room has a story and every day we have to make someone’s story a little bit easier,” Beckman said. “We get really good at putting that mask on and acting like everything’s okay and we forget that we need each other.”

A call to action

Beckman concluded with a challenge that encapsulated his message.

“I do believe once we understand that there’s a lot of broken pieces around us and that we can’t exactly know who it is ... If I challenged you to pick up one broken piece for one person every day, and you did that, and I did that, and community members did that, and teachers and staff did that, that’s how we leave a legacy that is impossible to forget,” Beckman said.

“You have a responsibility, I believe, to see where you can use your kindness, your compassion, your wisdom, to pick up someone else’s piece,” he said. “And it’s one piece for one person every day. How do we do that? We look down less, we look up more, and we will see where our kindness and compassion can be used.”

His final challenge to the audience was simple but profound: “Look down less, look up more ... that legacy can take you from there.”

The Great Speaker Forum, a tradition since 1978, was funded through donations from local businesses and community members. This year’s speaker was selected by a committee that included students who have served since sixth grade.

Beckman lives in Minnesota with his wife, Jess, and their four children. His best-selling books include “Just Look Up” and “Just Look Back,” and his work with Till360 focuses on building meaningful connections and positive school culture.

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Young Learners at 715-536-2392.

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OBITUARIES

Meredith Oehlkers



June 9, 1938 – April 19, 2025  
MONONA - It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of Meredith Oehlkers on April 19, 2025, at Agrace HospiceCare. Meredith was born on June 9, 1938, in Merrill, Wis., where she spent her childhood. She married the love of her life, Robert Oehlkers on June 23, 1963, in Merril. Meredith and Robert spent time living in New Jersey where Robert lived his childhood. They moved to Monona, Wis., in 1966, where they spent much time building a home where family could visit and enjoy.

Meredith was a Psychiatric Nurse at Madison General and Meriter Hospital and enjoyed painting nature, attending her church, Lake Edge Lutheran, going to painting retreats, playing with her grandchildren and great-grandchildren, traveling and gardening. Meredith made an impact on so many people's lives. She will be missed by all who knew her.

Meredith is survived by her brother, Peter Engel; daughter, Jacquelyn Shelton; and son, Dennis (Bobbi) Oehlkers. She will be greatly missed by her grandchildren, Cassie Mattie and Daniel Mattie (Jacci) and Rachel Marie (Dennis); as well as her great-grandchildren, Jaydin, Jordin, Alanna, Mikah, (Cassie) Taylor, Carson and Isabel (Rachel); and brothers-in-law, Bill (Lois) Oehlkers and Ken Oehlkers. She was preceded in death by her parents, Harold and Hildegard (Asmus) Engel; and husband, Robert Oehlkers.

A funeral service will be held at LAKE EDGE LUTHERAN CHURCH, 4032 Monona Drive, Madison, at 11 a.m. on Saturday, May 3, 2025, with Pastor Justin Dittrich presiding. A luncheon will follow at the church. A visitation will be held at the church from 10 a.m. until the time of the service on Saturday.

Memorials may be made to Lake Edge Lutheran Church or Agrace HospiceCare. Online condolences may be made at [www.gundersonfh.com](http://www.gundersonfh.com).

Jean M. Anderson



Jean M. Anderson, age 74, of Merrill, passed away on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the Aspirus Hospice House in Wausau, while surrounded by her loving family and under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services. She was born to the late Edward and Eleanore (Witte) Wilde on February 27, 1951 in Port Washington, WI. Jean attended and graduated from Port Washington High School. She met and married her best friend and soul mate, Steven Anderson, on October 22, 2005 in Merrill, WI. He survives.

Jean and her family moved from Port Washington to Merrill in 1982. She enjoyed being a stay-at-home mom and a homemaker. Jean had also worked at Semco Windows for some time. Family was first and foremost in her life, she looked forward to planning for all of the holidays. Jean enjoyed going into her "fun boxes" and decorating for all of the holidays when family and friends would come over; she made a house a home. She was a planner, always on time and very organized. Jean loved flowers, and would carefully manicure her flower gardens at home. She also would watch the birds and deer in the yard and liked to see the humming-birds come back year after year. When she wasn't outside enjoying the weather, she would make sure to catch every Brewers and Packers games she could. Jean also liked to start and end her day with working in her puzzle books. She had many collections of figurines. Jean was a giving and caring woman that had quite the spirit! She would exclaim, "I have my spark back"! She will be sadly missed, but her memory will live on.

Jean is survived by her husband: Steve Anderson, daughters: Kristine (Scott) Weiss and Cheryl (Mark) Radtke, all of Merrill, her twin sister: Jane (Jim) Kultgen of Port Washington, WI, brothers: Dennis (Marcella) Wilde of Saukville, WI and Gary (Jacquelyn) Wilde of West Bend, WI, nephews: Eric (Melissa) Kultgen, Alan (Kelsey) Kultgen and Kevin Wilde, nieces: Tammy (Jim) Thomas, Wendy (Paul) Greif and Kate (Ryan) Williams, as well as many great nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents.

A funeral liturgy will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, at 12:00 p.m. at Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral Home (301 Eagle Drive). Deacon Jim Arndt will officiate. Visitation will be held on Saturday, May 3, 2025, from 10:00 a.m. until the time of the liturgy, also at the funeral home. Burial at Merrill Memorial Park Cemetery will immediately follow the liturgy.

In lieu of flowers, donations in Jean's name may be directed to the Aspirus Hospice House, to help other families during a difficult time.

The family wishes to express a sincere appreciation to the nurses and doctors at the Aspirus Wausau Hospital and the Aspirus Hospice House, especially nurse Kelsey in the ICU and nurse Sam in palliative care. The staff were very professional and caring, as well as accommodating and kind.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation Service of Merrill is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstine-waid.com](http://www.taylorstine-waid.com).

PINE  
from page 1

been "deliberately kept in the dark" on these topics by the A&L Committee.

"Everyone allowed to attend the closed sessions has done so knowing that they are not to discuss what is said," the letter stated. "After all the secrecy surrounding the sale of Pine Crest, however, it appears that the A&L Committee is not requiring everyone to honor this secrecy."

The letter referenced a March 27 meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Portage County Board. During the meeting, Ray Giannini of the firm Marcus & Millichap, which coordinated last year's failed Pine Crest sale and is again working with Lincoln County, discussed details of the ongoing Pine Crest sale—details People for Lincoln County said it has been seeking.

A video recording of the meeting is available on the Portage County website. People for Lincoln County shared the recording with the *Tomahawk Leader*, the *Merrill Foto News*, and Lincoln County officials.

Giannini attended the meeting to offer the services of Marcus & Millichap as a potential broker to help Portage County sell its county-owned Health Care Center. In answering questions from the committee, Giannini referenced Lincoln County's potential sale of its facility several times.

Giannini told the committee that Lincoln County had been initially approached by five interested parties. Lincoln County Board members toured facilities operated by three potential buyers, and, as of late March, Lincoln County was "seriously deliberating between two of the buyers," according to Giannini.

Giannini said the offers proposed to Lincoln County fell between \$9 million and \$11 million, and the fee he would charge for a Pine Crest transaction would be 3% of the sale price.

He also told the Portage County committee that a decision regarding the Lincoln County facility would be made on Wednesday, April 2. On that date, the A&L Committee voted to authorize Lincoln County Administrative Coordinator Renee Krueger to "sign a letter of intent with the perspective (sic) purchaser identified as the most favorable," according to meeting minutes.

People for Lincoln County voiced its concerns about Lincoln County Board members' visits to potential buyers' facilities.

"Given the intransigence of the board to provide relevant information, we naturally, although regrettably, must wonder if these field trips have further violated the above-referenced statutes," the group stated

in the letter.

The group said the video of the Portage County meeting "clearly demonstrates the A&L Committee has broken faith with the community, and we demand that their authority to handle these negotiations be taken from them and given to a more trustworthy committee."

The letter said the public discussion of Pine Crest-related matters in another county "demonstrates that the law allowing legislative bodies to convene closed sessions no longer applies to this situation, if it ever did."

"We also believe that, in light of the public disclosure of this information, all communications considered by the A&L Committee in closed session, and all minutes from those closed sessions are now public records and subject to disclosure," the letter stated.

The letter said it would allow two weeks for a public response from the County, after which the group would "explore other remedies."

**People for Lincoln County members speak out**

In a release from People for Lincoln County, two members of the group spoke out about the ongoing Pine Crest saga.

Renea Frederick said the organization's requests for the Lincoln County Board to provide "the most basic information about the sale of Pine Crest" have gone unanswered "time and time again."

"It's a slap in the face to learn that the realtor, who's out there peddling our nursing home, is sharing information two counties away—information that our supervisors won't even share with the people who have paid taxes to support Pine Crest for decades," Frederick said. "That's not right."

Eileen Guthrie said the group's "immediate concerns are with the open meetings violations, but also the impact these violations may have had on the proposed sale of Pine Crest Nursing Home."

"If rules cannot be adhered to for the process, how can we trust this board to properly handle and negotiate the sale of a five-star skilled nursing home facility? We believe that Lincoln County needs to pause, if not stop, the sale of Pine Crest until a complete review of the process is done," Guthrie said.

**Lincoln County officials respond**

The *Tomahawk Leader* reached out to Marlowe, Boyd, Johnson, and Giannini for comment.

Marlowe said he has been contacted by People for Lincoln County requesting information related to the ongoing Pine Crest sale process.

The specific documents the organization is seeking, Marlowe explained, contain

NOTICE

Springbrook Cemetery Association Annual Meeting May 2, 2025 7 PM Pine River Town Hall

Correction: In our April 10, 2025, edition, in the "Area veterans to take Never Forgotten Honor Flight," Howard Peck of Merrill was incorrectly identified as a Marine veteran. He did, in fact, serve in the US Army. So sorry for this error, Howard!

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Phyllis Jane Reinhardt

Phyllis Jane Reinhardt, age 92, passed away on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at Pine Crest Nursing Home in Merrill, while under the care of Aspirus Comfort Care & Hospice Services.

Phyllis was born August 4, 1932, daughter of Alfred and Laura (Smith) Johnson. She married Ted Reinhardt Jr. on April 14, 1951, at St. Stephens United Church of Christ in Merrill. They were blessed with 33 years of marriage until his passing in July of 1984.

Phyllis and Ted enjoyed polka dancing and playing sheephead with many friends and neighbors. They ran the Lake View Ballroom for one year before moving to Ted's families dairy farm which they ran together until his passing. Phyllis enjoyed making meals and spending time with family and friends that helped on the farm. Phyllis then worked at Seeger's Dairy and Fox Point for many years until her retirement. Phyllis was involved in teaching Sunday school and was involved with the Dorcas Society at St. Stephens. She was also a 4-H leader and Vice President of the Copper Dell Homemakers Club where she also sang in the choir. Phyllis was very proud to be the first woman elected to the Lincoln County Zoning Board as well as the Lincoln County Fair Board. She also felt very proud to have met and shook hands with John F. Kennedy. Phyllis also enjoyed working at the Town of Scott polls for various elections over 40 years.

Phyllis loved spending time with family. Her grandchildren were the light of her life. Her favorite pastime was watching her grandchildren and great-grandchildren grow up and participate in activities over the years. She never missed an opportunity to support her family.

Survivors include her daughters, Cheri Reinhardt, Nancy Reinhardt-Porath (Jeff), and Jill Reinhardt all of Merrill; grandchildren, Jennifer Porath, Ted Porath (Jackie), and Janessa Weisman (Ryan); great-grandchildren, Owen, Brantley, and Vera; siblings, Janet Beyer and David (Roxie) Johnson both of Merrill; and many nieces and nephews. Phyllis was preceded in death by her parents; husband, Ted; son, Mike; and siblings, Mark and John.

The memorial service for Phyllis will be held at 11:00 A.M., Saturday, May 3, 2025, at St. Stephens United Church of Christ, Merrill. Rev. Mike Southcombe will officiate. The family will receive friends beginning at 9:00 A.M. Saturday at the church.

Taylor-Stine-Waid Funeral & Cremation, Merrill, is assisting the family with arrangements. Online condolences are encouraged and may be made at [www.taylorstinewaid.com](http://www.taylorstinewaid.com)



“detailed financial information that could give an advantage to competitors or bidders of the sale,” which is why they are not “deemed public.”

The Lincoln County Clerk’s Office does not have the requested documents, according to Marlowe.

“I fully understand (People for Lincoln County’s) frustration, and am frustrated myself,” Marlowe said. “I would also like to be privy to this information.”

Marlowe explained that because he is not a voting member of the Lincoln County Board and does not act as the Board’s parliamentarian, he is not invited into closed sessions.

“Minutes are not taken during closed sessions, nor are there ever any actions taken during closed sessions,” Marlowe said. “If, during a closed session, it is deemed that action must be taken, the action will take place immediately upon reconvening the regular meeting.”

Marlowe said the visits by Lincoln County Board members to facilities owned by potential buyers were not formal visits ordered by the Board. No quorums of county committees were present, and no per diems were requested, according to Marlowe.

“Our supervisors are not taking this lightly, and, in many ways, (are) going above and beyond their normal scope of duty,” he said.

In reference to Pine Crest sale information being revealed in Portage County last month, Marlowe said what Giannini “does in meetings outside (Lincoln County’s) borders should be taken up with him.”

“Mr. Giannini is the industry leader in Wisconsin in regards to the sale of public nursing homes,” Marlowe said. “We have the utmost confidence in his proven abilities.”

Marlowe said People for Lincoln County has deemed him as “opposition” and is accusing him of withholding information, which, he said, is “very unpleasant, to say the least.”

“These are people in my community who have been mentors, neighbors, and/or friends of mine; people I highly respect, regardless of the current climate,” Marlowe said.

Marlowe said he takes People for Lincoln County’s assertion that the County is deliberately keeping the public in the dark regarding Pine Crest “very personally,” adding that he has “a lot to lose” from the claim.

“(Lincoln County is), indeed, ultra transparent,” Marlowe said. “Our meetings are properly noticed. Our packet information, minutes, and video recordings are readily available and all on the County website.”

Not all Wisconsin counties record meetings or offer

virtual attendance options like Lincoln County does, Marlowe noted.

Regarding a potential sale of Pine Crest, Marlowe said the winning bidder “may not necessarily be the highest bidder, but we do want to get as much value out of the sale that we can from the bidder we are most confident in.”

“That bidder will have a proven track record of success in the skilled nursing home industry, and will be sincere in their intent to provide this much-needed service to our community for many, many years to come,” Marlowe said.

Marlowe said he has “nothing to gain” by debating whether or not Lincoln County should maintain ownership of Pine Crest regardless of cost to taxpayers, but noted that he “firmly (believes) we do have to help our most vulnerable citizens, which definitely includes our elders.”

“Does that mean (Lincoln County has) to own, maintain, and operate a skilled nursing home? There is a large majority of Wisconsin counties that do not own and operate such homes, most of which have an increasing population, are showing a higher rate of net new construction, and have a larger tax base,” Marlowe said. “These are all things that help governments fund the services they provide. There is not a nice way to put this, but we are struggling to make ends meet due to these factors. We are not currently keeping up with our road and building maintenance. We have a mental health crisis that needs more attention. And, among other things, we would like to offer a competitive wage so we can retain our employees. It is expensive and time-consuming to train employees, only to lose them to neighboring counties or to private industry.”

Boyd told the *Tomahawk Leader* that the Board believes there have been no open meeting statute violations, and negotiations regarding Pine Crest will continue.

Johnson and Giannini did not respond to their respective requests for comment as of press time on Tuesday, April 29.

Upcoming meetings

The next meeting of the A&L Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, May 7, at 4:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at the Lincoln County Service Center in Merrill. A virtual attendance option is expected to be available. The meeting’s agenda had not been released as of Monday, April 28.

The Lincoln County Board of Supervisors is slated to meet at the Lincoln County Service Center on Tuesday, May 20, at 6 p.m.

| LEGALS |

**DATE SIGNED: April 7, 2025**  
Electronically signed by Becky S. Byer  
Probate Registrar  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN,**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
GARY ALLEN SHOLUND  
**Notice to Creditors**  
**(Informal Administration)**  
Case No. 2025-IN-27  
**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE:**  
1. An application for informal administration was filed.  
2. The decedent, with date of birth 11/26/1935 and date of death 11/7/2024, was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of 504 E. Riverside Avenue, Merrill, WI 54452.  
3. All interested persons waived notice.  
4. The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent’s estate is July 18, 2025.  
5. A claim may be filed at the Lincoln County Courthouse, Merrill, Wisconsin, Room Probate.  
Atty. Craig J. Nienow  
N5041 County Road JJ, Irma, WI 54442  
715-536-7185 Bar No: 01015178  
Published 4/17/25, 4/24/25 & 5/1/25  
WNAXLP

**DATE SIGNED: April 15, 2025**  
Electronically signed by Thomas S. Barker, Clerk of Court  
**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
**Amended**  
**Summons and Complaint Small Claims-Replevin**  
Case No: 2025SC000116  
Small Claims, Replevin 31003  
PARK CITY CREDIT UNION vs. DEREK D VANDERLEEST  
**Plaintiff:**  
PARK CITY CREDIT UNION  
501 S PINE RIDE AVE  
Merrill, WI 54452  
**Defendant:**  
DEREK D VANDERLEEST  
110 S STATE ST., APT 8  
Merrill, WI 54452  
THE STATE OF WISCONSIN, to the said defendant(s):  
The plaintiff(s) named above has commenced an action to recover possession of the following property:  
**SEET THE ATTACHED DOCUMENTS**  
If you require reasonable accommodations due to a disability to participate in the court process, please call at least 10 working days prior to the scheduled court date. Please note that the court does not provide transportation.

**SUMMONS**  
This claim arises under a consumer credit transaction under which you are alleged to be in default, as described in the attached complaint.  
IF YOU ARE NOT IN DEFAULT OR HAVE AN OBJECTION TO THE PLAINTIFF’S TAKING THE PROPERTY LISTED ABOVE, YOU MAY ARRANGE FOR A HEARING ON THESE ISSUES BY APPEARING AT THE TIME AND PLACE STATED IN THIS SUMMONS. IF YOU DO NOT APPEAR AT THAT TIME, JUDGEMENT WILL BE RENDERED AGAINST YOU FOR DELIVERY OF THE PROPERTY TO THE PLAINTIFF.  
**When to appear/File an answer**  
Date: 05-15-2025 Time: 10:00 am  
**Place to Appear/File an Answer**  
Lincoln County Courthouse  
1110 E. Main Street, Suite 205  
Merrill, WI 54452  
**Circuit Court Judge/Circuit Court Commissioner**  
Galen Bayne-Allison  
Published 4/24/25 & 5/1/25 WNAXLP

**STATE OF WISCONSIN,**  
**CIRCUIT COURT, LINCOLN COUNTY**  
IN THE MATTER OF THE ESTATE OF  
**Ryan P. Burns**  
**Please Take Notice:**  
1. Non-probate of Filed Will Affidavit  
2. The decedent, with date of birth July 02, 1961 and date of death March 11, 2025 was domiciled in Lincoln County, State of Wisconsin, with a mailing address of W10236 County Road M, Merrill, WI 54452  
**The name or address of the following interested person is not known or reasonably ascertainable:**  
Scott Burns  
**Prepared by:**  
Ruffi Law Offices, S.C.  
627 Jackson Street  
Wausau, WI 54403  
(715) 843-0800  
Bar Number: 1024317  
Published 4/24/25, 5/1/25 & 5/8/25  
WNAXLP



Public invited to participate in Regional Planning Survey

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

The North Central Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission is seeking public input on its draft 2025 Regional Comprehensive Plan through an online survey open until May 15, 2025.

The new plan updates the 2015 Livability Plan with current data and a more streamlined format while maintaining many of the previous recommendations. This advisory document supports local and county

governments in developing their own comprehensive plans without overriding them.

Residents and organization members from the 10-county North Central Wisconsin Region (Adams, Forest, Juneau, Langlade, Lincoln, Marathon, Oneida, Portage, Vilas, and Wood) are encouraged to complete the survey at [surveymonkey.com/r/D76QB2F](https://surveymonkey.com/r/D76QB2F). Survey responses will help shape the final plan, expected to be adopted by late 2025.

**ATTENTION: TOWN OF SCHLEY**  
The Town is sponsoring a “**CLEAN-UP DAY**”  
**Saturday, May 10, 2025 - 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.**

Bring your old appliances and recyclables as listed below to the Schley Town Hall. You must be a Town of Schley resident. The Town will pay half of the regular fee for you.

<u>Items taken for free:</u> Grills (charcoal or gas) Humidifiers Lawn mowers Microwaves Patio furniture (metal) Dryers Stoves (electric or gas) Washers Monitors	Computers Batteries Bed frames (metal) Hot water heaters Dish washers (steel tub) Farm Equipment Fuel oil tanks
<u>Items with charges:</u> Junk tires \$6.00 each TVs \$10.00 Tires on aluminum/steel rims \$6.00 each Air conditioners \$20.00 Dehumidifiers \$20.00 Freezers (chest or upright) \$30.00 Refrigerators (electric or gas) \$30.00	<u>Items not taken:</u> Tractor/large truck tires Drain, fuel, & hydraulic oils Paint

Remember to Recycle  
Published May 1 & 8, 2025

Becky Dallman, Clerk  
WNAXLP

**TOWN OF RUSSELL**  
**REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS**

The Town of Russell, Lincoln County will be accepting sealed bids for double chip seal and single chip seal projects. Bradley Street (Approx: 5,150 ft x 22 ft) and Town Hall Road (Approx: 1,200 ft x 22') Single Chip seal on Prairie Forks Drive (Approx 75 ft x 22 ft).

Work must be completed between June 15th and August 1st.

**THIS IS A WIS DOT LRIP PROJECT**

For further information contact: Robert Kressel, Chairperson at 715-873-4041. Bids will be opened publicly on May 13th at 6:00 p.m. during the town meeting at the Russell Town Hall. Bids may be delivered to the Town Hall prior to bid opening or mailed to the Town of Russell Clerk N5410 State Rd 17 Gleason WI 54435. Bids Received after 6:00 p.m. May 13th will not be accepted or considered. The Town of Russell has the right to accept or reject any or all bids or any part(s) there of which may be deemed most advantageous to the Town of Russell.

Amy Brown, Clerk  
Town of Russell, Lincoln County  
Published April 24 & May 1, 2025

WNAXLP

**ATTENTION TOWN OF CORNING RESIDENCE AND LAND OWNERS:**

Clean up day will be held on May 10, 2025 at the Town Garage from 8 am to 11 am.

<b>Items to be taken include:</b>	<b>Resident pays</b>
Rim and Tire (Steel or Aluminum)	\$6.00 each
Junk Tires	\$8.00 each
TVs, Computers, Monitors	\$30.00 each
Air conditioners, Dehumidifiers, Freezers (chest or upright)	\$20.00 each
Refrigerators (electric or gas)	\$20.00 each

**Free items:**

Batteries	Charcoal or Gas Grills
Dish Washers (with steel tub)	Electric or Gas Stoves
Fuel Oil Tanks	Humidifiers
Lawn Mowers	Microwaves
Farm Equipment	Old metal Bed Frames
Metal Patio sets	Hot Water Heaters
Washer & dryers	Laptop computers

**No Garbage will be accepted.**  
**No Drain oil, fuel oil, hydraulic oil, paint, tractor tires or large truck tires.**

For vehicle pick up call Jason 715-351-0661  
Rick Hass, Town Clerk.

Please Recycle  
Published May 1 & 8, 2025

WNAXLP

**TOWN OF MERRILL**  
MERRILL, WISCONSIN

**TOWN OF MERRILL**  
**BID NOTICE**

The Town of Merrill is seeking bids for the mowing and trimming of the Town Hall lawn. Bids will be accepted until **May 12, 2025, 5:00 pm.**

Please send bids to:

**Town of Merrill**  
W4594 Progress Ave., Merrill, WI 54452

<b>RECYCLE</b> April 24, May 1 & 8, 2025	<b>www.townofmerrill.wi.gov</b>	<b>RECYCLE</b> WNAXLP
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**TOWN OF PINE RIVER RESIDENTS**  
**Clean Sweep Day: May 10, 2025 9:00 AM to Noon**

Drop off items that are no longer useful at the Town of Pine River Hall/Shop. Examples of items accepted with no charge: stoves, lawn mowers, items with metal, and batteries. Note: refrigerators, freezers, tires, TVs, monitors, etc., will have fees. To view complete listing, visit [www.townofpineriver.com](http://www.townofpineriver.com); see postings at the Town Hall, Pine River Fire Dept., or Bill’s Bar. Contact the Town Shop with questions 715-536-3694.

Please Recycle. Amanda Herdt, Clerk  
Published May 1, 2025

WNAXLP

**TOWN OF MERRILL**  
MERRILL, WISCONSIN

**OPEN BOOK – 2025 ASSESSMENT ROLL**

The Assessor will be at the Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Avenue, on

**Tuesday, May 6, 2025 from 3:00 - 5:00 P.M.**

Please bring your assessment notices. Time will be limited to 15 minutes for each person.

**NOTICE OF BOARD OF REVIEW**

The Board of Review for the Town of Merrill will meet at the Town of Merrill Community Center, W4594 Progress Avenue,

**Tuesday, May 20, 2025 from 4:30 to 6:30 P.M.**

Property owners wishing to make a formal objection to an assessed valuation must obtain an objection form from the Town Clerk and schedule an appointment 48 hrs. in advance of hearing. 715-536-4383.

The extensive Board of Review notice can be found on Town of Merrill website and Town Hall door.

Mitzi Flegner, Clerk

<b>RECYCLE</b>	<b>www.townofmerrill.net</b>	<b>RECYCLE</b>
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Published April 24 & May 1, 2025

WNAXLP



# AI Editorial Policy for Multi Media Channels

At Multi Media Channels (MMC), we are committed to delivering high-quality, accurate, and trustworthy content to our readers. As part of our ongoing efforts to innovate and improve our editorial processes, we have incorporated artificial intelligence (AI) tools into our workflow. This policy outlines our approach to using AI in content creation and the safeguards we have in place to ensure journalistic integrity.

## Our AI Usage Principles

Our AI usage at MMC aligns with best practices in AI-assisted journalism and follows our core principles of using cutting-edge communications technology to deliver hyper local content to our readership, through our print publications and digital media. We have our roots in our communities, and while AI is a tool—like computers or spell check—it cannot replace our journalists, with their experience, knowledge of and connections to their communities, and integrity.

1. Human-Centric Journalism: AI is a tool to augment, not replace, human journalists. Our experienced editorial team remains at the core of all content creation and decision-making processes.
2. Transparency: We are committed to being open about our

use of AI tools in content creation. When AI tools are used to analyze data or generate insights, we clearly attribute this in our reporting. Use of AI generated images are clearly attributed as such.

3. Accuracy and Fact-Checking: All AI-assisted content undergoes rigorous fact-checking and verification by our human editors before publication. AI-generated content is always cross-referenced with reliable, human-verified sources. We do not rely solely on AI-generated information without corroboration.

4. Bias Detection and Mitigation: Our editors are trained to identify and mitigate potential biases in AI-generated or assisted content, ensuring balanced and fair reporting.

5. Style and Voice Consistency: While AI may assist in drafting, we ensure that all published content maintains MMC’s distinctive style and voice and the authenticity of the writer.

6. Continuous Learning: Our team stays informed about the latest developments in AI and journalism, regularly updating our practices to reflect industry best standards.

7. Clear Attribution: Ethical Content Generation: We do not use AI to create fictional quotes, sources, or events. All content is factual and derived from verifiable

sources.

8. Quality Control: AI-assisted content goes through the same rigorous editorial process as traditionally created content, including multiple rounds of editing, verification, and fact-checking.

9. Ethical AI Use: We only employ AI tools that align with our ethical standards and journalistic values. We regularly review and update our AI usage to ensure it meets these criteria.

10. Data Privacy: We respect data privacy laws and ethical guidelines when using AI tools, ensuring that no personal or sensitive information is compromised.

Accountability and Feedback  
We value our readers’ trust and welcome feedback on our AI usage and content. If you have questions or concerns about our AI editorial practices, please contact our editorial team at [info@mmclocal.com](mailto:info@mmclocal.com).

By responsibly integrating AI into our editorial process, MMC aims to enhance the quality, efficiency, and depth of our journalism while maintaining the highest standards of integrity and accountability.

This policy is subject to regular review and updates as AI technology and industry best practices evolve.  
Last updated: April 4, 2025

NEWS  
SHORTS

Hanging flower basket program seeks donations for 18th year

The Merrill Chamber Foundation seeks community support for its annual hanging flower basket program, now in its 18th year. The project beautifies downtown lamp posts, Normal Park Gazebo, Highway 64 entrances, and business districts with locally-supplied flowers. Donations are \$60 per basket or \$100 per pole (two baskets), covering plants, materials, and maintenance costs. All contributions are tax-deductible and can be sent to the Merrill Chamber Foundation at 705 N Center Avenue. The community beautification project is a cooperation between the Merrill Chamber Foundation, City of Merrill, volunteers, and generous donors.

Holiday Family Fund to host special needs dance on May 16

The Holiday Family Fund is organizing a Spring Fling Special Needs Dance on May 16, 2025, at 6 p.m., aiming to provide an inclusive social opportunity often unavailable to special needs individuals during their school years. The event will serve 100+ participants and is being coordinated with assisted living and adult care facilities throughout northern Wisconsin. Organizers are seeking donations to cover food, DJ services, facilities, and transportation costs. Contributors will receive recognition in print and on-air in the Merrill community. Donations can be made at any Peoples State Bank location or by contacting Nathan Albrecht at 608.556.9133.

MEETINGS & COMMUNITY SERVICES

• **Alanon Meetings** - Mondays at 7 p.m. at Ascension Episcopal Church, 218 Pier St.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** (Open meeting) - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m. at St. Stephens UCC, 903 E. 2nd St.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** (Open meeting) - Wednesdays at 7 p.m. at St. Francis Xavier Catholic Church, 1708 E 10th St.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** (Closed meeting) - Fridays at 11:30 a.m. at St. Stephens UCC, 903 E. 2nd St.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous**

(Open meeting) - Saturdays at 9 a.m. at Our Saviour’s Lutheran Church, 300 Logan St.

• **Alcoholics Anonymous** (Closed meeting) - Sundays at 9 a.m. at Park City Credit Union, 501 S. Pine Ridge Ave.

• **Dinner@Five** at St. Stephens UCC - Mondays at 5 p.m.

• **GriefShare** grief support group - Mondays at 5 p.m. (Mar. 10-Jun. 9, 2025) at Trinity Lutheran Church, 107 N. State St.

For more information, contact the event sponsor or location.

DEADLINE THURSDAY, MAY 8<sup>TH</sup>!!!

17<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MERRILL CITYWIDE SPRING RUMMAGE SALE

Clean Out the Basement

Sweep Out the Garage!

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Saturday, May 17, 2025

It’s Simple to Run a Sale:

• Just place your own classified ad in the May 15<sup>th</sup> Foto News.

• We will pinpoint your address on our citywide map.

• Starting at \$10.00 for a 5 line classified ad. (Approximately 25 words)

- \$1.00 for each additional line of your ad.

Make Some CASH!

Stop in to place your ad in the office and put your number on the map.

DEADLINES: All ads must be placed before 3:00pm Thursday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. Don’t wait, get your ad set up today and beat the RUSH!

Merrill Citywide Rummage Sale Map

Get Rid of That Clutter!

Garage Sale Kits Now Available at the Foto News! Only \$5 with the purchase of your garage sale ad.

Email your ad to: [FotoNewsAds@mmclocal.com](mailto:FotoNewsAds@mmclocal.com)  
MERRILL Foto News  
(715) 536-7121  
OFFICE LOCATION:  
2011 E. MAIN STREET, MERRILL

St. John Lutheran School announces 2024-2025 third quarter Honor Roll

HIGHEST HONORS (4.0): Molly Literski, Julia Skaar, Ever Smith, Poppy Geisler, Ruby Hoffman, Ella Humphrey, Delana Podeweltz, Samuel Szeto, Christian Voigt, Job Verpoorten

HONORS (3.5-3.75): Joshua Hanson, Gemma Hoffman, Gabriel Kleinhans, Mason Klug, Garik Peterson, Colin Sprague, Caleb Steinagel, Emily Wendt, Ellyana Ineichen, Evie Klug, Genevieve Burtman, Mason Carpenter, Malayna Kufahl, Lola Klug, Joanna Szeto

St. Francis Xavier Catholic School announces 2024-2025 third quarter Honor Roll

HIGHEST HONORS 3.75 – 4.00 Margaret Delp Abigail Rell Sophia Wendt Elizabeth Burkhardt

HONORS 3.25 – 3.499 Emmett Johnson Evelyn Hagemeister Fiona Giese Frederick Delp

HIGH HONORS 3.50 – 3.749 Daven Saeger Julia Fleischman Alex Shimel

HONOR ROLL 3.00 – 3.249 Martin Hoffman





Caylor's work environment.

Tina L. Scott photo.



RIGHT: A view of the new Lincoln County morgue where Caylor works as Coroner.

Tina L. Scott photo.

# Valerie Caylor: Caring for the living and the deceased

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

Lincoln County Coroner Valerie Caylor may have an unusual job, but for her, it's all about caring for people—whether they're fighting for their lives or have already lost that battle.

"I think a lot of it is just telling their story," said Caylor when asked why she transitioned from saving lives as a paramedic to investigating deaths as Coroner. "Everybody has a story. It's making sure that their story is told, but on top of it, it's making sure that a family gets answers."



Valerie Caylor

for years," said Caylor. "As a kid growing up, we were part of the fire department, because that's what you did. It's a family. It's a huge family."

Initially heading to UW for college with different plans, Caylor's true calling became clear during an English assignment about future career goals. After writing about becoming a paramedic, her professor asked, "Why are you here? Why are you wasting your time? I can tell this is what you want to do."

**Flight paramedicine**

Caylor enrolled at Mid-State Technical College and earned her associate degree in paramedicine in 2009. She continued advancing her medical training, obtaining her critical care license and flight paramedic certification.

"It's more schooling, more tests, more things to prove

that you're at that critical care level," Caylor explained. "The flight paramedic certification is actually a board certified test to show that pretty much you have the most knowledge that a paramedic can get at their level."

**Taking on the Coroner's role**

Before becoming Lincoln County Coroner, Caylor worked for Marathon County as a Deputy Medical Examiner and later served as a Deputy Coroner in Lincoln County under the previous Coroner. When he decided to retire, she ran for the position and was elected.

In addition to her Lincoln County duties, Caylor also mentors the newly appointed medical examiner in Oneida County.

See CAYLOR page 8

**Balancing two demanding careers**

Caylor divides her professional life between two demanding roles. She works as a flight paramedic at Lifelink based at the Rhinelander airport three days a week while also serving as Lincoln County's elected Coroner. Both positions require her to be ready at a moment's notice, though in very different capacities.

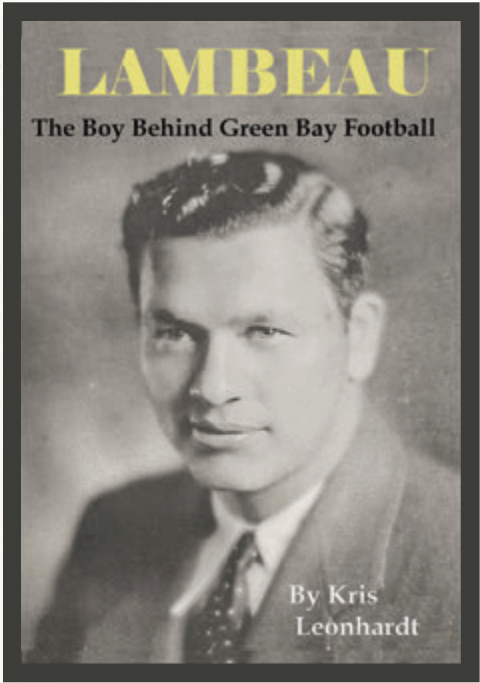
"We're always on call," said Caylor about her Coroner duties. "You never know what's going to happen. It's definitely not a nine-to-five job. I can get called multiple times during the night and be up most of the night and during the day. So you never really know what your day or your night is going to hold."

**From childhood inspiration to medical career**

Her path to becoming a medical professional began in childhood. Growing up in the Arpin community outside Marshfield, Caylor was immersed in emergency services because her mother served as a volunteer first responder.

"I grew up in it. That was something my mom was in

## “A fascinating TALE



of dedication that will inspire fans and readers alike. If you love football, community and tales of grit, this book is a must-read. ”

The story of the beginning of the Green Bay Packers and the life of Earl Louis “Curly” Lambeau are so intertwined that it is hard to imagine one without the other.

From the streets of Green Bay, Lambeau developed a passion for football and grew that yearning into a football team that would exist long past his lifetime.

Like the Packers, Lambeau's story is a tale of adversity and challenge, but also a story of triumph and perseverance. While his personal life and professional career were wrought with challenge, his legacy continues to resonate in the Green Bay community, including a massive structure along Lombardi Avenue that shines a light on his contribution to the professional team.

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Publishes June 25, 2025

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Thimbleberry Books, Marshfield

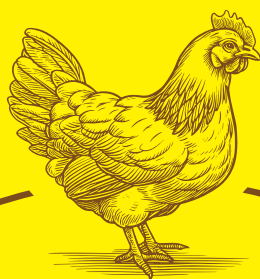
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Sifra Birth Center will be located in a beautiful piece of woods next to Elite Carriers on County Rd. W. Every egg you buy helps support your own community birth center.

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| CLASSIFIEDS |

Announcements 7005



**Now Accepting Consignments**  
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Get your items in front of eager bidders— Just in time for Father's Day! Consignment Deadline: May 18 Auction Dates: June 1 – June 15 Accepting: Handguns • Rifles • Shotguns • Antique Firearms • Ammo • and More!  
This is the event firearm buyers look forward to!  
Make sure your items are in the spotlight!  
**Call (715) 305-2475 for details** and consign today!  
www.lgqysAuction.com

Rummage Sales This Week 7200

**Jackson Street** Apartments, May 1st & 2nd 8-4, May 3rd 8-noon, 1/2 price Sat., Fisher Price House & accessories, garden tubs, plus size Men's, stamping supplies, keychains, boombox, 42 collectable Nerf guns.

**Wausau: 905 S. 19th Ave. TH 5/1 thru SAT 5/3, 8a-6p**  
Tools, yard tools, lawnmower, household & more.

If you would like to be included in our Employment Section please call  
**715-536-7121**

Rummage Sales This Week 7200

**Weston: 5306 Jean Ellen St. TH 5/1 & 5/2 8a-6p; SAT 5/3 8a-3p.**  
Tons of sports cards; lots of bobble heads; sports collectibles: Brewers, Bucks, Packers, Nascar, MLF/NBA/NFL.  
2-car garage full - 3 families.

**Weston: 6602 Randylyn St. TH & FR 5/1 & 5/2 8a-6p; SAT 5/3 8a-3p.**  
Womens & mens clothing; fall wedding decor; wedding items; household; women's shoes; antiques; crocks, and misc.

Rummage Sales Upcoming 7202



**GARAGE SALE KITS NOW AVAILABLE**  
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**Kit Includes:**  
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• How to have a successful garage sale pamphlet  
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**ONLY \$5.00 PER KIT!\***  
*\* With the purchase of a classified ad.*

Available at:  
**Merrill Foto News**  
2011 E. Main St., Merrill

Rummage Sales Upcoming 7202

**Place your Garage Sale ad at classifiedsmmc.com**  
**Deadline for Wausau is NOON Friday for Wednesday's paper**

Cemetery Lots 7030

**FOR SALE:** Outside companion crypt, level 5 at Restlawn Memorial Cemetery in Wausau. \$6500. 715-359-2878

**For Sale** St. Frances Xavier Cemetery Lots. Section H-11 - Lots 3,4, & 7. Normally \$650 each Selling all 3 \$1,000. Very close to Memorial Dr. 715-409-8742.

Firewood 7244

**DRY OAK & Hard Maple,** \$250/cord. Over 15 mi is extra. Have hard wood in wood shed over a year old. Clean & no bark. 715-351-1888 or 715-873-4196.

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Guns 7264

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Wanted to Buy 7268

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Dogs 7272

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Dogs 7272

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**Rottweiler Pup:** AKC, shots, wormed, tails & dew claws done, vet checked. Male, \$700. 715-498-6408

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Miscellaneous Services 7374

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Trinity Lutheran School  
announces 2024-2025 third  
quarter Honor Roll

Students are recognized on the Trinity Honor Roll for a Grade Point Average (GPA) of 3.5 and higher. An\* indicates a 4.0 GPA.

**FIFTH GRADE**  
Easton Baade  
Brinlee Brazeau  
Eli Clerveaux  
Grace Dupke  
Stevie Wells  
Evie Gilbert  
Paul Huth  
Joseph Renzelmann  
Ellie Steinagel

**SIXTH GRADE**  
Emma Baumann  
Brady Bostrom  
Hunter Bostrom  
Michael Houle  
Emma Krombholz  
Abigale Nelson

Laney Schmidt  
Oliver Weinkauf

**SEVENTH GRADE**  
Amber Blennert  
Lexi Hinz  
Adeline Huth  
Asa Laabs  
Melia Lee  
Amiya Lipke-Bauman  
Fiona McKeen  
Chloe McKeen

**EIGHTH GRADE**  
Emily Amelse  
Rebekah Hagemeister  
Willow Harmon  
Kayla Klimek  
Lexee Laabs  
TyLynn Osness  
Aubrey Renzelmann  
Jillian Severt  
Emmie Steinagel  
Brooklyn Teske



Senator Baldwin listens as Merrill Mayor Steve Hass, Merrill Chamber Executive Director Clyde Nelson, and owner of Auntie Ray's Coffee House, Rachel Beyer, and her mother chat about Merrill, along with members of Baldwin's staff.

More photos online  
merrillfotonews.com

**BALDWIN**  
*from page 1*

the vital role they play in strengthening our local economy.”

“I’m grateful for the opportunity to highlight just a few of the things that make Merrill such a great place to live, work, and thrive,” Hass said.

While visiting with Hass and Nelson, the two highlighted recent and upcoming developments at several of the local businesses, including large manufacturers in the area like Weinbrenner and Lincoln Windows, the fairly recent addition of the Boys and Girls Club to Merrill, and efforts of area churches to address the need for additional childcare for Merrill-area residents.

EMPLOYMENT  
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MERRILL STREET  
DEPARTMENT

Applications are now being accepted to fill a Public Works 2 position within the Street Department.

Applications can be found at the City Clerk's office or online at <http://www.ci.merrill.wi.us/employment>.

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📍 Plant Address  
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\$2,000 Sign-on Bonus



The Lincoln County Humane Society would like to send a big thank you to Girl Scout Troop 7147! They came in to visit recently and brought some homemade cat scratchers for the kitties! "Thank you for your hard work and gifts for the kitties!" staff said.

Submitted photo.



On Feb. 16, 2025, Merrill Eagles 584 Aerie and Auxiliary held a Pancake Breakfast Benefit for Carol Cortright to assist her with ongoing medical bills, as she continues her fight against cancer. L to R: Bryan Plautz, Aerie representative; recipient Carol Cortright; Sue Heckendorf, Auxiliary representative; and Carol's husband, Jerry. Submitted photo.

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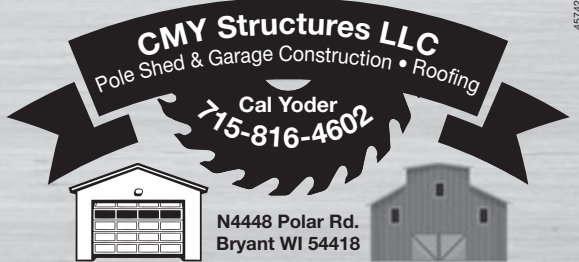


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# THE GLEASON CORNER

BY TINA L. SCOTT, EDITOR

## Gleason: “Trout Fishing Capital of the World”

Gleason proudly identifies itself—and is widely recognized—as the “Trout Fishing Capital of the World.” This celebrated reputation is rooted in its proximity to the Prairie River, famous for outstanding trout fishing, and the fact that the state-record brook trout was caught nearby. In September 1944, John Mixis landed a stream-caught brook trout weighing an impressive 9 pounds, 15 ounces in the Prairie River near Gleason.

### Trout Fishing on the Prairie River

Winding through Langlade and Lincoln Counties, the Prairie River flows with Gleason at its heart, effectively dividing the river into upper and lower stretches. The Upper Prairie River tends to be narrower, more brush-lined, and primarily holds wild brook trout, though some sections are supplemented with stocked fish. In contrast, the Lower Prairie River is broader, marked by a combination of gentle and more rugged rapids, and hosts brown trout along with stocked brook and rainbow trout.

On average, this tributary of the Wisconsin River spans about 60 feet across. Over the years, habitat restoration



Russ Akey and his grandson, Freddy, trout fishing in the area.

efforts, including dam removals, have significantly enhanced the environment for trout populations.

The river is conveniently accessible via Highway 17, which parallels much of its route. Additionally, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains the Prairie River Fishery Area along County Highways G and J southeast of Tomahawk. This public area offers excellent spots for wading and shore fishing.

Several designated access points are available along the river, making it easy for anglers to find and enjoy prime fishing locations.

### Fishing Techniques and Tips

**Fly Fishing:** The Prairie River offers a variety of fly fishing experiences, from meadow stretches to pocket water. Anglers can expect a range of hatches throughout the season, including a notable white fly hatch in select areas.

**Bait and Lures:** Experienced trout anglers recommend small, natural-colored spinners or live worms for brook



A nice brook trout caught near Gleason.  
Photos courtesy of Russ Akey.

trout. For targeting brown trout, live minnows or small silver or brown spoons tend to be effective. Curly-tail grubs, spinners, spoons, and jerkbaits all have their advantages depending on conditions and trout species. To support catch-and-release practices, barbless or single hooks are encouraged when using hard baits.


**Timing:** The best success often comes during early mornings, late evenings, and overcast days, especially during insect hatches when trout are actively feeding. Target “junk water”—slow, shallow stretches where trophy browns may feed under low light conditions. It’s wise to fish close to the bank first, as larger trout often linger in the shallows before venturing farther into deeper water.

**Adjusting lure presentation,** retrieval speed, and depth to match the trout’s behavior is key. Sometimes, a slow, hovering jerkbait can entice strikes from bigger fish, especially in colder water when trout are less aggressive.

Gleason’s claim as the “Trout Fishing Capital of the World” is rooted in its rich history, record-setting brook trout, and the excellent trout fishing opportunities along the scenic Prairie River. With easy access, diverse water types, and ongoing habitat improvements, it is a great destination for trout anglers of all experience levels.



Russ Akey, an avid trout fisherman from Merrill, said there are “Lots of nice spots in and around Gleason to catch brook trout and brown trout.”



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# Bluejays split doubleheader with Warriors, sweep weekend road games

BY TINA L. SCOTT  
EDITOR

## Bluejays bats quieted by Warriors' southpaw

The Merrill Varsity Boys Baseball Team opened their four-game week with a tough Bluejay loss to Wausau West on Wednesday, April 23, 2025, at Merrill's Athletic Park. In the first game of a doubleheader with the Warriors, West's left-handed pitcher Teske kept the Bluejays' offense in check throughout the contest, scattering just four hits over six innings while striking out seven.

"We ran into a tough lefthander in Teske in game one," said Merrill Head Coach Shawn Schultz. "We had some opportunities, but anytime we got guys on base, he was able to toughen up and get out of the jam."

Despite the loss, Merrill starter Carter Kaminski (4.1 IP, 7 H, 5 R, 4 ER, 5 BB, 4 SO) worked effectively on the mound, keeping the Bluejays within striking distance while throwing 99 pitches.

"Carter did a good job of keeping us in the game on the mound as well," said Schultz. "We need to make the routine plays in tight games like this one, because they can be the difference in the score."

**Box Score:**  
**Wausau West 5 @ Merrill 0**

## Bluejays' bats ignite in nightcap

The Bluejays bounced back with authority in the second game of Wednesday's doubleheader, pounding out 13 runs in a victory over Wausau West.

"We were the visitor in game two though we were in Merrill," said Schultz. "We knocked their starter out early and did a good job of putting consistent guys on base. The offense has been pretty good lately."

Weix and Wallin combined to handle the pitching duties, with Schultz praising both efforts.

"EJ Weix (3-for-5, 1 R, 2 RBI) started on the mound and had some tough luck in the first but was able to keep us in it and did a great job of shutting them down once we got the lead," said Schultz. "Cam Wallin (1-for-3, 1 R) came in and finished the last one and two-thirds to take us home."

High scorers for the Merrill Bluejays included Cooper Wendorf (1-for-4, 1 R, 4 RBI), Kory Page (1-for-4, 2 R), and Kaiden Henrich (2-for-5, 1 R, 1 RBI).

**Box Score:**  
**Merrill 13 @ Wausau West 5**

## Late-inning rally results in a Wallin shutout

The Bluejays continued their winning ways on Saturday, April 26, riding a dominant pitching performance from Cam Wallin (6.0 IP, 4 H, 2 BB, 5 SO) and a sixth-inning offensive eruption to a road victory over the Onalaska Hilltoppers.

"It was a pitchers' duel through five innings. There were not a lot of real opportunities for either team up to that point," said Schultz.

The Bluejays finally broke the deadlock. "In the sixth, Kory Page (3-for-4, 2 R) led off with a single and EJ Weix (2-for-4, 2 R, 2 RBI) doubled to put runners on second and third, and Kaiden Henrich (2-for-3, 2 RBI) came up with a big two-run single," said Schultz. "We added one more in

See BLUEJAYS page 15



Noah Klug with a base hit.

Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photo.

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Fill in the blank squares in the grid, making sure that every row, column and 3-by-3 box includes all digits 1 through 9.

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Kaiden Henrich at bat.



Erik Grunenwald applying tag after the throw from pitcher EJ Weix (in the background).



Noah Klug being congratulated at home plate by EJ Weix after scoring  
Blue Sky Photography/Peter Tesch photos.

BLUEJAYS from page 14

the sixth and three more in the seventh to get to six.”

Wallin was masterful on the mound, tossing six shutout innings while allowing just four hits. Noah Klug (1.0 IP, 1 H, 1 BB) closed out the victory with a scoreless seventh.

“Cam pitched great for six innings and Noah came in and finished things up,” said Schultz.

**Box Score:**  
**Merrill 6 @ Onalaska 0**

Patient Bluejays capitalize on opportunities

The Bluejays completed their impressive 3–1 week with a victory over Waunakee in the second game of Saturday’s road trip.

Merrill jumped ahead early with a run in the first inning and consistently added to their lead throughout the contest.

“We picked one up in the first to get things started and did a great job of tacking on runs all game,” said Schultz. “We took advantage of 12 walks and six errors by Waunakee but did a good job with the bats as well.”

“Noah Klug (2.0 IP, 2 H, 2 BB) started on the mound and gave us two scoreless [innings] to start the game,” said Schultz. “Cooper Wendorf (5.0 IP, 5 H, 5 R, 2 ER, 1 BB, 3 SO) pitched five strong innings after Noah and did a great job of keeping Waunakee off balance.” Their excellent pitching helped secure the win.

High scorers for the Bluejays included Kory Page (2 R) and Brady Norton (2 R).

**Box Score:**  
**Merrill 9 @ Waunakee 5**

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CLUES ACROSS

- 1. McCarthy acolyte Roy
- 5. Ancient Korean chiefdoms
- 10. Not soft
- 14. Jai \_\_, sport
- 15. Philosophy
- 16. Do what you’re told
- 17. Gaffe
- 18. Widely known and esteemed
- 19. Amusement park attraction
- 20. Popular comic strip Viking
- 22. Usually has a lid
- 23. American sportscaster
- 24. Lung fibrosis
- 27. General’s assistant (abbr.)
- 30. Pouch
- 31. Upset
- 32. Partner to hem
- 35. Astronomy unit of distance
- 37. Witch
- 38. Gradually disappear
- 39. Regions
- 40. Possesses
- 41. Body parts
- 42. A way to comprehend
- 43. Defraud
- 44. Sandwich type
- 45. Expression of disappointment
- 46. Popular Dodge truck model
- 47. The 17th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 48. Soviet Socialist Republic
- 49. Songs to a beloved
- 52. Custom
- 55. Partner to cheese
- 56. West Indies trees
- 60. Member of a Semitic people
- 61. Plant that originated vegetatively
- 63. Squandered one’s money
- 64. Ethiopian river
- 65. Excessive fluid

- accumulation in tissues
- 66. Acquire by one’s efforts
- 67. Irish goddess
- 68. Hungarian village
- 69. Cereal grasses

CLUES DOWN

- 1. Currency
- 2. Ceramic jar
- 3. Reagan’s Secretary of State
- 4. God worshipped in Kanesh
- 5. One thousand cubic feet (abbr.)
- 6. Semitic
- 7. About blood
- 8. Benign tumors
- 9. Move one’s head
- 10. Hours (Spanish)
- 11. Hebrew calendar month
- 12. Advise someone
- 13. Colors clothes
- 21. The sun does it
- 23. Concealed
- 25. City of Angels hoops team (abbr.)
- 26. Droop

- 27. Away from one another
- 28. Challenges
- 29. A harsh scraping sound
- 32. Attaches to a wall
- 33. Capital of Ethiopia: \_\_ Ababa
- 34. German river
- 36. Disappointed
- 37. Star Wars character Solo
- 38. Supervises flying
- 40. Not mass-produced
- 41. Nonsense
- 43. Automobile
- 44. Hogshead (abbr.)
- 46. Soak in water
- 47. Flower cluster
- 49. Romanian city
- 50. A parent is often one
- 51. Fencing sword
- 52. Body part
- 53. Region
- 54. Farm building
- 57. Ali’s surname at birth
- 58. Waxy bird beak covering
- 59. Stiff bristles
- 61. VCR button
- 62. Small amount

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# Merrill Track & Field shows promise at Indoor Conference Championships

The Merrill High School Track & Field program competed at the recent Indoor Conference Championships, with both boys' and girls' teams showcasing developing talent and earning notable individual achievements.

"The indoor conference meet provided a great opportunity for our athletes to compete against some of the best in the conference," said Merrill Track & Field Varsity Head Coach Alec Oestreich. "We saw significant progress from many individuals, with several athletes achieving strong finishes and personal bests."

On the boys' side, Jace Olson had a busy and successful day. He clocked 7.72 seconds in the 60-meter dash and followed it up with a 25.32-second performance in the 200-meter dash. Olson also demonstrated his versatility in the field, leaping to an impressive 18 feet 9 inches in the long jump.

In the middle distances, Gabe Keys and Jacob Mueller ran competitively in the 800-meter run, finishing close together with times of 2:24 and 2:25, respectively. In the throwing events, Jax Hanson put forth a strong effort in the shot put, reaching a distance of 40 feet 1 inch.

The Merrill girls' team also had several noteworthy performances. Jaz Severt placed 12th in the 60-meter dash with a time of 8.81 seconds. She also ran the 200-meter dash in 29.57 seconds and cleared 4 feet 4 inches in the high jump.

Mia Smith clocked in at 1:06 in the 400-meter dash. In the distance events, Charlotte Van Der Nest showed her endurance in the 1600-meter run, finishing in 6:29.

"The dedication and hard work they've put in throughout the indoor season are evident, and we're excited to see this momentum carry into the outdoor track and field season," Oestreich said.

The girls' 4x200 meter relay team put together a strong race, earning a respectable 5th place with a time of 1:59.53. In the field events, Brenna Jirovec matched Severt's height in the high jump, clearing 4 feet 4 inches, and also recorded a jump of 13 feet 3 inches in the long jump.

Maddie Robbins secured a 9th place finish in the pole vault, reaching a height of 8 feet 6 inches. Finally, Merin Yates earned a podium finish, claiming 3rd place and a bronze medal in the shot put with a throw of 32 feet 8 inches.

"These results will serve as valuable experience and motivation as the team prepares for the outdoor season ahead," Oestreich said.

Congratulations to all the Bluejay athletes on their efforts!

## 2025 Merrill High School Spring Sports Schedule

Boys Baseball (Varsity, JV, & JV2)			
Thurs. May 1	Marshfield (JV2)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. May 1	Marshfield (Varsity & JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Mon. May 5	Mosinee (Varsity & JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Mon. May 5	Wausau East (JV2)	Away	5:00 pm
Tues. May 6	Wausau East (Varsity & JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. May 8	Wausau East (Varsity & JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Girls Softball (Varsity & JV)			
Thurs. May 1	Wausau West (Varsity & JV)	Home	4:30 pm
Mon. May 5	Marshfield (Varsity & JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Tues. May 6	Stevens Point (Varsity & JV)	Home	4:30 pm
Thurs. May 8	WI Rapids Lincoln (Varsity & JV)	Away	4:30 pm
Boys Golf (Varsity & JV)			
Fri. May 2	Multiple Schools (Varsity)	Home	2:00 pm
Mon. May 5	WI River Golf Club (Varsity)	Away	2:00 pm
Mon. May 5	Pine Valley Course (JV)	Away	3:00 pm
Girls Soccer (Varsity & JV)			
Thurs. May 1	Wausau East (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. May 1	Wausau East (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Fri. May 2	Crandon (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Mon. May 5	Lakeland Union (JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Mon. May 5	Lakeland Union (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Tues. May 6	Stevens Point (JV)	Away	5:00 pm
Tues. May 6	Stevens Point (Varsity)	Away	7:00 pm
Thurs. May 8	Mosinee (JV)	Home	5:00 pm
Thurs. May 8	Mosinee (Varsity)	Home	7:00 pm
Boys Track & Field (Varsity & JV)			
Tues. May 6	Stevens Point (Varsity & JV)	Away	4:00 pm
Girls Track & Field (Varsity & JV)			
Tues. May 6	D. C. Everest (Varsity & JV)	Away	4:00 pm
Trap Team (Varsity)			
High School Season Ongoing • Weekly Rounds			



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## Skic celebrates another successful hunt



At 97 1/2 years old, Marie Skic of Merrill still loves to hunt and is a great shot. On April 21, 2025, she shot this 24.5 pound turkey with a 9 inch beard and 1 inch spurs.

Submitted photo.

## ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

**Carter Kaminski**, a Senior at Merrill High School (MHS), has been named Athlete of the Week for the week of May 1, 2025. Carter is in his second year on the MHS Varsity Boys Baseball Team, where he plays pitcher and third base. He played JV baseball during his Freshman and Sophomore years. Carter started playing baseball at age 7 or 8, progressing from t-ball to coach pitch, then minors and majors, before joining Babe Ruth and traveling teams prior to high school. This year, Carter also played on the Varsity Basketball Team.


At school, Carter participates in the Youth Apprenticeship program, working part-time at his father's business, Sparkle Wash. In his free time, he enjoys hanging out with friends, playing video games, basketball, and pool. Carter also golfs and goes deer hunting.

The son of Jay and Stefanie Kaminski of Merrill, Carter has a 3.0 GPA and plans to attend Northcentral Technical College (NTC) after graduation, where he will major in business with the possibility of working with his father's business in the future.

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**Carter Kaminski**

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Please direct comments or suggestions to [fotonews@mmclocal.com](mailto:fotonews@mmclocal.com)

## Bluejay Trap Team: A win and a loss

BY TINA L. SCOTT EDITOR

The Merrill Bluejays Varsity Trap Team shot against the Rhinelander High School Trap Team in week four on Tuesday, April 15, 2025. The scores are in from Rhinelander's shooters in the matchup, and in week four the Varsity Bluejays took the win 115-101. The Bluejays also won

at all levels of shooting that week. Things were looking up for the team.

In week five's shooting, unfortunately the Bluejay Varsity shooters suffered a loss to the Wausau Skeet & Trap Team. Wausau took the win 119-114. The Bluejay JV shooters did take a win in their competition, with Merrill winning 109-87. Lower levels were split for wins and losses.

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