

Friendship knows no boundary

Waukesha family learns the importance of giving back

Submitted by Julie Gaier
TRG Marketing

Last November, Catherine Obermann of Waukesha was thinking about how she could donate her time to help others and teach her three children why it's important give back.

She's starting them off young. Max is 5, Evie is 3 and Nora is one year old.

"At the time, Nora was four months old so I wanted to figure out what to do with a newborn in the winter. There was a life care community close to my home in Waukesha, so I put in an application to see if they wanted volunteers. I got a phone call back from Grand Hills Castle in New Berlin, and they put me in contact with the activities coordinator. It was only 12 miles away."

The distance is not exactly a quick trip to help a next-door neighbor. Still, Catherine says the weekly drive with her kids to visit residents every Wednesday is worth it.

"Life Enrichment Coordinator Jessica Haase introduced us to residents. All of us played with balloons and we talked that first day."

"It's fun to bring the kids and residents together and watch them interact. No matter what age, people want the same thing. They want your attention and someone to love them," she said.

Grand Hills Castle New Berlin opened in September 2018. The facility specializes in senior care for residents needing assisted living or memory care.

"Catherine and her kids add an intergenerational aspect to Grand Hills Castle," says Jessica Haase. "Her children have developed really good relationships with the residents. It helps bring back memories of their own families when they were parents. The Obermanns add so much to our community."

Catherine says the volunteer experience benefits the residents just as she hoped. Her kids are also learning by example.

"There was a resident named Anita who has since passed away. We were with her every week for almost a year. One time, we were at the library



Nora Obermann with pigtails on the couch. She is sitting with Ramona, one of the residents.

Have a story to share?

■ Every day in our communities, neighbors are helping neighbors, such as with the generous gesture of raking an elderly neighbor's leaves or driving a church member to an important doctor's appointment every Wednesday.

Do you know someone that should be recognized for doing good in The Freeman? Let us know at 262-513-2644 or news@conley.net.com.

and found a book and the person's name was Anita. Evie would say, 'At the nursing home.' They know who and where they are going. That is great."

Waukesha and New Berlin may only be a dozen miles apart, but friendship knows no boundary lines for the Obermanns. They are finding their friends from Grand Hills Castle all around the area.

"We were at the Milwaukee County Zoo before school started and it was Senior Day," recalls Catherine. "All of a sudden, we spotted a couple of Grand Hills Castle residents there with one of their daughters and she recognized us."

"It's such a small world that we can



Evie Obermann is in the foreground with the basket. Catherine is next to her daughter Nora, who is sitting with Helen, one of the residents.

see each other outside their facility. We made a connection that day, too. It always puts a smile on their face and ours."

WAUKESHA

Tenny Avenue extension clears initial hurdle

Project timeline unclear

By Cara Spoto
cspoto@conley.net.com
262-513-2653

WAUKESHA — A proposal to extend Tenny Avenue south to Les Paul Parkway cleared an initial hurdle this week, but just when applicants plan to hire contractors to construct the roadway remains to be seen.

The Plan Commission on Wednesday voted 6-0 to approve a certified survey map submitted by landowners The Smart Family Trust. The map is needed to subdivide portions of the farmland that will one day make up the right-of-way of the roadway and two outlots — a 40-acre lot that would be on the northeastern corner of Les Paul Parkway and the extended roadway and an 11-acre lot located closer to East Sunset Drive to the west of the Meijer store.

"Ever since the Meijer store was developed it has been anticipated that Tenny would eventually come down and connect to Highway 59/164 (Les Paul Parkway), and the dedication of the

CSM for this right-of-way will be the first step in doing that," Senior City Planner Doug Koehler told commissioners.

The proposed roadway is being determined by an existing sanitary sewer easement, and will cross Pebble Brook Creek. It is expected to intersect the state highways at a median opening.

Calls made to the Wisconsin Department of Transportation and a member of the Smart family to find out when the road might be completed were not returned, but Koehler said commissioners were currently working with WisDOT on the highway connection.

Deputy Community Development Director Maria Pandazi was unable to locate the current zoning for the two outlots on Thursday afternoon, but said it was reasonable to expect the developments would be residential.

She said the developers would likely pay for the roadway, but the street would be built to city standards.

The extension of the roadway is part of the city's existing transportation plan, and Pandazi said the connection to Les Paul Parkway is expected to result in better traffic flow.

IN BRIEF

Man transported via Flight for Life after New Berlin accident

NEW BERLIN — Flight for Life responded to an accident at 3:05 a.m. Thursday on southbound Interstate 43 north of Moorland Road for a vehicle that left the roadway.

From the initial investigation, it appears the SUV was traveling southbound on I-43 and lost control leaving the roadway and rolled over. The 34-year-old East Troy male sustained serious injuries and was transported by Flight for Life. The 35-year-old East Troy female sustained non-life-threatening injuries and was transported by ambulance for treatment.

The Waukesha County Sheriff's Office, New Berlin Police Department and New Berlin Fire Department all responded to the accident scene.

This crash remains under investigation by the Waukesha County Sheriff's Office and the Wisconsin State Patrol.

Inside the bedroom, the officer located a tent inside a closet with a ventilation system.

Right next to the tent, there was also a clothesline with suspected marijuana plants hanging from it.

Several glass jars and a brown lunch bag containing marijuana were also allegedly found in the bedroom.

Man charged after allegedly growing pot in his mother's home

WAUKESHA — A New Berlin man is charged with manufacturing/delivering THC, maintaining a drug trafficking place and possession of drug paraphernalia after his mother allegedly found out he was growing several marijuana plants in her home.

Christopher T. Dreyer, age 27, faces over nine years and six months in jail on conviction.

According to a Waukesha County Circuit Court criminal complaint, an officer responded to a residence in the 14500 block of Meadowshire Drive on Oct. 5 after a marijuana grow operation was located there. Dreyer's mother told the officer that he was a respondent in a temporary restraining order and he had been removed from her home.

The complaint states Dreyer's mother found marijuana in his bedroom and he was the only person who had access to the upstairs area of the home over the past four years.

Man charged after allegedly urinating in river

WAUKESHA — A Waukesha man allegedly urinated into the Fox River downtown on Wednesday.

Travis Pechstein, 49, was charged Thursday with a count of disorderly conduct and faces up to 90 days in jail if convicted.

A criminal complaint said a witness identified Pechstein by name and described what he was wearing when reporting his actions to Waukesha police.

Pechstein was found by police on a park bench near the gazebo. Pechstein reportedly told police it was someone else who was observed by the reporting party, the complaint against him said. But the caller also had photos of the activity, which did not show the face of the offender, but showed him wearing the same clothes Pechstein was wearing, the complaint said. It added police observed Pechstein to be "highly intoxicated."

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FREEMAN MANAGEMENT

- Bill North - Publisher & Editor-in-Chief 513-2671
- bynorth@conley.net.com
- Katherine Beck - Managing Editor.....513-2644
- kbeck@conley.net.com
- Jim Baumgart - Freeman Group Ad Director 513-2621
- jbaumgart@conley.net.com
- Tim Haffemann - Circulation Director 513-2640
- thaffemann@conley.net.com
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- pscheel@conley.net.com
- Joe Rocha - Mailroom Supervisor.....513-2659

NEWS DEPARTMENT

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Analysis: New Jersey, New Hampshire, Illinois have highest property tax rates

Wisconsin is 7th out of 10 in Construction Coverage analysis

WASHINGTON (THE CENTER SQUARE) — New Jersey, New Hampshire and Illinois have the highest property tax rates in the U.S. and Wisconsin is seventh on a top ten list compiled by Construction Coverage and based on U.S. Census Bureau data.

The Great Recession led many Americans to more closely protect their bank accounts and veer away from big purchases, including homes. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau shows a steady decline in homeownership from the start of the Great Recession in 2007 until 2016.

However, the last few years have seen more individuals take on mortgages and become homeowners. In 2018, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded the average annual homeownership rate at 64.4 percent, which was still down from pre-recession rates, but an improvement nonetheless.

Property tax is determined by a local tax assessor's office. The office calculates the fair market value of a home, then

multiplies that value by the local tax rate to come up with the property tax.

State differences in what residents pay in property taxes are more closely tied to differences in tax rates than differences in property values. For example, Hawaii has the second highest median property value, but ranks 25th for median property tax paid. At the opposite end of the extreme, the median property value in New Jersey is approximately 50 percent above the national median, yet the median property tax paid by its residents exceeds the national median by more than 260 percent — the result of an extremely high effective tax rate.

Homeowners have long been able to deduct state and local property taxes from their federal tax return, helping offset steep property tax bills. In 2017, however, the tax code changed when President Donald Trump signed into law the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act. The bill made sweeping changes to the U.S. tax code,

including placing a cap on state and local tax deductions. According to the new law, taxpayers can deduct no more than \$10,000 in state and local taxes.

For some homeowners, especially high earners in high-tax states, the cap translates into substantially larger federal tax bills. As such, living in a high-tax state is now even more expensive than before.

Analysis

Construction Coverage researchers used data from the U.S. Census Bureau 2017 American Survey Public Microdata Sample (PUMS) to calculate property tax rates for all 50 states and the District of Columbia. For each home in the U.S., Construction Coverage divided its annual property tax by its value to find an effective property tax rate. These values were then aggregated at the state and national level.

Researchers included only owner-occupied single family homes on less than 10 acres of

land. As such, the median household incomes shown are limited to that sample of homes.

Across these homes, the median property tax rate is 1.09 percent, and ranges from 0.28 percent to 2.58 percent. The median annual property tax is \$2,350 per year, and ranges from \$575 to \$8,500.

The states with the three highest property tax rates, according to the analysis, are New Jersey at 2.58%; New Hampshire, 2.30%; and Illinois, 2.26 percent. Wisconsin, at 1.79%, is seventh on the list.

The other states, beginning with fourth place and proceeding to 20th place while excluding Wisconsin at 7th, are Connecticut, New York, Vermont, Texas, Nebraska and Rhode Island.

The states with the three lowest rates are Hawaii at 0.28%; Alabama, 0.38 percent; and Louisiana, 0.46 percent.

For a complete list of results for all states, see the original version constructioncoverage.com.

Pewaukee man charged with stalking ex-wife

WAUKESHA — A Pewaukee man allegedly repeatedly contacted his ex-wife, hurled vulgarities at her in messages, showed up at her home, and made disparaging comments about her in social media posts in recent months.

Jeffrey Bodus, 44, was charged this week in Waukesha County Circuit Court with stalking-domestic abuse, and faces up to 3 1/2 years in prison if convicted.

The complaint in the case said a woman reported to Pewaukee police Sept. 10 an incident that occurred the previous weekend. The couple divorced two years ago, but he's since continued to send her texts and emails and show up at her home unannounced, and has been con-

tacting family and friends about her, the complaint said. The woman asked to be left alone, and Bodus refused to do so, the complaint said.

The woman they met to discuss issues after he asked to "vent" and then promised to leave her alone, only to curse her, pour wine over her head and throw items around her residence. The next day, Sept. 8, she noticed a fresh dent in her car, the complaint said. The woman reported Bodus has threatened her family and friends, some of whom contacted her to report seeing Facebook messages containing "nasty comments" blaming her for their breakup.

The complaint also alleged an incident in September 2018 where Bodus rang the

woman's doorbell "nonstop" and sent her messages calling her vulgar names. Police advised him to leave her alone, but Bodus immediately sent text messages to her saying he "did not care if he was going to jail" and telling her she "ruined him," the complaint said. The woman reported the pattern of conduct has left her "emotionally drained and anxious most of the time," the complaint said.

Lottery

Thursday, Oct. 10
WISCONSIN

Pick 3	8-6-2
Pick 4	5-3-8-4
SuperCash	3-6-10-21-24-33
SuperCash Doubler:	No
Badger 5	6-11-17-18-31

Speedbump

