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Local Swim Team**
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Native Historians on
Lewis and Clark**
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**Sports editor
Reischel wins
Football
Writers of
America award**



Reischel

Rob Reischel, Sports Editor for the *Mount Horeb Mail*, recently received a Professional Football Writers of America award.
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**Homecoming
Parade Route
and Entries**

The 2026 homecoming parade will take place on Friday, September 25th. The start time for the parade will be approximately 2:45 p.m., fifteen minutes after the pep rally at the high school. The parade will follow the same route as in past years.

The route will start on
continued on page 4



Where the wild things are



Dave Laufenberg with his dog, Tui, who originally came from the Assiniboine and Sioux Indian Reservation in Wolf Point, Montana. They are pictured on land that was recently home to two plants - corn and soy - and now boasts around 200 species. Photo by Matt Geiger.

Mag Agriculture's Dave Laufenberg touts the benefits of ecological diversity

By MATT GEIGER
Mount Horeb Mail

"Farming is this beautiful intersection of all things," says Dave Laufenberg. "Everything comes together on the farm."

Standing in a pasture brimming with life, his words echo those of iconic writer Wendell Berry: "My basic assumption when talking about agriculture is that there's more to it than just agriculture. That you can't disconnect one part of a society from all the other parts and just look at the results and that alone."

American units of government, from federal all the way down to city and
continued on page 6

Laurence Kruckman publishes debut book of local stories: 'Driftless Anthology: Coming of Age in Western Wisconsin'

By MATT GEIGER
Mount Horeb Mail

A new book published by Little Creek Press on August 15 shines a light on the people and places that make this region special. Readers of the *Mount Horeb Mail* will likely recognize some of these tales by Laurence Kruckman, which have appeared as his "Village Vignettes" in these pages.

Kruckman recently took

the time to answer a few questions about his work, his life, the way a sense of place keeps people grounded, and whether or not Thomas Wolfe as actually correct about whether or not you can go home again.

First of all, tell us a little about this book? What's it about?

Kruckman: At its heart, *Driftless Anthology* is a series of essays exploring people and places that shape

our lives, and in particular my life. By returning back to my boyhood town and actual house after 50 years, I was able to look into a unique historical mirror and reflect on what forces played a role in my development as a person. The backdrop is the Driftless Area of western Wisconsin and a small town in Dane County, but I feel the core message speaks to

continued on page 6



Laurence Kruckman with Carolyn White. Photo contributed.

5TH ANNUAL MT VERNON FALL FEST
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Lorelei Lawry, left, and Julia Straka are the Rotary students for September.

American Legion supports MHHS Girls Swim Team



The Mount Horeb American Legion Post 113 donated \$300 to the Mount Horeb Girls Swim Team. Al Breunig, the Legion's Finance Officer, presented the check to the MHHS Girls Swim Team.

Lawry and Straka are Student Rotarians

September is a favorite time at the Mount Horeb Rotary Club because it means that high school students are back to eat lunch with the club at noon Wednesdays at Culver's and share their current activities.

Lorelei Lawry and Julia Straka are the Rotary students of the month for September. Both are members of Club Interact, the Rotary affiliate for students. Club Interact does service activities, including recently decorating bags for children at Ronald McDonald House.

Lorelei is a founding member of Sources of Strength, a high school

group focused on mental health. The group is planning a community-wide "color run" next spring, with proceeds to an organization that supports substance abuse treatment.

Lorelei is also active in band and choir. She plays multiple instruments and is currently serving as uniform manager and drum major in the marching band. She's been involved in the musical and competed in solo and ensemble contests in both vocal and instrumental music. Her other activities include Green Team, Student Council, Debate Club, HOSA, Link Crew, National

Honor Society, Social Justice Club and Viking Book Club.

Lorelei is the daughter of Molly and Mike Lawry and the sister of Cy Lawry.

Julia Straka is having a busy fall as captain of the State Champion cross country team. The team had a great start to its season despite competing against larger schools. In the winter, Julia plays basketball and in the spring she's on the track and field team. She was recently selected to the homecoming court.

Julia is a class officer and a member of National Honor Society, and works at Miller's and the school district. She's co-founder of "Letters of Love" and shared that the group recently handwrote 100 fall-themed letters that will be sent to hospitalized children. Julia is the daughter of Josh and Sarah Straka and the sister of Katherine and William. She hopes to attend UW-Madison or the University of Iowa and is interested in a career in health care or education.

Jeannie Statz uses weight loss journey to support local veterans' breakfast



Jeannie Statz set out on a health journey a year ago. She wanted to take control of her life again. On her journey, she has lost over 140 pounds and is helping others become healthier along the way.

At the end of June, Jerry Hook, Commander of the Mount Horeb American Legion, met with Jeannie and they talked about how they could combine her efforts with a way to support local Veterans. They talked about asking people to pledge money for every mile that Jeannie walked during July. A few days later, Jeannie and Hook met with the VFW Commander, Marny Skindrud, to talk (top photo).

They decided that the funds would go to support the free Veterans Breakfast held the first Saturday of every month at The Red Mouse, because every month more than 50 Veterans attend the breakfast, eat great food, and socialize. Jeannie received sponsorships from businesses and individuals and they are grateful to everyone who supported Jeannie along the way. Jeannie raised over \$1,000 and Jerry Hook raised over \$300.

Jeannie has since joined the Mount Horeb American Legion Auxiliary so that she can continue to honor her father, DuWayne Statz's military service.

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Local Government

Mount Horeb Historic Preservation Commission applies for grant money to bolster funding

By ERIN HERNDON
Mount Horeb Mail

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is applying for 2026 grant funding. The HPC met August 26 and voted to continue its funding process to support commission goals. It also approved its July meeting minutes and planned future discussions surrounding current design standards.

HPC Chair Marc Schellpfeffer introduced a letter of intent Village Administrator Gabe Altenbernd prepared for Jason Tish, the Certified Local Government (CLG) Coordinator with the Wis-

consin Historical Society. Schellpfeffer said while the commission’s previously sought-after and obtained grant went toward the ongoing Village historic resource survey, this grant application would focus on revising existing codes for historic properties, ensuring any renovations preserve their historicity and the character of the Village.

“We had gone after a grant to help us with the historic resource survey that’s currently going on,” Chair Schellpfeffer said. “This would be another grant application around our design review standards as they

relate to downtown as well as historic structures that would be in its purview in the future.”

According to the letter, if selected, the Village will utilize the funds to hire a consultant to clarify and personalize the design standards so historic property owners have a clear understanding regarding any maintenance, alterations or additions to their properties. Similarly, the HPC and Village Trustees will be able to utilize it as a clear set of guidelines with which to evaluate such projects.

HPC Citizen member Destinee Udelhoven said

the 2026 grant aligns well with goals the commission has maintained since its inception.

“I would have liked to go for this grant first, but we were told by the state, and I now agree, that it would have been nice to have our survey in order before we do our design standards,” Citizen member Udelhoven said. “These design standards will help people who are doing updates or projects on their house that are on the register to know what we’re looking for. The application should be as clear as possible, so folks don’t feel like they got blindsided by regu-

lations.”

Udelhoven said she anticipates the HPC will be informed by the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office if Mount Horeb is the grant’s recipient by spring 2027. If selected, she said the grant will be reimbursable with no match required, and the Village will have the opportunity to meet with multiple consultants and ultimately decide if they wish to move forward with the project.

“I think we should know by the spring. [The consultants] are applying for the full project amount, and then you have to get three or

four bids to make sure that the number is appropriate. This is going to be between \$30,000 and \$40,000, so it would include quite a bit of input from the public,” Udelhoven said. “There’d be a meeting or two asking for feedback from the consultant, and if it’s no match, and the Village decides, for whatever reason, they don’t want free money, they can say no.”

The Historic Preservation Commission next meets September 23, 2026 at 6 p.m.

Village of Blue Mounds votes on increase for fire budget; Trustee Jeff Lange leaves village board

By ABIGAIL KARBUSICKY
Mount Horeb Mail

The Blue Mounds village board approved the budget for the Mount Horeb Area Joint Fire Department at its Sept. 9 meeting with a small increase.

The village board heard a presentation from MHAJFD Fire Chief Jenny Minter on the 2025 call data and increases in costs that require a budget change. She told the board that the fire department was requesting an increase of \$84,500 for 2027.

Minter said personnel is always the highest cost, and the department had to increase the budget for fill-in staff because of the high volume of calls. She added the cost to repair fire apparatus

is increasing. And the department is requesting in the budget an increase to the pot of money that goes towards checks volunteer firefighters receive based on the number of calls they volunteer at.

Minter said MHAJFD wasn’t requesting a wage increase for EMS this year, but she was watching area departments to compare wages, and hopes her department can remain competitive.

In Blue Mounds, Minter said the department responded to 98 calls in the village in 2025, which was the exact same as 2024.

Minter said the fire department would hold its budgetary meeting and look for approvals at the end of September. For the budget

to pass, seven of the eight municipalities needed to approve the budget.

The Blue Mounds village board approved the budget at its Sept. 9 meeting.

Also at the meeting, resident Audra Anderson spoke during public comment about a concern she had regarding permitting and zoning for a specific property.

Anderson pointed to a detached garage on Cave of the Mounds Road that is zoned residential, but is operating as a commercial business.

Baum responded that he was aware of the situation.

“There were probably some issues in how that process is handled,” Baum said.

Baum announced earlier in the meeting he was looking for residents to be part

of a temporary committee to review and revise the village’s building permit and zoning standards, as they are out of date.

And Baum said this ad hoc committee could address the standards so there would not be oversights like this again.

And Trustee Curt Winter said this was an issue with the village’s process: “What happened here is a lapse in how we’re supposed to do business.”

And he said the village board was looking at the issue very seriously.

“This is not getting blown off by anyone,” Winter said. “This is getting looked at real hard, and changes have to be made for the benefit of the town.”

Baum also shared at the meeting that Trustee Jeff Lange resigned because he was moving out of the village.

He said that means the village will put out a call

for a new trustee to finish his term. People who are interested can check the Blue Mounds village website for more information.

Correction: Rosenbaum statement

The following quote, which was from Springdale supervisor John Rosenbaum, was mistakenly attributed to the wrong person (Bachman) in last week’s

fire budget article: “I am not a member of your committee, but this is very important to Springdale. I do not think it is too late for 2027, maybe there is a phase in

over three years starting in 2027, as this is a significant dollar amount for everybody and for the Village to just say this is a big number for us and we cannot do it

in 2027..... I am going to challenge you and suggest we just phase into this as a fairer arrangement starting in 2027.” The *Mail* regrets the error.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Indiginous perspectives on Lewis and Clark

The Lewis and Clark expedition spent countless hours navigating, documenting and discovering lands that were already home to dozens of Native nations with established governments, trade networks, cultures, and histories. From the Indigenous perspective, the land was not unknown. In truth, without the support of the Mandan, Hidatsa and other tribes, the expedition likely would not have succeeded. Join Dr. Matthew Villeneuve, Turtle Mountain Chippewa Descent, at the Mount Horeb Public Library Tuesday, October 6 at 6:30pm as he shares an Indigenous telling of the Corps of Discovery, highlighting a crucial part of US history. Dr. Villeneuve is a Professor of US History and American Indian Studies at UW-Madison. He currently teaches courses on American Indian history, Native studies, and Indigenous education. Matthew’s scholarship is informed by his Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa descent. For more information about the

library, its programs and services, visit www.mhpl.org or call 608-437-5021.

Bail Scams continue

Despite attempts to alert the public to a scam targeting families of individuals recently booked into the Dane County Jail, the Sheriff’s Office received another report over the weekend of someone falling victim to it.

Jail bookings are public information, and scammers are taking advantage of this by calling family members, falsely posing as jail staff, and asking for bail money over the phone. This past weekend, they were asked to pay \$3,000 via Venmo, and the caller identified himself as a Sgt. Gary Reynolds.

Telephone and computer scams have become increasingly complex and convincing; no one is immune to being targeted. The phone number on your screen may look legitimate, but that’s part of their game. It’s important to know how to recognize a phone scam. The Federal Trade Commission offers the following advice:

-Scammers may pretend to be law enforcement or a government agency. They may claim you’ll be ar-

rested, fined, or deported if you don’t comply. Their goal is to scare you into paying. **Law enforcement and government agencies won’t call to threaten you, and they will never ask for money over the phone.**

-Scammers will pressure you to act immediately. **Honest businesses will give you time to consider their offer. Take your time.**

-Scammers will insist you pay using methods that make it hard to get your money back, such as wire transfers, gift cards, cryptocurrency, or a payment app. **Anyone who insists you pay that way is a scammer.**

-Scammers will impersonate a government agency to obtain your personal information. **Never give out sensitive information, such as your Social Security number or bank information, over the phone.**

-Scammers will play on your emotions. Most people feel compelled to respond if they believe a loved one needs their help. **Hang up the phone and reach out to that person directly.**

If someone you know is booked into the Dane County Jail, our website offers a “Resources for Family

and Friends” page, <https://www.danesherriff.com/Jails/Family-and-Friends>, as well as detailed instructions on how to bail someone out of jail, <https://www.danesherriff.com/Jail/Bail-Information>

If you receive one of these calls, hang up immediately. If you have been a victim of this scam, report it to your local authorities.

Platinum Card

Staff at the Mount Horeb Public Library are excited to roll out a new opportunity for our patrons – a beautiful new metal card we are calling the platinum library card – and it comes with perks too!

Patrons can earn a platinum library card by checking out 1,000 items from the Mount Horeb Public Library. Track your checkouts via our easy checkout tracker. Earn prizes along the way when you reach the 200, 500, and 800 checkout milestones. At 1,000 checkouts you get your beautiful new card. It’s that easy!

Platinum cards come with ongoing perks. For example, holders of platinum library cards will be eligible for one free book at the Friends of the Library Used Book Sale

(held twice per year in the Library Meeting Room.) Other perks may be forthcoming.

Stop by the library today to begin earning your platinum library card. This program was generously sponsored by the Friends of the Mount Horeb Public Library.

Starting with the soil

On Tuesday, October 6, Dr Annalisa Stevenson will present on Gardening Success Starts with Soils. Healthy gardens start with healthy soils. In this presentation, soil scientist and UW Extension Master Gardener Annalisa Stevenson will explore how soils support plant growth, water regulation, nutrient cycling, and other essential ecosystem services, while highlighting gardening practices that build long-term soil health.

The club meets monthly, every first Tuesday, 6:45PM, at Wisconsin Surplus, Mt Horeb, 2600 Rte 78 South, in the Violet Room. The building is located on the west side of the village of Mt Horeb (at the second exit heading west off 18/151). Refreshments at 6:45, presentation starts at 7:00, and

the club business meeting begins at 8:00.

Contact Gloria Davies at jrdgrdquilt@mhtc.net for more.

A chance to visit farm of the year

Thursday, October 8, 1:00 PM CDT - 4:00 PM 1762 S. Sharpes Corner Rd.

Can bird habitat and prairie complement an operating farm? You betcha! Join us for an engaging day on Steve and Beth Albert’s Praire Bluff Farm.

The Alberts, who are Marbleseed’s 2026 Farmers of the Year, are showcasing their organically managed egg layer farm. They are joined by Andy Paulios, Natural Resource Manager with Dane County Land & Water Resources Department.

Andy will lead a guided walk to share how the Alberts have worked with the neighboring county park to enhance bird habitat. Agronomists and conservationists will be on site to help with discussion and production curiosities. Light locally sourced snacks will be served.

Attendance is open to everyone but please RSVP.

Senior Center News

September Events

Mondays and Thursdays, Table Tennis, 10:00am. It is open to all levels, providing a casual and friendly atmosphere for playing. Fridays, Coffee & Chat, 9:00am. Coffee will be provided, or you can bring your own. Enjoy your morning coffee with some conversation. Free and open to all.

Writing Class, Your Life as Story, with Julie Tallard Johnson, a local author, will be held on 9/25 from 4:30-

6:00pm. This class is for any writer wanting to write from life-whether as a memoir, a collection of stories, or fiction rooted in lived experience. Call the Senior Center at 608- 437-6902 for more information and to sign up.

Friday, September 25th, Bingo at 12:30, \$1 a card to play. Lunch is provided. Sponsored by The Lions Club.

Saturday, September 26th, Oakwood Fruit Farm in Richland Center

visit. The bus will leave the Senior Center at 10:00am. Lunch location TBD. Please call the Senior Center at 608-437-6902 to reserve your spot.

Tuesday, September 29th, Movie Matinée at 1:00pm. We will be showing National Treasu

re. Refreshments, popcorn, and snacks will be provided! “Historian and code-breaker Ben Gates (Nicolas Cage) has been searching his whole life for

a rumored treasure dating back to the creation of the United States. Joining an expedition led by fellow treasure hunter Ian Howe (Sean Bean), Gates finds an ice-locked Colonial ship in the Arctic Circle that contains a clue linking the treasure to the Declaration of Independence. But when Howe betrays him, Gates has to race to get to the document ahead of his so-called colleague.” There is no cost for this activity.

UPCOMING EVENT INFORMATION: As we head into Fall, we are excited to be going back to Legacy Theater in the Dells for the Monster Mash performance. Please call the Senior Center to reserve your space as availability is limited! Your ticket includes the bus ride, show, and lunch. Thursday, October 8th: Monster Mash:

“A wannabe Ghost Hunter and his skeptical girlfriend stumble into a mysterious theater and discover there’s only one way out....” Big laughs, no nightmares! We will leave the Senior Center at 12:45pm. Lunch consists of roasted chicken, a bread roll, corn, green beans, roasted potatoes, and dessert.



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KRUCKMAN

continued from page 1

readers everywhere. While not intending to answer it, the essays also address the age-old question, can you go home again? Literary figures like Thomas Wolfe and countless others have famously pondered this question. While they often found a deep disconnect between their static memories of youth and the reality of adulthood, I did not. My essays explore the reasons why my experience was surprisingly positive. These essays dive into why that return brought clarity rather than disappointment.

Our readers are already familiar with you from your Village Vignettes. Tell us about how you came up with the idea for this series, and how that led into the book:

Kruckman: Returning to my boyhood home after retiring was a deeply physical and emotional experience. My wife, Carolyn, and I made a vow to walk regularly, whether on the trails in Stewart Park or in town. During these walks, it suddenly struck me: I was stepping on the exact same sidewalks that carried me to school every day. Decades ago, I had also been a paperboy on these very streets, learning every house and face. As I walked, ghosts of the past began jumping out at me, triggering a flood of

unexpected memories—both good and bad. Eventually, Carolyn grew a bit tired of hearing me describe these ‘ghost memories’ and suggested I try journaling as a way to cope. I took her advice, and those notes quickly turned into short vignettes, poems, and story fragments. Around that same time, I began bumping into a few locals who had never left Mount Horeb—people I hadn’t seen in decades. One of the first was Ralph Buechner, a man from my parents’ generation who was then in his 90s. He spotted me at a local art fair just weeks after we moved back, and we instantly connected. I started driving Ralph around the beautiful valleys of the Driftless Area. As anyone who knew him can attest, he was a goldmine of local history. I began penning his stories, which inspired my first complete essay, *Ralph: Town Hero*. That shifted everything. The ghost memories were no longer chasing me; instead, I was chasing them, eagerly tracking down the living links to my past. I began writing in earnest about the colorful characters from my childhood. These stories eventually became the weekly *Village Vignettes* column in the *Mount Horeb Mail*. Later, a friend suggested I compile them into a single volume, and the rest, as they say, is history.

What was the most rewarding, or perhaps

surprising, thing about compiling these stories?

Kruckman: Discovering my role as a cultural transporter! I realized I was carrying readers back to small-town Wisconsin during the 1950s and early 1960s—a pivotal era of rapid social and economic change. I vividly remember the “farmer nights” of my grade school years, when Fridays and Saturdays transformed Main Street into a bustling hub. Sidewalks were packed as rural families brought crops to the mills and livestock to market, dropping by the hardware and lumber yards along the way. For both town and country kids, the energy was electric; theaters were packed, and restaurants boomed. While economic shifts quickly erased this way of life, writing allowed me to reconnect with those vibrant memories. Surprisingly, I discovered that these stories are linked by a single theme: how deeply a specific place shapes a person’s life. Ultimately, writing this collection shifted my return to the Driftless area into a profound, life-changing journey—one that forced me to reflect on my own path, practice gratitude, and bridge the past with the present.

Your tales focus very much on time and place. What makes this part of the Driftless special to you? What makes this good soil

WILD

continued from page 1

village, have long worked diligently to stamp out rural communities in the name of alleged progress. In recent years, the insatiable maw of development has devoured much of Wisconsin’s richest farmland as a procession of small family farms are pushed out of business. Farming, which has been the heartbeat of the human experience since the Neolithic Revolution, has increasingly come under the domain of big business as people become more and more detached from their food sources.

And yet, standing here surrounded by tall grasses, fluttering butterflies, and swaying explosions of yellow and lavender flowers, there is a discernable, palpable glimmer of hope for the future. It’s hard not to be optimistic when surrounded by the beauty of the unadulterated Wisconsin landscape.

“Laugh ... Be joyful though you have considered all the facts,” says Laufenberg. “That’s my favorite Wendell Berry quote.”

Laufenberg, a 2006 Mount Horeb High School graduate, spent years living out west and trained and worked in the field of ecology.

“For most of my 20s I got paid to count birds,” he

laughs.

But he recently returned home, drawn by the fact that Wisconsin, despite fervent efforts to destroy it, retains something of Tolkien’s “Shire.”

Laufenberg is currently working as a “Wilding” Manager for Mad Agriculture, a national non-profit striving to create a new environmental and economic system in which the land and its people can both thrive. The idea is so simple it sounds slightly insane, hence the “Mad” name, a reference to Berry’s poetry: That people, wild plants and animals, domestic plants and animals, and all of society can thrive together.

The best place to start is on farms.

“The basic idea is that we can show up gracefully,” says Laufenberg.

The idea of “Wilding” is to replace desecrated spaces with sacred ones; to swap

WHAT IS WILDING?

According to Mad Agriculture, Wilding is “an ecological framework built around the strategic integration of perennial cover—native prairies, silvo-pasture systems, perennial crops, and riparian buffers—into working agricultural landscapes to reconstruct habitat connectivity and build a functionally connected, multi-use habitat network capable of delivering ecosystem services, supporting species movement, and maintaining biodiversity across watershed and regional scales. Sustaining that network requires financial structures and commercial opportunities that make coordinated stewardship economically viable for the farmers and landowners doing the work.”

“Decades of research document the extent to which the conversion of perennial cover to cropland has diminished ecological function and demonstrate that strategically sited native perennial cover can produce substantial improvements in water quality, soil function, and biodiversity.”

vast monoculture for ecologically intense, diverse parcels where food, nature, culture and fun all joyously mingle. The idea is to transform agriculture and make it regenerative.

“Plants, you know, they make homes for all the other critters, of course,” explains Laufenberg. “So, in theory, the more plant species you have, the more bugs and everything else.”

Located just outside Mount Horeb, the 50-acre Laufenberg family farm, which sits on the headwaters of the Sugar River, is being used to showcase the potential of Wilding. Here, the two crops that dominate industrial agriculture have been replaced by hundreds of others. In the space of a few short seasons, it has transformed into an eclectic paradise. Today, rather than two species of plants, there are hundreds.

“Biodiversity is a reflec-

tion of the resilience of the fabric of our common home,” Laufenberg explains.

“You know, two years ago there were two members of the plant kingdom on this entire property,” he continues. “A big, domestic grass: corn. And a big, domestic legume: soy. And that first year we got it to 20 species, so an entire magnitude of two, to 20, when we planted out the pastures with a 10-species mix, mostly non-native cool weather stuff, pasture that grows fast and can be grazed off and grow back quick. And we planted a bunch of different trees, honey locust, oak, two different little orchards with persimmon, apple, pear. I thought it would take the rest of our lives to get to 200, to get to the next magnitude, but this year we planted 170. So, it’s about 200 now.”

The more plants there are, the more animals can

thrive. Human beings, for those who might have forgotten, are a species of animal, which is similar to all others in nearly everything except its remarkable capacity to either harm or heal its planet.

With or without people, the world will always exist in a state of flux. It is in biological diversity that it survives through the challenges of perpetual change.

“Maybe at the heart of it, maybe at the heart of ecology is just one tenant, and that is constant change,” muses Laufenberg. “Don’t fall for the illusion of stability.”

A small, diverse farm is a healthy farm, he reasons. Its capacity for change allows it to thrive through heat and cold, flood and drought, good fortune and bad.

“You know, this year July was awfully hot and awfully dry,” he says. “That means certain species out of that 170 species we just put in did really poorly. It was too harsh, they died, germinated, whatever. But other species were like, ‘Yeah, okay, I can roll with this.’ And if you have enough diversity in a space to kind of roll with the dynamic nature that has always been, whether in climate to some degree, I mean obviously the intensity and frequency of kind of anomalous events is increasing,

Book Launch September 29

Join Laurence Kruckman at Mount Horeb’s downtown Driftless Historium (100 S 2nd St) on Tuesday, September 29 at 6 p.m. for the official launch of his new book, “Driftless Anthology: Coming of Age in Western Wisconsin.” At this family-friendly, free event, Kruckman will share his rediscovery of the hills, valleys, and small towns in the Driftless Region where he spent his youth.

His book is a heartfelt journey in which Kruckman’s reflections and stories explore how this unique landscape—and the people and experiences within it—shaped his life. His childhood adventures in Mount Horeb, encounters with remarkable characters, memories of post-war Wisconsin and reflections on identity and belonging work together to capture the spirit of a place unlike any other. Along the way, he introduces readers to war heroes, teachers, soda jerks, coaches, conservationists, family members, local legends, and lifelong friends whose influence extended far beyond their titles.

Laurence Kruckman is a medical anthropologist, educator, and writer whose work has appeared in numerous academic journals, including *American Anthropologist*, *Social Science and Medicine*, and *Medical Anthropology*. He taught at the University of Wisconsin–La Crosse, Humboldt State University, and Indiana University of Pennsylvania. After a forty-year academic career, Kruckman returned to Mount Horeb, his boyhood home, where he began documenting the people, places, and experiences that shaped his life. *Driftless Anthology* is the result of that journey home.

For more information about this event, call the Mount Horeb Area Historical Society at 608-437-6486 or email mthorebahs@gmail.com.

for stories?

Kruckman: Without a sense of place, especially a love of place (and I mean more than just people), I think we humans become adrift. Capitalism forces most people to go where the jobs are, which many people do, as I did, and unless we work hard to put down roots and feel good about a place or respect a place, I think we become lost souls rarely investing in community. Growing up in this unique landscape, the Driftless stayed with me and I realize it is not the Rockies or the Allegheny’s, but for kids it is/was a mysterious set of valleys, caves and quarries that was ideal for childhood play, including (and

I hope I don’t offend anyone) Cowboys and Indians. Fortunately, my street was, in post-war days, loaded with boys: Haroldson’s, Gullick’s, Aavang’s, Statz’s, Jenkin’s, the list goes on. We played almost every day in the wonderful hills north of my dead-end street, in Stewart Lake Park; there were pick-up ball games in empty lots, sledding in winter, and so on. I also had a wide range of jobs. Believe it not, pin-setter, drug store gopher, cave guide, paperboy. These childhood adventures, my part-time employment, and the adult characters swirling around these activities provided more than enough fodder for stories.

Anything else you want

to add?

Kruckman: Most of the book’s profits, if any, will go to the Driftless Historium. It represents the type of institution that every small town needs to promote a sense of place, to help people, even if they’re not born here, to find a ‘home,’ to put down roots, and respect and protect the environment around them. I also want to thank essay co-authors: Carolyn White, Wm Sutter, Jim Leary, and Jack Pohle all contributed. It takes a village to write a book! The book is available at the Historium bookstore in Mount Horeb, bookshop.org, on-line at Little Creek Press, Barnes & Noble and Amazon.



Prime Time Plus builds community through travel, education and connection

Bank program offers trips, events and educational opportunities designed to keep clients connected and engaged

By Alec Finger
Finger Publishing

For Lake Ridge Bank clients age 50 and older, Prime Time Plus offers more than an opportunity to travel. The program, led by PTPC Director Katie Magyera, combines trips, local activities, educational programs and social events with an emphasis on building connections among members.

Magyera oversees the bank's Prime Time Plus efforts alongside Associate Director Jenny Gutzmer, who helps coordinate the program's activities and travel opportunities.

Magyera said the program has been part of the bank for nearly 35 years, continuing through the transition from State Bank of Cross Plains to Lake Ridge Bank.

Today, Prime Time Plus has about 4,000 members, with about 1,500 people actively traveling or participating in events throughout the year.

Gutzmer is excited to be involved with one of the

area's only bank-sponsored travel and event groups for clients.

The program is open to bank clients age 50 and older who meet basic requirements. Once a member, they receive the Prime Time Plus newsletter and can participate in the program's events and trips. Members also receive benefits including free checks on a checking account and a discount on safe deposit boxes.

While travel is one of the program's most visible features, Magyera said Prime Time Plus is designed to serve members at different stages of life.

Its offerings include extended domestic and international trips, day trips, local activities, appreciation events, banking education, estate planning seminars, fraud and identity theft education, and instruction on digital banking tools.

The travel program is designed to remove much of the planning burden from members. Magyera and Gutzmer accompany mem-



Lake Ridge Bank Prime Time Plus Director Katie Magyera and Associate Director Jenny Gutzmer pose in front of Peggy's Point Lighthouse during a Prime Time Plus trip. Photo contributed by Lake Ridge Bank.

bers on trips, coordinate with tour operators and handle much of the communication and logistics.

"We can really meet the needs of both the most avid traveler and a new traveler by just being there to take care of every detail," Magyera said.

That approach can be particularly appealing to people who have spent years planning family vacations and are ready to let someone else handle the details.

The program also aims to make group travel accessible to people who may not have a regular travel partner.

Magyera said some members have spouses or partners who no longer want to travel, while others have lost a spouse or are traveling alone.

"They still want to travel, and being part of our community makes it feel really safe to do so," Magyera said.

Trips vary considerably in length and structure. Recent



A hot air balloon ride over the Maasai Mara in Kenya offers Prime Time Plus travelers a unique way to experience the region. Photo contributed by Lake Ridge Bank.

examples included Costa Rica at 10 days, France at nearly two weeks and an Oregon and Northern California trip that lasted nine days and covered approximately 1,400 miles by bus. An upcoming Asheville trip is planned for five days.

The program has also been incorporating more free time and choices into trips based on member feedback.

"To help ensure we continue to offer programs and trips our clients will enjoy, we survey participants after every event or trip to see how we can improve current offerings or add new trips and programs," Magyera said.

That feedback has helped shape upcoming trips. New Orleans was selected after repeated member requests, while Kenya is being offered again after three years because of continued interest.

The program's local activities provide another way for members to participate without committing to an extended trip.

Prime Time Plus has taken members to Lambeau Field and on a Lake Geneva lunch cruise, while upcoming activities include a tour of American Family Field and a visit to the Harley-Davidson Museum.

The program's annual See PRIME, on next page



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PRIME

Continued from previous page

appreciation concert, for example, drew about 650 people this year. Magyera said some longtime travelers who no longer take extended trips still attend the concert to reconnect with friends they made through Prime Time Plus.

Education is another significant component of the program.

Recent offerings have included a four-part estate planning seminar as well as sessions on digital banking tools, digital wallets, fraud, identity theft and safer banking practices.

Magyera said education is an important part of Prime Time Plus because the program is designed to provide more than travel opportunities.

“We have identity theft seminars. We have fraud seminars. So the jazz hands are what excite people, right? The travel, but there is a lot that comes back to the client,” Gutzmer said.

Magyera said the program also focuses on helping members plan for the future and stay safe while managing their finances.

“How to keep you safe, how to plan for the future, how to be thoughtful with that, and that’s really important to us,” she said.

The Prime Time Plus newsletter also serves as a way to share information about banking safety and changes to banking procedures.

Beyond the travel and educational components, Magyera said the relationships formed through Prime Time Plus are what make the program meaningful.

“It’s the people,” Magyera said when asked about the most rewarding part of the program.

She said the relationships formed through the program can extend beyond individual trips and events.

“It’s a group of strangers coming onto a bus and leaving as family. It doesn’t matter where we go, people leave connected,” Magyera said.

Magyera said Prime Time Plus also aims to supplement, rather than replace, the work of local senior



A rhinoceros moves through as tour buses observe from nearby. Photo contributed by Lake Ridge Bank.

centers.

“Our communities also have really amazing senior centers that offer a lot of these amazing pieces as well,” Gutzmer said. “We like to think that we just supplement all the amazing base work that happens at the senior centers.”

For eligible clients who have never participated, Magyera has a simple invitation: “Get on the bus.”

Magyera said members can bring eligible guests, and nonmembers under age 50 may also participate as guests, subject to applicable limits and fees. Adult children have joined their parents on trips.

The goal, Magyera said, is to give people an opportunity to experience the program rather than simply hear about it.

“A lot of people don’t get it until they see it in action,” she said.

Ultimately, Magyera and Gutzmer described Prime Time Plus as a way for people to form connections while exploring new places and experiences.

“They might not know each other well, and they leave as family. They leave as friends,” Magyera said.

For a program that has been part of the bank for nearly 35 years, that sense of connection remains at its center.



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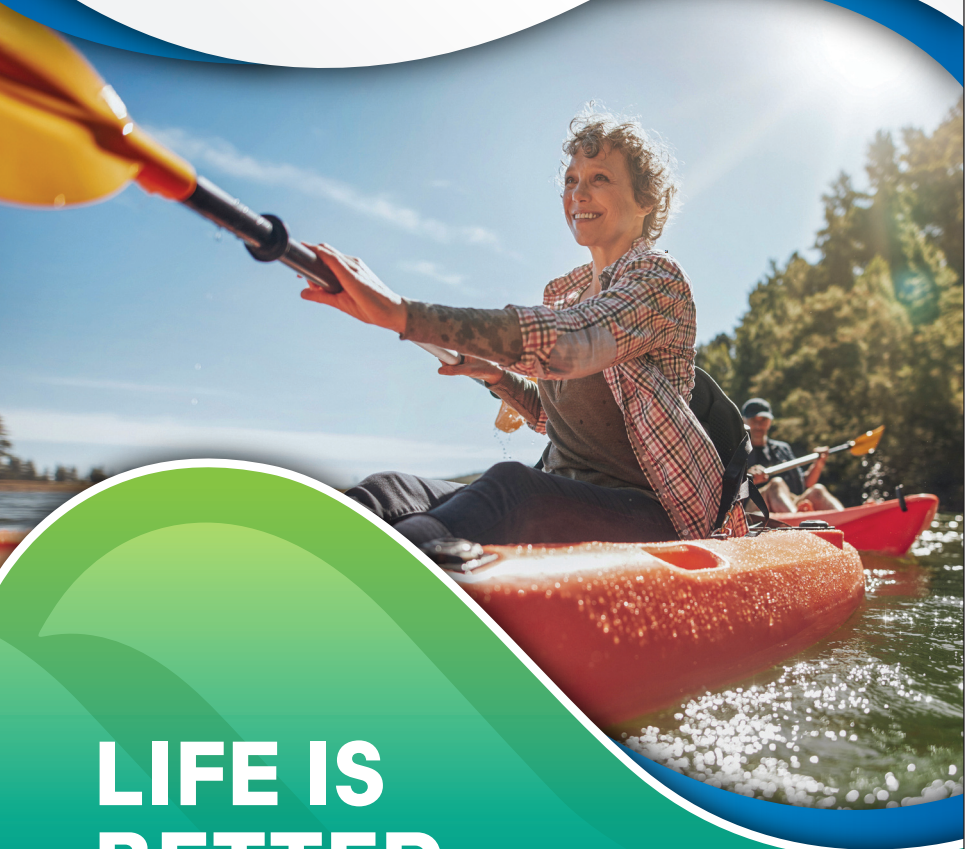
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How arthritis affects daily life and mobility

Arthritis is a broad category of joint and connective tissue disorders that impacts around one in five people in both Canada and the United States, according to the Arthritis Society of Canada. In fact, arthritis is a leading cause of disability for many people around the world. Arthritis becomes a greater concern as people age. That's particularly so with osteoarthritis, which is degenerative condition caused by repeated use and stress on joints.

Common symptoms of arthritis include joint pain, swelling, reduced mobility, and physical weakness. Such signs underscore how much arthritis can affect daily life. Symptoms may come and go, but it's not always easy living with arthritis, particularly rheumatoid arthritis. Also, in some people, rheumatoid arthritis can damage body systems beyond the joints, including the skin, eyes, lungs, heart, and blood vessels, says the Mayo Clinic.

There is no cure for arthritis, so working on lifestyle changes can improve quality of life and help people manage day-to-day tasks more



There is no cure for arthritis, so working on lifestyle changes can improve quality of life and help people manage day-to-day tasks more easily.

- **Lose weight:** Carrying around extra weight can put greater stress on joints, causing more pain and stiffness. Losing a little weight can help alleviate stress on hips and knees and facilitate mobility.
 - **Take medicine:** Talk to your doctor about which medicines might be available to help manage daily symptoms. Certain prescriptions and over-the-counter options can help prevent flare-ups and may even reduce the risk of further problems.
 - **Find balance:** Johns Hopkins Medicine suggests toggling between activity and rest to protect joints and lessen symptoms. Take breaks when needed, and don't feel down on yourself if you can't exercise for as long or as intensely as you once did.
 - **Get regular activity:** Certain exercises can help reduce joint pain and stiffness. Consult with a doctor about what you can do to keep joints flexible. Swimming, walking and low-impact aerobic exercise can promote flexibility.
 - **Talk to someone:** Arthritis also can come with emotional symptoms that you may want to discuss with a mental health professional.
- Arthritis affects millions of people's lives, but management of the condition can improve quality of life.

Great gifts for retirees

Millions of working professionals may feel as though retirement is a long way off. But data suggests retirement may be a lot closer than many people believe. According to separate findings from the Employee Benefit Research Institute and the Transamerican Center for Retirement Studies, the average worker in the United States retires at 62. Professionals tend to work a little longer in Canada, where Statistics Canada notes the average retirement age in 2025 was 65.

Regardless of which country professionals call home, retirement is a milestone moment worthy of celebration. Retirees may have their own private celebrations planned, but loved ones can still make this notable moment in a person's life more meaningful with the right gift.

- **Luggage:** Give a nod to many retirees' stated desire to travel more in retirement by gifting some new

luggage. Hard shell luggage is particularly durable, which may be especially useful for individuals who plan to become jetsetters now that they no longer have to work. Personalize the gift by having the recipient's initials monogrammed onto the new luggage.

- **Chef's knives:** Another goal many people have upon retiring is to fine-tune their culinary skills. Some feel a chef is only as good as his cutlery, so the gift of a professional chef knife set can get retirees on the road to crafting delicious, top-notch meals.

- **Reading chair:** Many working adults lament that they have little time to read, a common refrain that no longer applies once professionals retire. A brand new comfortable reading chair can make an ideal gift for retirees with a bucket list of books to get through now that they have plenty of time

to read for pleasure.

- **Ergonomic gardening tools:** Ergonomic gardening tools are easy on the joints and tailor-made for new retirees who now have plenty of time to invest in their gardens and landscapes. Pair the tools with a cushioned kneeling pad and sturdy gardener's gloves and retirees will have all they need to get to work in the great outdoors.

- **Photo albums:** Anyone with a smartphone is familiar with the notion that great pictures are routinely snapped but easily forgotten thanks to the ease of taking photographs in modern life. Some high-end photo albums can encourage retirees to take a stroll down Memory Lane as they pick and choose memorable photographs to include in their new books.

Retirement is a milestone moment in life that can be made even better with the right gift.

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Practices that can benefit seniors’ mental health

Making an effort to maintain and safeguard mental health is a key component of a healthy lifestyle, and that’s as true for seniors as it is for children, young adults and men and women in middle age. Seniors can embrace a number of practices and habits to safeguard their mental health well into their golden years.

- Spend more time with family. Spending time with family members can be especially beneficial for adults 70 and older. According to a 2023 study published in the Journals of Gerontology: Series B, adults without family ties had worse mental health and were less likely to engage socially than older adults who were close to their family. The researchers behind the study noted those benefits are not affected by distance, as even the older adults who lived far away from their family members but maintained strong social ties to their families enjoyed higher levels of mental health and social participation than seniors with no such connections.
- Exercise regularly. Routine exercise also can have a profound impact on seniors’ mental health. The Anxiety & Depression Association of America reports that evidence supports the notion that exercise can shift attitude, mindset and mood in a positive way. Another study found that adults who participated in a regular physical activity program experienced reduced rates of long-term and acute depression.
- Incorporate travel into your golden years. Working professionals have



Seniors can embrace a number of practices and habits to safeguard their mental health well into their golden years.

long expressed an intention to travel more during retirement, and doing so may have an even bigger impact than seniors realize. According to a joint report from the Global Coalition on Aging and the Transamerica Institute® released in 2025, regular travel has been shown to lower Alzheimer’s risk by up to 47 percent, a benefit researchers link to culturally enriching activities like visiting museums and exploring historical landmarks. The same report also notes that travel helps to address loneliness and social isolation, which are mental health issues that the senior population is especially vulnerable to, particularly during retirement.

- Volunteer. The Mayo Clinic Health System notes that volunteering can boost mental health in a number of ways. Volunteering has been found to reduce stress and increase positive, relaxed feelings. The Mayo Clinic also notes that volunteering leads to lower rates

of anxiety and depression, particularly among adults 65 and older.

Mental health is part of a healthy lifestyle. Seniors can look to various practices to protect their mental health and reduce their risk for conditions such as social isolation, loneliness and depression that affect a great number of older adults.

Can cataracts be prevented?

Vision should be cherished at every stage in life. However, as one ages and vision changes become more profound, it is even more important to stay abreast of what can be done to care for the eyes in the hopes of preventing certain conditions, including cataracts.

Cataracts are the clouding of the eye’s natural lenses. The World Health Organization estimates that cataracts affect more than 94 million people globally. Cataracts also account for nearly 45 percent of all blindness cases.

Even though cataracts are considered an unavoidable part of the aging process, some people wonder if they can be prevented. Reedsburg Area Medical Center says that, while one cannot entirely stop the biological aging of the lens, delayed onset and reduced severity of cataracts is possible through targeted lifestyle choices.

According to EyeHealth Northwest, by age 80, more than 90 percent of adults will either have a cataract or have already undergone surgery for them. Techni-

cally cataracts cannot be prevented, but these steps can help push cataract development further into later life.

- Wear sunglasses with UV protection. The consensus among experts is that prolonged exposure to ultraviolet B rays accelerates the breakdown of lens proteins. Consistent use of sunglasses that offer 100 percent UV protection can greatly slow this protein degradation. Wraparound frames will block light from the periphery as well as the front.
- Lower oxidative stress. Preventing oxidative stress, a primary driver of lens opacification, can be achieved through diets rich in antioxidants, says Premier Eye Care of Eastern Idaho. Lutein, zeaxanthin and vitamin C act as shields for the eye. Eye Physicians of Long Beach says the risk of age-related cataracts reduces by around 26 percent for every additional 10 mg of carotenoids added to a person’s diet.
- Manage diabetes. The National Institutes



of Health says individuals with diabetes face a 63 percent higher likelihood of requiring cataract surgery compared to those without the condition. Managing high blood sugar will prevent sorbitol from depositing in the lenses and causing cloudiness earlier in life.

- Quit smoking: Smoking is a key factor in cataract development, says Optometrists.org. Smokers have a 1.66 times greater risk of developing cataracts than non-smokers because the toxins in tobacco smoke can deplete the body’s natural antioxidant stores.

Although it may not be possible to turn off aging and prevent cataracts entirely, cataracts can be delayed and made less impactful through lifestyle changes.

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Finley records his final out

Mount Horeb skipper steps down after 16-year run

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

Time is a thief.
Like many parents, Mount Horeb baseball coach Ryan Finley is experiencing that first hand these days. Finley's son, Jaxen, is a freshman pitcher for Edgewood's baseball team, while his daughter, Macie, is a junior at MHHS.
Understanding that time is one thing you can never get back, Ryan Finley recently decided to do something different with his.
So Finley resigned as Mount Horeb's skipper after a terrific 16-year run.
"I'm a little bit of a slow learner, I guess, but with Jaxen moving to college about a month ago, I finally realized how quickly life moves," Finley said. "Coaches have to sacrifice a lot of their own family time to spend with other people's kids, and I certainly enjoyed doing that. But I want to be able to make as many of

Jaxen's college baseball games as I can this spring.
"I also have an amazing daughter, Macie, who is already a junior in high school. I understand much better now how much things will change when she graduates and moves to college in a couple of years. Whether she likes it or not, that poor girl is going to get a lot of dad time over the next two years before she graduates."
Finley leaves with a 199-174 overall record and a bevy of memories from big games, team trips and countless relationships.
Mount Horeb won the Badger West Conference championship in 2013 before falling to River Valley in the regional finals that year.
"Winning the conference championship in 2013 was an amazing experience," Finley said. "I coached many of the seniors on that team as freshmen when we were all part of the JV team.

continued on page 16



After 16 seasons as Mount Horeb's baseball manager, Ryan Finley (left) decided to step down. File photo

Back on track?

Mount Horeb-Barneveld believes its trending upward after routing Fort

by ROB REISCHEL
Sports Editor

Kickoff was still 48 hours away.
His team was mired in a three-game losing streak. And the doubters were out in full force.
That's when Mount Horeb-Barneveld football coach Bret St. Arnauld had a promise.
"You'll never see a team play harder than we will the rest of the season," St. Arnauld said.
That was certainly evident last Friday, when the Vikings took out their recent frustrations on Fort Atkinson and routed the visiting Blackhawks, 50-6.
Sophomore quarterback Preston Myers had a sensational performance, throwing four touchdowns on just nine passes. Senior running back Eli Maier had

135 rushing yards on only nine carries — a whopping 15.0-yard average. Maier also had two rushing touchdowns and three two-point conversion runs.
And the MH-B defense held Fort without a first down in the first half and limited the Blackhawks to 21 yards of total offense.
The Vikings improved to 2-3 overall, 1-2 in the Badger Small Conference and won their first game since Aug. 21 when they defeated WIAA Division 3 defending state champion Grafton in Week 1. MH-B also snapped a three-game losing streak, which was its longest since the 2019 campaign.
Fort fell to 1-4, 0-3.
"All last week I felt like Captain Smith on the Titanic," St. Arnauld said. "But I believe that this story is going to have a dif-

ferent ending than that one did.
"I'm fully anticipating that we'll save everybody. Is it too late? It's not too late. We just had to change the mindset."
That was at the top of St. Arnauld's "to-do" list after MH-B fell to Beaver Dam on Sept. 11.
St. Arnauld and his staff took an honest look at themselves and admitted there had been slippage in some key areas. It trickled down to the team, which was evident in MH-B's early-season play.
So St. Arnauld & Co. preached culture, discipline and work ethic. And after MH-B had arguably its best week of practice this season leading into the Fort game, its fiery head coach felt things were about to get back on track.

continued on page 15



Henry DeRosier and Mount Horeb-Barneveld's football team routed Fort Atkinson, 50-6, last Friday. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

Soccer Vikings trending upward

Mount Horeb close to putting it all together

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

Mount Horeb’s boys soccer team is looking for a branch of consistency to hold onto.

When they do, look out. That’s how Vikings coach Rick Gage feels.

Mount Horeb defeated Janesville Parker, 9-2, and fell to Fort Atkinson, 2-1, last week. The Vikings are now 4-3-2 overall and 1-2 in the Badger Small Conference.

“I feel that this team is close to really breaking through,” Gage said. “We have played well this season. We have had some really good results and some frustrating results.

“While we have been disappointed in some games, we also know that we are capable of playing with anyone. We have some things to clean up and the team continues to be positive and working hard in practice.”

Here’s a recap of the Vikings’ week.

• **Mount Horeb 9, Janesville Parker 2** — Romain Gilles, Marcos Gallastegui Luna and Veyron Ruef each had two goals as Mount Horeb won the battle of Vikings on Sept. 14.

Nathan Holt, Gavin Van Gorden and Gavin Schultz each had a goal, as well.

Parker Smith and Gilles both had two assists, while Holt, Gallastegui Luna and Ruef each had an assist.

“This was a game that we figured we would control from start to finish,” Gage said. “On film we thought we would be able to control things both offensively and defensively. The game pretty much played out as we thought it would.

“We are a little banged up, so it was a good chance to give everyone good playing time and to try players at some different positions. The game was never in doubt. I thought all players did a good job creating offensive chances and our defense did a good job of controlling the back line.”

• **Fort Atkinson 2, Mount Horeb 1** — Mount Horeb dug itself a 2-0 hole and couldn’t climb all the way back on Sept. 17.

Romain Gilles had a goal for the Vikings, but it wasn’t enough.

“Watching film on Fort we figured this would be a close game,” Gage said. “They are fast and a sure tackling team. I felt that we would be able to move the ball on Fort and create plenty of offense, but figured they would be dangerous on the defensive side.

“Fort plays on a smaller field and they like to attack quickly by playing balls over the back line and then using their quick forwards to create goal scoring chances. On a smaller field this can be a very dangerous attack as you don’t have as much room to stop them. We have a quick back line so I figured as long as we kept our shape on the back line that we would be just fine.”

Mount Horeb created plenty of early chances, but couldn’t convert. Then in the 32nd minute, the Blackhawks cleared a ball up the field that snuck through the Vikings’ defense, found a Fort player who slotted it home.

“It was frustrating to be down 1-0 as I felt we had created the better chances in the game,” Gage said. “But we had to try to fight our way back into the game.”

Mount Horeb’s Holt hit the top of the crossbar in the 35th minute. Then in the 39th minute, Fort was able to convert again after a Mount Horeb defensive breakdown and the Blackhawks grabbed a 2-0 halftime lead.

“We were frustrated coming in at halftime,” Gage said. “We felt we had played well and missed some good chances. We had two mistakes that led to us being in the hole.”

Mount Horeb switched to a 3-4-3 instead of its normal 4-4-2 to begin the second half.

“We needed to get goals to get us back into the game,” Gage said. “Three defenders in the back was going to expose us to more chances from Fort, but we needed to play more offensively to get back into the game. We came out of half playing well. We were creating lots of chances.”

Finally, in the 57th minute, the Vikings broke



Romain Gilles (9) and Mount Horeb’s boys soccer team split a pair of matches last week. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

through.

Donovan Rahman played a through ball to Gilles in the box. Gilles put a move on the goalie and slotted the ball home to pull the Vikings within 2-1.

“We were playing well and had some momentum so I thought we would get another goal and level the game up,” Gage said. “We continued to create chances, but were just not able to get the ball into the back of the net.”

As the half played out, though, Mount Horeb began to tire and couldn’t find the equalizer.

“We were frustrated with not winning the game,”

Gage said. “We felt there were long stretches of the game where we put Fort under a lot of pressure, but were unable to find the net.

“I feel like the team is playing good soccer right now, but we are making some small mistakes that are putting us in a hole. Additionally, we are doing a good job of creating offensive chances, but just haven’t been able to put the ball in the back of the net enough against better teams.”

• **On deck:** The Vikings hosted Dodgeville/Mineral Point on Tuesday, then host Stoughton Thursday at 7 p.m. Both teams are in Mount Horeb’s sectional

next month.

“We will work on cleaning up our mistakes on the field and keep working on finishing our offensive chances,” Gage said. “We are a young team and sometimes young teams are inconsistent. The goal is to be a consistent team from start to finish and we will have two good chances this week to show it.”

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MoHo swimmers shine on Senior Night

Vikings cruise past Portage/Poynette

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

There’s nothing quite like Senior Night, as teams pay homage to individuals that have given so much to their program.

Mount Horeb’s girls swimming team honored seniors Maddie Becker, Madeline Evans, Delilah Gasch and Ellie McKillips on Sept. 15.

The Vikings then went out and dunked Portage/Poynette, 106-55.

“I was really happy with what we saw,” Mount Horeb coach Kaitlin O’Rourke said. “I think the biggest takeaway for me is that we’re starting to see our practice plan show up in the results.

“We’re still very much in a heavy training block right now, so to come out and have event wins, lifetime bests and girls continuing to drop time is really exciting.”

Mount Horeb’s Lucy Peterson won the 200-yard freestyle, while Haylie Becker was second. Peterson also won the 100-yard freestyle, while Becker was third.

The Vikings’ Ava Beglinger won the 100-yard butterfly, while CeCe Watson was second and Emma Erickson was third. Evans won the 500-yard freestyle, while McKillips was third.

The Vikings quartet of Peterson, Haylie Becker, Evy Vedo and Gasch won the 200-yard freestyle, while the foursome of Maggie Coe, Erickson, Watson and Evans was second.

Mount Horeb’s 400-yard freestyle relay team of Evans, Maddie Becker, Haylie Becker and Peterson was first, while the

Vikings’ quartet of McKillips, Charlotte Johnson, Nora Carroll and Vedo was second.

The Vikings’ 200-yard medley relay team of Watson, McKillips, Maddie Becker and Vedo was second, while the foursome of Gasch, Coe, Erickson and Evans was third.

Watson was second in the 200-yard IM and Coe was third. Becker was second in the 100-yard backstroke and Heidi Sheahan was third.

Coe was second in the 100-yard breaststroke, while Beglinger was third. Gasch was also third in the 50-yard freestyle.

“I just really liked how they raced,” O’Rourke said of her team. “They’re becoming more confident, and I think we’re starting to see them understand that all of those hard practices have a purpose.

“Coming off a really strong runner-up finish at Lodi and then rolling into another dual win was a great stretch for this

group.”

Overall, O’Rourke is thrilled with where her team is one month into the season.

“We’ve been asking a lot of them in practice — building their aerobic base, doing a lot of race-pace work and really challenging them to get comfortable swimming fast while they’re tired,” O’Rourke said. “We aren’t trying to be at our fastest in September, so when we’re already seeing lifetime-best swims at this point, or super close to their end of season taper swims, that tells me the work is translating.

“Overall, I’m really encouraged by where we are. There’s still a lot of work ahead of us and a lot of season left, which honestly makes some of these early results even more exciting.”

• **On deck:** The Vikings were at the Lodi Triple Dual Tuesday, then head to the Jefferson Invitational Saturday at 10 a.m.



Delilah Gasch and Mount Horeb’s girls swimmers downed Portage/Poynette on Senior Night. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld



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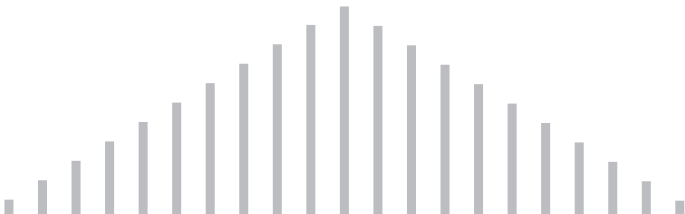
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Golfers hoping for postseason magic

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

The regular season is complete. The second season has arrived. And Mount Horeb's girls golf team hopes to make some noise. The Vikings wrapped up their Badger Small Conference mini-meet schedule last week with a third place finish at the Reedsburg Country Club on Sept. 15 and a second place showing at Coachman's Golf Resort on Sept. 17. "I feel we are in a good spot heading into the time of the season when you want to be playing your best golf," Mount Horeb coach Nolan Krentz said. Here's a recap of the Vikings' week.

BADGER MINI-MEET (at Reedsburg) Madison Edgewood finished first with a 179, while host Reedsburg (206) and Mount Horeb (208) rounded out the top three. "Reedsburg Country Club was a difficult challenge for the entire field,"

Krentz said. "Scores were high across the board as players struggled to navigate the tree-lined course and the hazards coming into play on most of the front nine. "We were close to finishing in second as a team on the day, but unfortunately, we were just a couple strokes short as has been the case in several of our mini-meets this season." Junior Ella Baber led Mount Horeb with a 49 and junior Harper Birkeland carded a 50. Baber tied for sixth place individually in the 35-player field, while Birkeland tied for eighth. Senior Jady Schellpfeffer finished with a 51 and tied for 11th, and senior MacKenzie Meinholz added a 58. "Course management is important every round and its importance is only heightened at a course as challenging as Reedsburg," Krentz said. "Sometimes getting the ball back into play is all you can do and gives you the better chance at saving strokes instead of trying to play the heroic shot which often leads to higher scores. We had nine

scores higher than a triple bogey as a team and that proved to be the difference between second and third in the end." **BADGER MINI-MEET (at Coachman's)** The Vikings posted a team score of 190 and finished second, behind only Edgewood, which carded a 165. "We played extremely well at Coachman's," Krentz said. "The weather was far from ideal with cool temperatures and on and off rain showers, but I thought we were resilient throughout the round in matching our second-best nine-hole score of the season as a team." Baber led the Vikings with a 41 and finished in fourth place individually out of 35 golfers. Playing the back nine, Baber's round was highlighted by pars on No. 11, 13, 14, and 16. Schellpfeffer had another solid performance, finishing with a 47 to tie for eighth after parring No. 15. Birkeland added a 49 and finished in 13th place individually, while Mein-



Jady Schellpfeffer and Mount Horeb's girls golfers wrapped up their conference mini-meet season last week. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

holz and senior Maddie Niemetscheck both shot 53s. Both Baber and Niemetscheck had personal best rounds. Mount Horeb was at the Badger Conference tournament Monday, then heads to the WIAA Division 1 Tomah Regional at Hiawatha Golf Club on Sept. 30. "With our conference mini-meet schedule complete, we now turn our at-

tention to postseason play," Krentz said. "We had one of our best performances of the season (at Coachman's) and hopefully we can keep that going moving forward."

Spikers second at Viking Invitational

by **ROB REISCHEL**
Sports Editor

Mount Horeb's girls volleyball team hosted its annual, nine-team Viking Invite on Sept. 19. And Mount Horeb gave an impressive performance, reaching the championship match before falling to Lodi. "We have things we are working on cleaning up, but we continue to be excited about where we're at and what is in front of us," Mount Horeb coach Josh Smelzer said. "The girls are competing and doing some

really great things, and we're excited to continue building from here." Mount Horeb opened pool play with a 25-12, 25-11 win over Madison La Follette. Elaina Imbus had seven kills for the Vikings, while Pippa Barsness had 12 assists, Claire Casey had 10 assists and Courtney Monroe had 12 digs. Lodi then rallied past the Vikings, 23-25, 25-23, 15-13. Imbus again led Mount Horeb with 12 kills, while Casey had 14 assists and Claire Wagner-Leek had seven digs.

That left Mount Horeb with the No. 4 seed in the Gold Bracket, and the Vikings opened with a 25-17, 21-25, 15-9 win over Barneveld. Mount Horeb followed that with a 21-25, 25-22, 15-12 win over Monona Grove and advanced to the championship match. The Vikings won the first set in the title match, 25-18. But Lodi rallied back and captured the final two sets, 25-18, 15-12. Imbus had seven kills in the championship match, while Monroe had 11 digs and Casey had 13 assists.

Madison Edgewood also toppled the Vikings, 25-15, 25-22, 23-25, 25-16, in a Badger Small Conference match on Sept. 17. Imbus had 14 kills and 13 digs for the Vikings, Casey had 13 digs, nine assists and five aces, Quinn Johnston had 12 assists and Monroe had 17 digs. The Vikings also combined their annual Youth Night with a Pro Night celebration, welcoming several players from LOVB Madison — a United States professional women's indoor

volleyball team. Among the special guests were Mimi Colyer, a former University of Wisconsin outside hitter and current LOVB Madison outside hitter; and Annemarie Hickey, a former UW libero and assistant coach, who currently serves as an assistant coach for LOVB Madison. Colyer and Hickey signed autographs for fans, addressed the crowd with short speeches, and shared their experiences in the sport. Hickey also spoke to the Vikings before the match, giving the team a special pregame message. "Having them in our gym was absolutely amazing," Smelzer said. "It was a great opportunity for our players and our community to interact with people who have reached the highest levels of the sport."

The night also provided a memorable experience for Mount Horeb's youngest volleyball players. Youth wearing a volleyball jersey received free admission and had the opportunity to be part of several special moments throughout the evening. The young ath-



Elaina Imbus and Mount Horeb's girls volleyball team finished in second place at the Viking Invitational last Saturday. Photo courtesy of Mary Langenfeld

letes formed a tunnel for the varsity team to run through before warmups, stood alongside a varsity player during the National Anthem, and received signed posters from the Vikings following the match. "It was a great opportunity for these young ladies to be part of what their

role models do," Smelzer said. "We want our youth program to be about more than just teaching volleyball skills. We want these athletes to feel connected to the high school program and see what they can aspire to become."

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FOOTBALL

continued from page 11

“It was a culture thing, and we talked about the culture around here slipping a little bit,” St. Arnauld said. “Ultimately, the buck stops with me. We’ve go to a better job holding each other accountable and making sure that culture doesn’t slip.

“It’s easy to come up with excuses, but we all need to look ourselves in mirror and fix it. Now, we’ve laid a road map. We are so laser focused on getting the culture back.”

In retrospect, Fort caught MH-B at the absolute worst possible time.

Not only were the Vikings angry, they’re beginning to get healthier.

Standout defensive end Henry Loger, who suffered a concussion in Week 2, then got the flu when he ready to return, was back to help ignite MH-B’s defense. Loger finished the night with three tackles for loss and four tackles overall.

Others are close to returning, as well.

“We could be really healthy by Week 8,” St. Arnauld said.

With MH-B hungry — and healthier — it took a month of frustration out on the Blackhawks.

The Vikings put up 30 first quarter points and 50 in the first half alone, while making sure the Blackhawks’ offense never got out of neutral.

“We were laser focused,” St. Arnauld said. “Our message was, ‘Go get it done.’”

Boy, did they ever.

Maier had an 8-yard touchdown run just 3 minutes into the game, then added the two-point conversion run to make it 8-0. Myers hit Cullen Olson with a 20-yard TD pass and Meier tacked on the conversion run that pushed MH-B’s lead to 16-0 with 7:08 left in the first.

Meier ripped off a 53-yard TD run and added the two-point conversion to make it 24-0 with 5:15 left in the opening quarter. And before the quarter was over, Myers hit Django Christian with a 36-yard TD to give MH-B a 30-0

lead.

Just 36 seconds into the second quarter, Myers and tight end Henry DeRosier connected on a 23-yard TD pass to give the Vikings’ a 36-0 advantage. Myers then found Sam Grundahl for a 46-yard TD midway through the second quarter as the Vikings’ lead ballooned to 43-0.

Haiden Jeglum then had a 6-yard TD run with 3:20 left in the first half and MH-B carried a 50-0 lead to halftime.

“We went back to the drawing board after Beaver Dam and asked ourselves which way are we going?” St. Arnauld said. “We couldn’t let that losing streak sideswipe the program.”

St. Arnauld went deep into his bench during an extremely fast moving second half.

And while there was a lot to like about MH-B’s bounce back win, perhaps the most positive development was the continued growth of Myers.

The sophomore quarterback completed 88.9% of his passes (8-of-9), aver-

aged 18.6 yards per pass attempt and threw four touchdowns.

“He played a really good game vs. Fort,” St. Arnauld said of Myers. “It’s unfair of us to ask a young QB to go win us a game. But he put us in good spots, threw a lot of terrific balls and has shown really good growth.”

Defensively, sophomore Barrett Slaney had a team-high seven tackles and two tackles for loss, Dilyn Randle had a fumble recovery and the Vikings finished with 10 TFL’s as a team.

Overall, it was the kind of effort the Vikings desperately needed — and one that gives St. Arnauld hope that his team can finish 2026 with a bang.

“If we can run the table and get to 6-3, we can get a (No.) 3-seed and be extremely dangerous in the playoffs,” St. Arnauld said. “If that happens, there’s not a team out there we’d be afraid of and I believe we could go and ruin somebody else’s season.

“But we’re not out of the woods yet. Not even close.”

• **On deck:** MH-B hosts Sauk Prairie (3-2, 2-1) in its Homecoming game Friday at 7 p.m.

The Eagles tied for the conference title last season with MH-B and Madison Edge-wood. Sauk Prairie has reached the playoffs two straight years after having gone just once between 2008-2023.

“Randy (Wallace) runs a great program over there,” St. Arnauld said of the Eagles. “Where Sauk is now vs. when I first got here is night and day. Randy’s done just a great job and I have a ton of respect for him.

“I always look forward to our games with Sauk. It’s going to come down to our style vs. their style. We just have to keep playing with the effort level we did last week (against Fort Atkinson) and I think we can continue to turn this thing around.”

Sept. 11
Mount Horeb/Barneveld 50,
Fort Atkinson 6
Fort 0 0 6 0 — 6
MHB 30 20 0 0 — 50
MHB — Eli Maier 2 run (Maier run)
MHB — Cullen Olson, 20, pass

from Preston Myers (Maier run)

MHB — Maier, 53, run (Maier run)

MHB — Django Christian, 36, pass from Myers (conversion failed)

MHB — Henry DeRosier, 23, pass from Myers (conversion failed)

MHB — Sam Grundahl, 46, pass from Myers (Olson kick)

MHB — Haiden Jeglum, 6, run (Olson kick)

FA — Vicente Martinez, 1, run (conversion failed)

TEAM STATISTICS

Total yards — MHB 387, FA 21. Rushing (Att.-Yds.) — MHB 21-187, FA 22-19. Passing yards — MHB 200, FA 2 62. Passing (Comp.-Att.-Int.) — MHB 13-17-1, FA 4-11-0. Fumbles-lost — MHB 0-0, FA 1-1.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERS

Rushing (Att.-Yds.) — MHB: Eli Maier 9-135, Lucas High 2-36, Haiden Jeglum, 4-21, Myles Thompson 1-3, Harvey Hellen 5-(-8), FA — Vicente Martinez 16-22, Grayson Eske 5-5, Jordan Mbow 1-(-8). Passing (Att.-Comp.-Yds.-TD-INT) — MHB: Preston Myers 8-9-167-4-0, Harvey Hellen 5-8-33-0-1. FA: Jordan Mbow 3-7-3-0-0, Nathan Riddell 1-3-(-1)-0-0, Grayson Eske 0-1-0-0-0. Receiving (Rec.-Yds.) — MHB: Django Christian 3-52, Sam Grundahl 1-46, Henry DeRosier 2-20, Eli Maier 1-20, Brady McCue 2-16, Quinn Frenz 1-3, Haiden Jeglum 1-1. FA: Parker Recob 1-2, Vicente Martinez 2-1, Grayson Eske 1-(-1).

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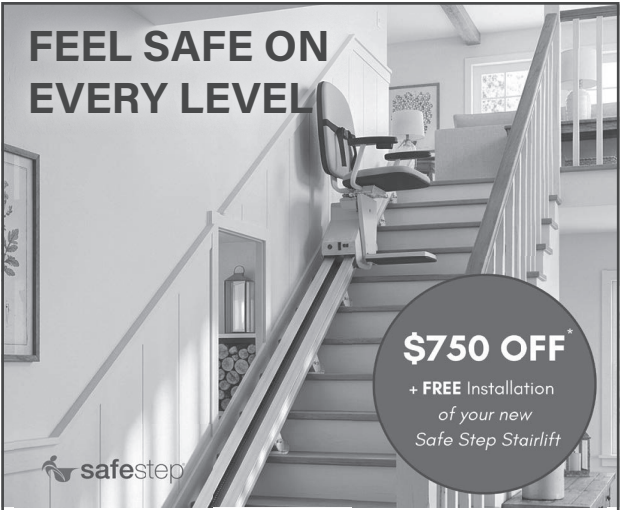
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The deadline for filing a claim against the decedent’s estate is 12/28/2026

3.A claim may be filed at the Dane County Courthouse, 215 S. Hamilton Street, Madison, WI 53703, Wisconsin, Room 1005.

FILED
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CIRCUIT COURT DANE COUNTY, WI

Attorney Terese M. Hansen
Hansen Law Office
111 East Verona Avenue
Verona, WI 53593
(608) 772-3939
Bar Number 1000988

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Publish: 7/16/26 **WNAXLP**

TOWN OF PRIMROSE NOTICE

The Town of Primrose will hold the 2026 **Budget Workshop** for the 2027 municipal budget on Tuesday, September 29th, 2026 at 8468 County Road A, Verona, WI, beginning at 7:30pm.

Should the budget not be finalized that evening, a continuation of the workshop will be held on Monday, October 5th beginning at 7:30pm during the October regular board meeting.

The agenda for this meeting will be posted at the Town Hall, Mount Vernon Auto, Primrose Church, and on the Town website. A summary of the agenda will be available on the voice message system at 608-832-6660.

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FINLEY

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Then, when I got the head coaching job, I knew I had some great kids coming up through the program.”

Mount Horeb, which has reached the state tournament just once in school history (1987), came extremely close twice under Finley.

The 2017 Vikings won a memorable game over River Valley in the regional finals and defeated Prairie du Chien in the sectional semi-finals. But Beloit Turner defeated Mount Horeb in the sectional finals that season.

Then in 2021, the Vikings once again won a regional championship and downed Lodi in the sectional semi-finals. Jefferson edged the Vikings, though, in the sectional finals.

“The two teams that made it to the sectional finals were really special teams,” Finley said. “They just loved each other on and off the field, and as a result, did some special things during those seasons.”

The baseball program began its annual Strike-Out Cancer game in 2015 under Finley, and that event has raised more than \$87,000 since. Amy Arneson helped get things started with that event 11 years ago, while Christa Olsen and Joy Finley ramped things up to where they are today.

“That really brought the community together and taught the players so many lessons about community, family, resilience, and playing for a cause bigger than ourselves,” Ryan Finley said.

In this year’s Strike-Out Cancer game, \$15,000 was raised, while Jaxen Finley pitched a gem, holding Madison Edgewood to one run in 5 1/3 innings. Jaxen Finley also went 2-for-3 with a two-run home run in the bottom of the first inning — the only home run of his high school career — as Mount Horeb defeated the Crusaders, 4-1.

“The last Strike-Out Cancer game that I coached will be something I will never forget,” Ryan Finley said. “With all the excitement of that night, and for Jaxen to put on a performance like that against an Edgewood team that made the sectional finals that year, that will always be a special moment for me.”

Finley took his team to Miller Park/American Family Field five different times over the years, which was a tremendous experience for the Vikings and their families.

Finley also began taking Mount Horeb to Wisconsin Dells during spring break early in his tenure. Eventually, that turned into spring



break trips to Florida for the Vikings and their families.

“Cubby Osterloo helped convince me years ago to take the team on an overnight trip to the Dells and rent the turf fields up there to play a game over spring break for some team bonding,” Finley said. “We did that for a number of years and eventually turned that into spring break trips to Florida.”

“I would say having the opportunity to provide experiences like these for the boys over the years is what I’m most proud of. When we first started taking the boys to Florida, it was the first time for a handful of them that they had ever been to the ocean. The Strike-Out Cancer games and Miller Park games are experiences they won’t ever forget, and our baseball program helped make those memories possible for them.”

The Vikings also put tremendous teams on the field most years, finishing in the top half of the league seven times during Finley’s tenure.

“I think we played a lot of really good baseball in Mount Horeb over the years, and I was lucky enough to coach and get to know a lot of great young men and their families,” Finley said.

Now, Finley will have even more time for his own family. But he also knows leaving his “baseball family” won’t be easy.

“I’ve probably made it to over 95% of my kids’ athletic events over the years, and I think that’s important to them, and I know it’s important to me,” Finley said. “I want to be able to continue doing that.”

“Hopefully, that will include some true family spring breaks in March, which was never really a possibility during baseball season. I’m excited that I’ll



Ryan Finley went 199-174 during his 16 seasons as Mount Horeb’s manager. Finley led the Vikings to the sectional finals twice and a Badger West Conference championship in 2013. File photos

have more time and flexibility to be with my family.

“But what makes this such a difficult decision is that I’ll be losing my baseball family. The bond you form with the players and coaches each season, when you spend so much time together, will definitely be what I miss the most.

The practices, games, and watching the kids develop each season and over the course of their high school careers are what it’s all about. I’ll be at as many games this spring as I can make, but it will definitely be a weird experience being on the other side of the fence this spring.”

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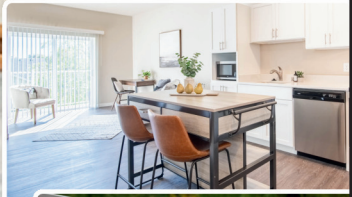
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