

NEWS

YMCA reveals plans for major renovations

By NEWS-REVIEW STAFF

RHINELANDER — The YMCA of the Northwoods publicly revealed specific plans for a multi-million dollar facility addition last Thursday, and announced the identity of the \$1 million individual donor helping to make the project a reality.

Rhinelanders resident Gale Wilcox made the \$1 million gift to the Y and was recognized during an event that included a ceremonial groundbreaking on the expanded and renovated facility.

"There's no organization in Rhinelanders better positioned to help the greatest number of people than our YMCA," Wilcox said. "I know my late husband Dale would be as pleased as I am, to contribute to the expansion and ongoing success of the Y."

The planned facility expansion of the Y will add more than 14,000 square feet to the existing building along with renovations to existing spaces.

Highlights of the addition include a new gymnasium with pickleball courts, a walking track, and a gymnastics center; an outdoor pavilion to serve summer day camp and gathering space for the community; a new and larger aerobics studio that will serve growing numbers of adults and seniors in healthy living; and a gathering room in the front lobby.

The facility expansion is Phase 2 of an ambitious, multi-year capital campaign conducted by the Y.

Phase 1 of the campaign featured the Y's purchase of the former South Park School in Rhinelanders and its conversion to a high-quality childcare center. Now called the Youth Development Center, that facility opened in 2020 and

provides nearly 100 children with much-needed childcare.

"The Y's mission is centered around improving our community," said Ryan Zietlow, CEO of the YMCA of the Northwoods. "Between our childcare services and today's announcement of our facility expansion, we're working to fulfill that mission and make the North Woods a better place to live for individuals and families. Facing previous challenges of space to provide impactful programming, this work will launch the Y to our next chapter."

Zietlow also expressed his gratitude to Gale Wilcox for her generous contribution to the Y's capital campaign.

"The Wilcoxes have been leading by example in our local community for a long time. I'm thrilled Gale has continued her philanthropy with the YMCA of the Northwoods," said Jake Weinand, YMCA of the Northwoods chief volunteer officer. "Her gift will help springboard our organization to its brightest future yet."

Dr. Judy Pagano-Thoms, YMCA of the Northwoods building campaign chair, said, "We are so very grateful to all those who have believed in our campaign and the future of the YMCA of the Northwoods, especially Gale Wilcox whose gift put us over our goal and allowed even more exciting additions to our original plan. All of us at the Y are grateful to Ryan Zietlow for his tireless energy and expertise. He has set this Y on a course above and beyond our wildest imagination."

The YMCA of the Northwoods began providing services to the Rhinelanders area in 1998. Since then, it has become a hub for community growth, promoting healthy living,



Gale Wilcox, who donated \$1 million to the project, takes a seat in the Caterpillar bucket machine.

strong families, and youth development.

"The Y's major facility addition will benefit far more than just YMCA members, guests, youth campers and other users," said Lauren Sackett, executive director of the Rhinelanders Area Chamber of Commerce. "A strong YMCA helps make the entire Rhinelanders area a better and more attractive place to live and work. I'm excited to see how this organization continues to develop and provide benefits to our community."

The Y's facility expansion is currently planned to be completed in 2023 by KSW

Construction which recently expanded to the North Woods.

Zietlow is hopeful for a potential future Phase 3 of its capital campaign which would feature further expansion of the Y's facility. The expansion would include nearly 4,000 square feet of secured multi-purpose space that would expand opportunities for after school programming for youth and teens, create additional meeting space for the community, and additional programming for the Y in its focus areas of youth development, healthy living and social responsibility.

'25 water tower project to put Vilas over budget

By KEN ANDERSON
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

Radio upgrades and an emergency generator will put costs over budget according to a report to the Vilas County Law Enforcement Committee last week.

The additional need for funding springs from changes to communication in the Eagle River area in 2025 when the city water tower will be repainted.

According to the Vilas County Sheriff's Office, the emergency generator is here but has not been hooked up. The committee directed to get it operational before winter.

Radio upgrades will be completed this year, but the 2025 service to the Eagle River water tower will present an opportunity.

"When the city repaints the tower, all communication on the top will have to come down," said Sheriff Joseph Fath. "We're looking at options, and one is to erect our own tower in the courthouse area and place our equipment on it."

They noted tower height and location would be an issue due to the Eagle River Union Airport and the orientation of its runways.

It's estimated cost is \$250,000.

Proposed resolutions

The committee approved a county board resolution establishing a county Criminal Justice Collaborating Council (CJCC), and approved a Public Safety Answering Point. It

also approved filling a vacant full time administrative assistant position.

The CJCC would provide coordinated leadership necessary to foster innovative and effective criminal justice programs for adult and juvenile offenders, and to qualify for future state and federal grants. The council will report to the county board regarding juvenile and criminal justice system issues.

The Public Safety Answering Point grant program is designed to provide grant dollars for advanced training of telecommunications, equipment and software expenses and to consolidate functions. The committee adopted a motion to ask the full county board to adopt the program.

Other information

Deputy Jason Molle reported for June there was 153 hours of ATV patrol with 47 complaints received, two reported accidents, 35 written warning issues and 12 citations. There was 260 hours of boat patrol, nine complaints, six reported accidents, 53 written warnings and 21 citations issued.

Jail Administrator Bill Weiss indicated he had 76 inmates, with the average July number at 70.

Inmates are charged \$17 a day and collecting that is an issue, with over \$2 million owed the county. Income tax refunds are frequently used to collect funds owed.

Manitowish Waters votes down ATV use on county highways

By KEN ANDERSON
NEWS CORRESPONDENT

The Manitowish Waters Town Board voted 2-1 to oppose the use of ATVs and UTVs on county highways within the town last week.

An email from Manitowish Waters Town Chairman John Hanson was read at the final meeting of the Vilas County ATV/UTV Subcommittee July 26 meeting, which cited resident and absentee property owners were opposed to ATV/UTVs on town roads.

Apparently Hanson indicated that persons thought since the town trail plan included an ATV/UTV trail, the town board endorsed its construction, but stated that is not the case.

He indicated the trail plan can always be amended to include an ATV/UTV trail in the future, but noted there are far more important obstacles that must be overcome by proponents. He did not identify what those obstacles were, and since he was absent from the meeting he could not be asked. Winchester also was not present for the meeting.

Holly Tomlanovich, subcommittee member stated she was very disappointed Manitowish Waters didn't want to even meet face-to-face to identify and discuss the obstacles and ways to overcome, modify or eliminate them.

"I feel many people are not being represented," she said.

Lac du Flambeau will hold a referendum sometime in August regarding ATV/UTV

use on limited town roads.

Boulder Junction Town Chairman Dennis Reuss said they are looking at two things when it comes to travel, and that is public safety and enforcement.

Plum Lake Chairman Will Maines indicated they are waiting for an engineering study from the Department of Natural Resources and asked for the county to respect their views on county roads.

Supervisor Mike Biszak said he felt the subcommittee achieved at least on important action; that "many people here would have never got together except for this subcommittee."

Tomlanovich agreed, saying "We had good interaction except for one township, Manitowish Waters."

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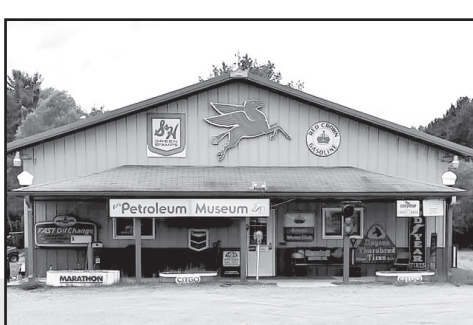
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