



There will be no paper Monday. Have a safe and happy Labor Day



Giants salvage series finale
After Milwaukee took three in a row, San Francisco rode a strong outing from Logan Webb to victory. **Page 1B**



Weekend Gazette

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Photos by Anthony Wahl/awahl@gazettextra.com

Sherry Stone takes a photo with her daughters Rebekah, left, and Lucille, by the school's sign on the first day of the school year at Roosevelt Elementary School in Janesville on Thursday.

Kids flock back to class

Janesville, Milton schools throw open their doors Thursday

By Sara Myers
smyers@gazettextra.com

MILTON AND JANESVILLE

Students headed back to school this week to the delight of many parents and teaching staff. Wednesday was the first day for the Milton School District and Thursday was the first day for Janesville schools.

"It's obviously a unique year," said Jeremy Bilhorn, principal at Milton High School. "We are coming into the school year with a pandemic still going on. COVID is still very real and we have masks. There's an added level of distraction but it's important. We want to keep students as safe as we can."

Turn to **CLASS** on Page 7A



Kindergarten student Gordon Biermann, left, walks to the doorway on the first day of the school year at Roosevelt Elementary School in Janesville on Thursday.

Collazo gets life in prison

Man who killed Janesville woman cannot be paroled

By Frank Schultz
fschultz@gazettextra.com

JANESVILLE

The murderer of Christine Scaccia-Lubeck was sentenced Thursday to life in prison without parole.

Julian D. Collazo, 24, stabbed the Janesville woman 33 times in her home on Dec. 8, 2017.

A Rock County jury found Collazo guilty of first-degree intentional homicide July 21.

The law required Collazo, 24, to be sentenced to life in the prison system. But the law allows the judge to make him eligible for extended supervision—the modern term for parole—after at least 20 years.

Assistant District Attorney Jerry Urbik said Judge Barbara McCrory believes most people are redeemable and can be rehabilitated.

"Mr. Collazo is not most people. He's a psychopathic killer," Urbik said.

McCrory agreed about her approach to sentencing. She said she searched for reasons to allow Collazo to be considered for extended supervision.

McCrory said she considered the vicious nature of the crime; Collazo's repeated denials of guilt; his multiple, varying stories about what happened; and his criminal acts both before and after the murder.

McCrory said she always looks for indications of potential for rehabilitation in those she sentences.

"I have to tell you, Mr. Collazo, I can't find that. I just can't," McCrory said.

Scaccia-Lubeck was almost 43 years old when she was killed in her home by a man she had befriended.

The sentencing came more than three years



Scaccia-Lubeck

Turn to **PRISON** on Page 8A

Day cares grapple with labor shortage

Lack of workers leads to parents scrambling to find care options

By Neil Johnson
njohnson@gazettextra.com

JANESVILLE

Mary Gut had a skeleton staff working with a small group of toddlers Thursday

afternoon at Cradles to Crayons Early Learning Center near Janesville's downtown.

Other rooms at her day care off North Parker Drive are now empty of children. Gut has been going through volumes of toys, books and other items that since 2004 have given her 50-child center its flavor and pizzazz.

Soon, probably by the end of September, Gut plans to

close the day care center. It's not for a want of revenue or enrollment. Rather, Gut says, it's because as the COVID-19 pandemic rolls on, she's increasingly seen a bottoming out in recruitment and retention of day care staff.

Even though more households have seen both parents returning to work this spring

Turn to **SHORTAGE** on Page 7A



A sign outside of Community Kids Learning Center in Janesville displays the need for teachers on Wednesday.

Anthony Wahl/awahl@gazettextra.com

OBITUARIES AND DEATH NOTICES, 6A

•Gregory Devoe Carter
•Jeanne A. Fobes
•Carmen G. Harstad
•Wallace R. "Wally" Hindes
•James Raymond
•"Jim" Klein

•Geraldine L. Jensen
•Thomas John Nelson
•James Prochaska
•Jean C. (Hart) Ryan
•Christopher Paul Schadewald

•Maggie Shultz
•Mary Ebhart (Brown) Streib
•Donna Turben
•Judith "Judi" Urban
•Joseph H. Viertel

TODAY'S WEATHER

High 71 | Low 62
A stray t-storm this afternoon
More on 7A

Classified 1C-5C, 7C-8C Lotteries.....6A Puzzles.....12C-13C
Comics.....12C-13C Nation/World...7B-8B State.....2A
Legals.....5B Opinion.....5A Advice.....8B

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REGIONAL FORECAST

AccuWeather | Go to AccuWeather.com

JANESVILLE ALMANAC
 Thursday's high 81
 Average high 81.4
 Thursday's low 50
 Average low 56.3
 Precipitation 0 inches
 High a year ago today 79
 Low a year ago today 48

STATE FORECAST
 Mainly cloudy today. Drenching thunderstorms in the southwest; a thunderstorm in northwestern parts. A stray afternoon thunderstorm in central parts of the state.

WEATHER TRIVIA
 Q When is dew likely to form?
 A On a clear night when the air near the ground cools to saturation.

IN THE SKY
 Jupiter's brightness will be clearly visible before the sun goes down, making it an easy find before dark.

Source: Longway Planetarium

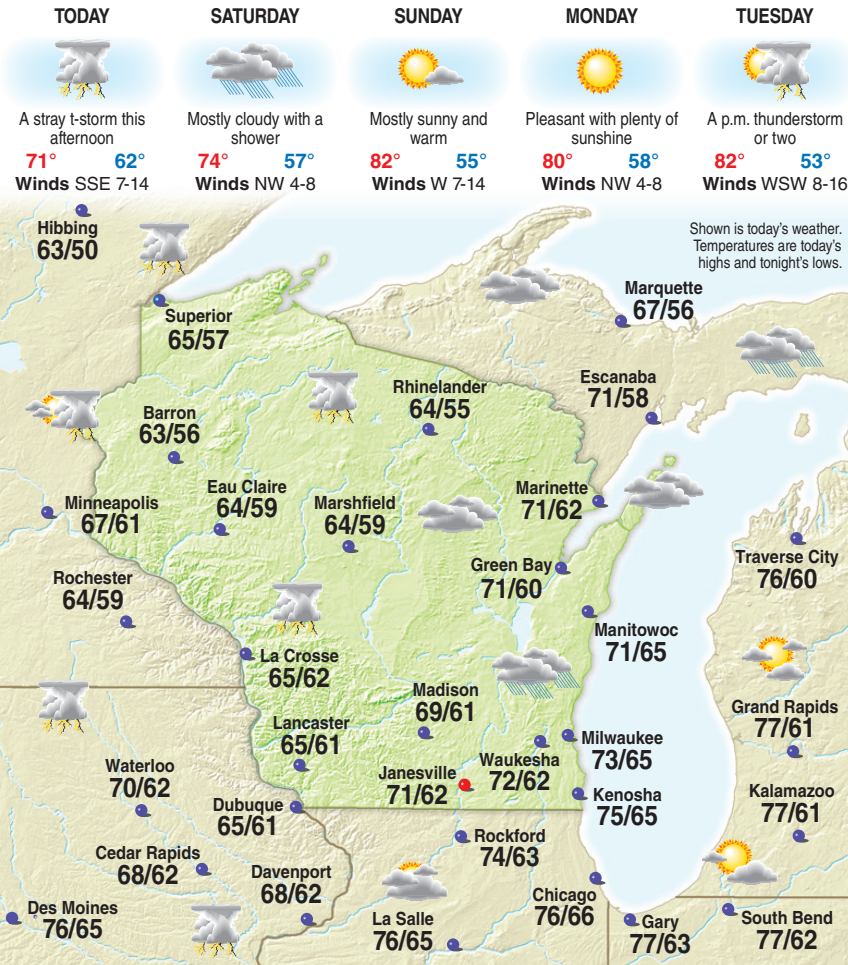
SUN AND MOON

Sunrise today 6:23 a.m.
 Sunset today 7:27 p.m.
 Moonrise today 2:17 a.m.
 Moonset today 6:04 p.m.



Forecasts and graphics provided by AccuWeather, Inc. ©2021
Road Conditions
 By phone: 1-800-ROAD WIS
 On the Internet: http://www.dot.state.wi.us

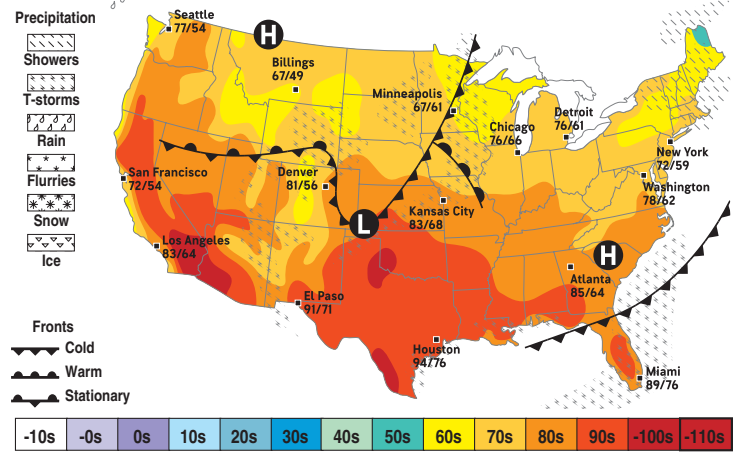
ACCU WEATHER 5-DAY FORECAST FOR JANESVILLE



NATIONAL FORECAST

Friday, September 3, 2021

Shown are noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day. Forecast high/low temperatures are for selected cities.



Spotty showers will affect New England today, while much of the rest of the Northeast and interior South will be dry. Storms will dot the Gulf coast and Florida Peninsula. A few robust storms are in store for the central and northern Plains to the Upper Midwest. Storms will drench part of the Southwest, while the rest of the West stays dry.

National extremes yesterday for the 48 contiguous states
 High: Zapata, Texas at 104°
 Low: Bodie State Park, Calif. at 23°

NATIONAL CITIES

City	Today	Saturday	City	Today	Saturday
Atlanta	85/64/s	85/68/pc	Milwaukee	73/65/c	75/62/pc
Boston	70/59/pc	77/61/pc	Minneapolis	67/61/t	74/59/pc
Chicago	76/66/c	75/61/c	Nashville	85/66/s	87/69/pc
Cincinnati	79/59/s	74/64/t	New Orleans	90/76/pc	90/74/pc
Cleveland	72/57/pc	79/63/c	New York	72/59/s	78/65/s
Dallas	97/79/c	98/78/pc	Orlando	90/75/t	91/73/t
Denver	81/58/t	83/57/s	Philadelphia	75/58/s	78/64/s
Detroit	76/61/pc	76/64/pc	Phoenix	99/82/pc	104/83/pc
Dubuque	65/61/t	71/56/t	Reno	87/51/s	90/54/s
Honolulu	87/75/s	87/74/pc	Salt Lake City	82/56/s	86/62/s
Indianapolis	78/83/s	74/66/t	San Diego	77/66/pc	80/69/pc
Las Vegas	98/77/s	101/81/s	San Francisco	72/54/pc	73/57/pc
Los Angeles	83/64/pc	86/67/s	Seattle	77/54/s	78/61/c
Marquette	67/56/c	67/52/sh	St. Louis	81/68/t	80/67/pc
Memphis	89/69/s	89/72/pc	Washington, DC	78/62/s	80/67/pc

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Class/Teachers, administrators eager to welcome kids back

Continued from 1A

Bilhorn is excited to have a more "normal" start to the school year. Many things were put on hold last year for Milton, and this year the staff is excited to "do some things instructionally that were challenging with our hybrid and virtual models last year."

At elementary schools in the area, the principals at both Roosevelt Elementary School and Harmony Elementary School always look forward to seeing their students on the first day, especially when it's the first day of school ever for the youngest students.

"At the elementary level, we have a majority of our families come with their children on the first day and they stay," said Sarah Stuckey, principal at Harmony Elementary School in the Milton School District. "They see them off and they give them those squeezes and then parents stand and visit with each other."

There can often be lots of tears on a child's first day, both from students and parents. Sherry Stone, who has two daughters who attend kindergarten and fourth grade at Roosevelt, is excited for children to get back to school for many reasons.

"It's going to be more structured at home now," Stone said. "I'll get up, go to school and then I can get my stuff done. The girls will learn, play and make friends."

Stone said she is excited for her youngest daughter to enter kindergarten.

At Roosevelt, each year there is a theme to start off the school year.

"This year is bee themed," said Stacy Petersen, principal at Roosevelt. "It's just a way of us to unite our school culture. We really want to draw attention to kids. It's amazing. We can really focus on the strengths of all of our kids and ... set our positive culture for the school year."

All teachers and staff at Roosevelt were sporting T-shirts with bees on them.

Many teachers are looking forward to learning and getting to know all their students. Kindergarten teacher Amy Cleasby said she is happy to have the students back.

"I'm excited to be able to have them in the classroom and see their faces," Cleasby said. "We may not be able to see their full face but we can see the eyes light up when they get to share an idea or show how to do something. It's just magical."

At Milton High School, the new year brings the opportunity to use new facilities. The high school has a new STEM (science, technology and engineering) center, which is 32,000-square feet, a new pool and many renovated areas, including a new fine arts wing. The wing is the old technology area completely renovated for the arts. The new fieldhouse will also be open this October.

The school year comes with a new mask mandate implemented last week by both schools. School officials are determined to not let the mandate be the focus of the school year.

"Just like any school rule, if there's a non-compliance, then we address that," Bilhorn said. "Students will be asked to put (their masks) on. If not, then there's the consequences that come along when any school rule is broken."

Bilhorn is looking to focus on safety overall and starting the year off on the right foot.

Roosevelt Principal Petersen isn't worried about the students at her school

"Kids are so understanding and resilient in life in general," Petersen said. "Once they understand why we're doing it and it's a rule for everybody's good to keep us all safe, everybody is fine."

Shortage/ 'Everybody's tired'

Continued from 1A

and summer, Gut has been unable to find the number of qualified day care workers she needs to make her center viable.

Gut's pending closure of Cradles to Crayons is leaving as many as 30 families with children needing day care providers. So far, Gut has helped families place about a third or half of those children at other local day cares.

But many centers that remain open say they're at capacity and have growing waiting lists, while other, smaller in-home day cares are also beginning to close, too. Single-operator, in-home caregivers carry overhead costs and difficult logistics during the ongoing pandemic.

It's all leaving some parents who work scrambling to find day care for their children as COVID infections surge.

One center official interviewed by The Gazette said they struggled to fill a part-time job created during the pandemic: a greeter who receives and ushers children in and out of the center's doors so parents can have contactless drop off and pickups.

Day care workers spread thin

All the while, day care centers like Gut's have soldiered on, short-staffed but making things work. For the last year, though, Gut said she's averaged about five staff—down from typical staffing levels of nine or 10.

She's no longer able to take breaks at work. She's no longer been able to allow staff to cut out for a half hour to attend their own children's soccer games. Each member of her staff, she said, has been working 12-hour days for months.

"My work with kids is who I am. But I'm tired, everybody's tired," Gut said. "With the pandemic, things have gone from 'recovery' to 'reset' to ... I don't even know where we're at now. I don't think you can call it recovery anymore. Whatever it is, it's not good."

Gut, 53, has operated in-home day cares and in independent learning centers for the last 30 years. In that time, she's never seen the available workforce so slim, and seemingly, so elusive.

This year was the first year she'd ever seen new hires show up for their first day of work only to leave later the same afternoon to take a different job somewhere else.

That's not uncommon right now in the lower-paying strata of the local job market, as more employers have begun to offer hiring bonuses



Anthony Wahl/awahl@gazettextra.com
 P4J teacher Carissa Peterson works with her classroom of students at Community Kids Learning Center in Janesville on Wednesday.

and other enticements in bids to compete amid a shortage of qualified workers.

Wait lists grow

Local nonprofit social service agency Community Action began to field calls late this summer from parents looking to hit the reset button on day care services as their providers, one by one, have shuttered—either temporarily, or like Gut's, permanently.

Kayla Oestrich, program manager of Community Action's Community Kids Learning Center on Janesville's south side is at maximum capacity based on its own staffing levels and enrollment.

Oestrich said there are 30 children on the wait list for spots at her day care center. When openings come up, they often fill within a few hours.

"These kinds of wait lists show me that child care is definitely needed, the demand is growing. However, the workforce issue is definitely a challenge. We haven't hired anyone for almost a year. The problem is that getting quality staff that are trained. You can't just hire anyone off the street. There's a really, really narrow availability," Oestrich said.

Ripple effect

Oestrich said she's seeing day care workers migrating into the school system to take jobs as para-professionals in early childhood education. Others are exiting the day care field to take jobs in other sectors, such as manufacturing or retail.

It's hard to calculate how many families might be affected, but

Oestrich said working parents who have infants or toddlers—children too young to attend school—are those who are in the biggest bind.

Community Action has landed state grant and rescue funding over the last year aimed at recruiting, hiring and retaining staff at day care centers during a pandemic. Oestrich said some day cares have been able to use such funding to woo workers who otherwise might opt for taking day care jobs.

Some other day cares said they've found area pipelines of student interns who are stanching some of the worker shortage over the short haul.

Yet other, small-scale private day cares have not received federal financial assistance to boost pay and compete with what larger centers are offering.

Mal Bennett, who directs the nonprofit Child's First day care center on Janesville's east side, points out that under law, licensed day care facilities are required to maintain staffing levels based on enrollment, services and the size of the day care.

Until recently, day cares during the COVID era have been required to keep children of differing age categories in separate rooms.

Oestrich, Bennett and Gut said they're all hearing from parents struggling with cost and scant availability of day care services locally. They said a shortage of day care centers, workers and enrollment spots are only exacerbated by ongoing worker shortage here.

Oestrich said she recently got a new T-shirt that boils down the conundrum to its essence. The shirt reads: "No Child Care = No Workforce = No Economy."

Prison/Case ends after more than three years

Continued from 1A

after the murder. The pandemic delayed the court process, and the guilty verdict came after a second trial.

McCrary apologized to the family for how long it took.

One juror in the first trial refused to agree to a guilty verdict. Urbik said Collazo, who had tried to lay blame elsewhere, finally admitted his guilt to the writer of the presentence report, and he hoped that juror would now be convinced.

Collazo could be heard sobbing as a niece of the victim read a statement by Scaccia-Lubeck's mother, Diane Somers.

Urbik said he didn't think Collazo's tears were true remorse.

"I'm highly dubious they're real, and if they are real, how dare you, how dare you do that at this point?" Urbik said. "Up until now he had every opportunity to take responsibility, accept remorse. He didn't. Now we hear the tears because now the hammer is about to come down."

Family and friends, often tearfully, talked about what a beautiful person Scaccia-Lubeck was and expressed their anger and hopes for a sentence of life without any release. Some expressed a bit of compassion for Collazo.

Scaccia-Lubeck's sister Angela Garipay said she couldn't understand how someone so young could do this. Collazo was 21 at the time.

Garipay choked up as she described the last text messages she exchanged with



Anthony Wahl/awahl@gazettextra.com

Defendant Julian D. Collazo, 24, reacts as a statement by the mother of his victim is read aloud Thursday during Collazo's sentencing for the murder of Christine Scaccia-Lubeck in December 2017. The prosecutor and a friend of the victim said they didn't believe Collazo's remorse was genuine. Collazo was sentenced to life in prison without extended supervision. Next to Collazo is his attorney, Jeffrey Jensen.

her sister the day before she died: "I look at that message often and think, 'Why didn't I respond? What was so much more important that I couldn't send a quick response and an I-love-you-sis?'"

Garipay said she is still haunted by her sister's last moments and how scared she must have been.

Garipay said she hopes Collazo can someday feel remorse for what he did and reject his anger and hate.

"I truly hope you can find your own kind of peace and happiness someday," she said.

Another sister, Debra Scaccia, said she believes Collazo had killed before "because you are a

predator," and she needs to know that he can never hurt anyone again.

"God tells me you are still one of his children," Scaccia said. "I will forgive you and let God take care of you from here."

Scaccia-Lubeck's niece Sydney Garipay read the statement from Somers, who was the one who discovered her daughter's body in a pool of blood.

"I miss my daughter every day, and you took her from me. The one and only saving grace that I have is that the last thing I said to her is that I love her," Sydney Garipay read. "I will never understand why you had to kill my daughter. What did you have to get that was so important

that you had to take her life? ... I doubt I will ever get an answer, but I hope it will haunt you for the rest of your life."

Collazo began to cry as Sydney Garipay read her grandmother's words.

"I hope you never get out of prison so that you can't put another family through what ours is going through now and will be going through for the rest of our lives," Somers' words continued.

Scaccia-Lubeck had lost her husband four months before her own death, several speakers said. Sydney Garipay said that before the hearing, the family had given her Scaccia-Lubeck's wedding ring.

"It makes me think of

how happy she used to be, the contagious laugh she had that made her eye squinty and her face bright red," Sydney Garipay said. "The day of her wedding was the happiest day of her life, and I will never forget the cheek-to-cheek smile she had while she was surrounded by all of her friends and family."

Scaccia-Lubeck's father, Steve Scaccia, recited past deaths in the family. He said the family had learned how to live with the losses but not with his daughter's death.

The whole family has been seeing counselors since the murder and will continue to do so, he said.

Steve called Collazo "an evil con man who planned from the beginning to take advantage of her."

Urbik said Collazo had repeatedly violated his parole in Texas and that shortly before he came to Wisconsin, a Texas parole board declined to revoke the parole.

Urbik said he can't help but think that if the parole board had decided differently, Collazo wouldn't have been in a position to kill Scaccia-Lubeck.

Urbik said he sees similar instances in Wisconsin regularly, not with such terrible results, but which he called "repeated failures to protect the public from being victimized by people like Mr. Collazo."

Urbik said that while in jail, Collazo had assaulted other inmates, set fires, flooded his cell, threatened a jailer, hid a razor blade in a Bible, defecated in front of a jailer and had sexual contact with a female inmate.

Urbik said the prosecution had offered a plea deal in between the two trials for prison with the possibility of supervised release after 40 years, but Collazo turned it down.

"To make Mr. Collazo eligible for extended supervision at any time creates a real risk, in my mind, that a future parole board might be taken in by Mr. Collazo's claims of remorse and repentance, just like Christine was taken in, and the consequences of that could be fatal to someone else," Urbik said.

When Collazo's turn came, he said, "I have a lot to say, but I feel there's nothing I can say to make anything better, so I will just save time."

Collazo's attorney, Jeffrey Jensen, asked for eligibility for supervised release after 20 years. He pointed out that doesn't mean Collazo would necessarily be released at that time. A parole board would decide, and prison infractions would require more time behind bars, Jensen said.

Jensen also noted that McCrary is required by law to consider potential for rehabilitation.

Collazo should be allowed extended supervision "because we don't know who this man will be in 20 or 30 years," Jensen said.

But McCrary rejected that idea. She said Collazo has a predatory nature and an ability to manipulate and that he preyed on Scaccia-Lubeck's vulnerabilities at a time she was grieving.

Friends and family clapped at the verdict, but McCrary interrupted them, saying their reaction is "a sad commentary on this case and on life. I do not take this lightly, and I know nothing this court does is ever going to bring back your loved one, and for that, I am truly sorry. ... But making this decision is not something that should be applauded."

Nods of agreement were seen among those who had just cheered.



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Circulation Customer Care Call Center will also be closed.

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