INSIDE

Bluejays compete at indoor State contest

■ Six Three Lakes and Phelps track and field athletes visit UW-Whitewater for competition. Pg. 11A

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VILAS COUNTY
NEWS-REVIEW

Section A

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Winter Severity Index shows moderate season for wildlife

By Michelle Drew
News Editor

The long and cold winter seasons seen across the state can have a lasting impact on many North Woods animals, creating food scarcity and making survival difficult.

In order to keep records of winter severity and the effects it can have on local wildlife, especially deer herds, the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) created its Winter Severity Index (WSI) in 1975 after

testing several procedures for quantifying winter conditions.

Prior to 1975, Wisconsin did not have a formal procedure for measuring winter severity and predicting its impact on deer herds, although records had been kept beginning in 1960-'61.

Curtis Rollman, DNR wildlife biologist for Oneida County, explained how the WSI works to log information so wildlife experts can have an ongoing gauge from one winter to the next.

"The way the DNR measures the severity of the win-

ter is the WSI, (notice the word 'index' in the title). It is not a perfect relationship to the severity of the winter but gives us a good idea of comparing winter to winter," Rollman said.

"A day can get up to two WSI points — 1 (point) for temperature at 0 degrees or less and 1 for snow depth at 18 inches or greater. These points are derived from studies of temperature and snow depth on a deer's energy balance. Essentially less temperature and higher snow depth creates a negative energy balance (i.e. using fat reserves),"
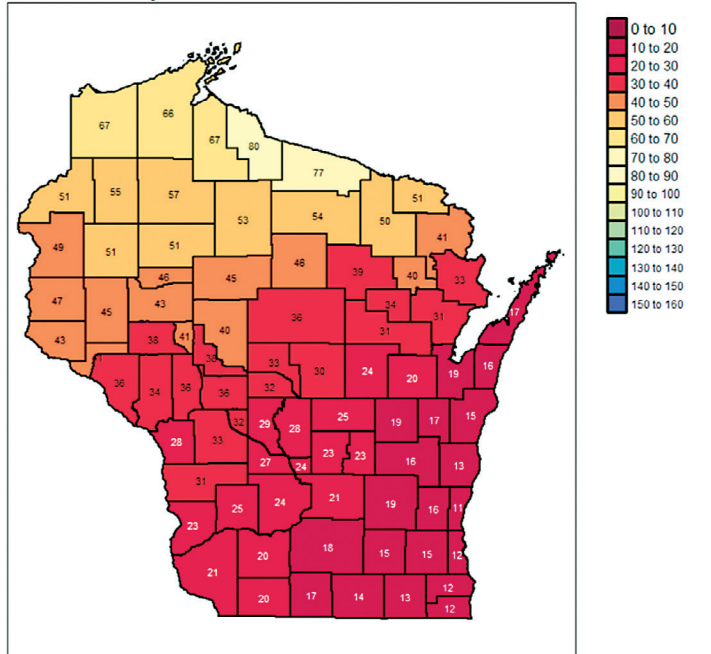
Rollman said. "Obviously snow depth at 17 inches still impacts a deer even though it doesn't register a point, hence the 'index' side of things."

These points accumulate throughout the winter from Dec. 1 to April 30. A WSI of 49 or less is considered mild, 50-79 is moderate, 80-99 is severe, and 100 or greater is very severe.

The WSI for March showed that the winter of 2021-'22 ranked only moderate on the scale of severity for area wildlife. Last year's win-

Winter Severity Index Mar. 2022

This map depicts the Winter Severity Index across Wisconsin. Vilas County registered 77 points which is considered a moderate season. Oneida County had an index of 54.
—Graphic from Wisconsin DNR

CALL OF THE WILD — About 40 local ice skaters were joined by special guest skaters to put on the Silver Blades Ice Show last weekend with the theme "Welcome to the Jungle." The Learn to Skate group's smiles shown nearly as brightly as their blades during the Sunday afternoon performance. See more pictures on page 1B.
—Staff Photo By MICHELLE DREW

Cranberry Island sale 'off the table'
Island remains on the agenda

By Ken Anderson
News Correspondent

The sale of the 44-acre Cranberry Island on the Eagle River Chain of Lakes is officially off the table after the Vilas County Forestry, Recreation, and Land Committee voted last week to remove sale but keep the island on their agenda.

The popular island has a boarding pier, a couple picnic tables, fire rings, and two grills, one of which is broken off. Staff claim the pier is in poor shape, which was reputed by Dean Safer, owner of Gypsy Villa on the Oneida County side of the island.

"This is the most neglected park you have," Safer told the committee, saying he inspected the island the day before this committee meeting. "I see nothing wrong with the pier. It's hard to believe the county staff."

He admitted there were issues that the county needed to address.

"There is no beach and a serious erosion problem and the outhouse is full. Why fire rings, why grills? No one is going to bring firewood out

Overbey defeats O'Marro for Judge 2 seat in Vilas

By Sara Carias
Staff Reporter

Voters elected Daniel Overbey to the newly created seat of Vilas County Circuit Court Judge 2 on April 5.

He defeated his opponent Meg O'Marro 2,597-2,017.

Overbey, 63, has lived in Arbor Vitae for the past 19 years with his wife, Kristine.

In 1998 he graduated Notre Dame Law School with honors. Overbey previously worked in law enforcement for 15 years, was a sergeant for the Daytona Beach Police Department, and prior to moving to Arbor Vitae he practiced law for five years in Chicago.

Currently Overbey handles

family law cases in his private practice and also a Guardian Ad Litem, tasked with representing the best interests of children. In addition to his private practice, he serves as the vice chairman of the Vilas County Civil Service Commission and is a Vilas County Court commissioner.

Overbey said he will be closing out his law practice over the next couple months, adding that "Eaton John Overbey Jackman, LLP, is a great firm and I will miss working with them."

Additionally, Overbey and the civil service commission are currently looking for a replacement for his position on the commission.

As a current court com-

DANIEL OVERBEY

missioner for the county, Overbey conducts bond hearings, initial appearances, juvenile proceedings and mental

commitments; reviews and approves search warrants and temporary restraining orders; and handles other matters as assigned.

The decision as to whether Overbey will continue as a court commissioner until he is seated officially as Judge 2 has not been made, but he said he is willing to do so until he is seated in his newly elected position Aug. 1.

Overbey said that coming into a brand new branch will be exciting and challenging.

Judge Martha Milanowski ran uncontested for Judge 1 with 3,766 votes.

Also uncontested on the ballot was Thomas M. Hruz, running for Court of Appeals Judge District 3 in Wausau.

BUNNY VISIT — With Easter just around the corner, the Northwoods Children's Museum hosted a visit with the Easter bunny April 9. More photos of the event and a full list of Easter services can be seen in Lifestyle.
—STAFF PHOTO