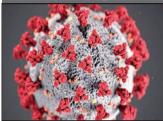


Serving the Ripon community since 1864

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Hospitals near capacity ahead of Christmas, p. 3



Murray Park/Quest hosts holiday concert, p. 11



RC men rise to the challenge, defeats Bethany, p. 16



THE J.M. SMUCKER Co. announced last week that it plans to close its Ripon facility at 1050 Stanton St. in 2022. The plant employs 92 people. Jonathan Bailey photo

By Joe Schulz

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A little more than a decade ago, Ripon's J.M. Smucker Co. plant was spared when the company decided to cut roughly 700 personnel and shutter almost 20% of its plants nationwide.

This time around, it wasn't quite so lucky as the facility at 1050 Stanton St. is set to be shuttered in 2022.

The J.M. Smucker Co. announced last week Wednesday that it intends to close and pursue the sale of its Ripon manufacturing facility.

The announcement came in a corporate press release, which said the decision was made "to further optimize operations for the consumer foods business."

While the release mentioned the plan to close the Ripon plant, it primarily served as an announcement that the company intended to sell

its natural and organic beverage and grains businesses to Nexus Capital Management LP.

"This transaction supports our strategy to direct investments and resources toward core brands positioned for growth," said Tina Floyd, senior vice president and general manager of Consumer Foods for The J.M. Smucker Co.

In a written statement, J.M. Smucker Co. Corporate Communications Manager Frank Cirillo described the decision as "difficult," but said it was made to "optimize operations."

See CLOSE/back page

Schommer to retire in June after 25 years as Ripon's city clerk

Ripon will use private firm to help search for new clerk

By Joe Schulz

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When Ann Schommer started her career with the city of Ripon as deputy clerk in October 1996, she experienced a "baptism by fire."

She had just left an accounting job in the private sector and was thrust into running a presidential election in her second month on the job, determining tax bills and many other tasks that were completely foreign to her.

If not for the help of the Fond du Lac County clerk and treasurer offices, Schommer isn't sure that she would have made it that first year.

"I was on the phone with them constantly trying to arrange for the election and learning what I had to





CITY CLERK ANN Schommer prepares to close the door on her time in municipal government. Joe Schulz photo

do," she recalled. "I'd speak with the people in the finance department, who showed me the bits and pieces of what went into making the mill rate."

Now, Schommer has 25 years of experience under her belt, and has become someone others in City Hall look to for advice about elections and various other city operations.

After diligently serving the city of Ripon and its residents for more than two decades, Schom-

mer announced last week that she will retire from her position in June 2022.

"I am very grateful to the city for all the opportunities it gave me and for basically welcoming me, who had no clue what I was doing [at first]; it was patient with me," Schommer said. "The council and the city administrators didn't hesitate to approve any educational opportunities that I wanted."

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Darkness will be outshined by the brightest light

By the Rev. Canon Ezgi S. Perkins, St. Peter's Episcopal Church rector

We live in times where empathy is a rare commodity.

I am sure most of us have heard someone in our lives at one point who cried out: "You just don't understand. You don't know what I am going through!"



Isn't that just a true statement?

Don't we sometimes feel that when we are confronted with a world that does not seem to care about our suffering and that sometimes seems to deal us a bad hand?

Christmas is a time where the secular world screams out themes of goodwill, joy and peace from the rooftops.

Many people act as if the



Rev. Canon Ezgi S. Perkins

only way to feel such elevated goodness is to fill our lives with material things and give expensive gifts to others in order to feel some type of worth in life.

Goodwill towards all people, and peace on Earth ... Now go buy more stuff!

No wonder we believe no one cares about what we are going through.

In Christmas, when we find

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