

GUEST COLUMN

## Help health care heroes amid COVID-19 resurgence

By Joe Parisi

Dane County Executive



Joe Parisi

We are naturally a hopeful people. It's one of the qualities of this community I appreciate most. Not that many weeks ago, we had every reason to feel renewed optimism. Our vaccination rate was among the best in the country.

We saw precipitous declines in the numbers of COVID cases, hospitalizations, and deaths. Life as we knew it seemed more "normal," and the start of summer brought a renewed sense of living.

For a time it seemed as though we had weathered the worst of this unrivaled period in our lives, only to face the sobering realization in recent weeks that this long, difficult journey isn't quite over yet. The anxiety and worry we thought was in the rear view is now back front and center, magnified by the return of kids to school and a change of seasons that results in us gathering once again indoors.

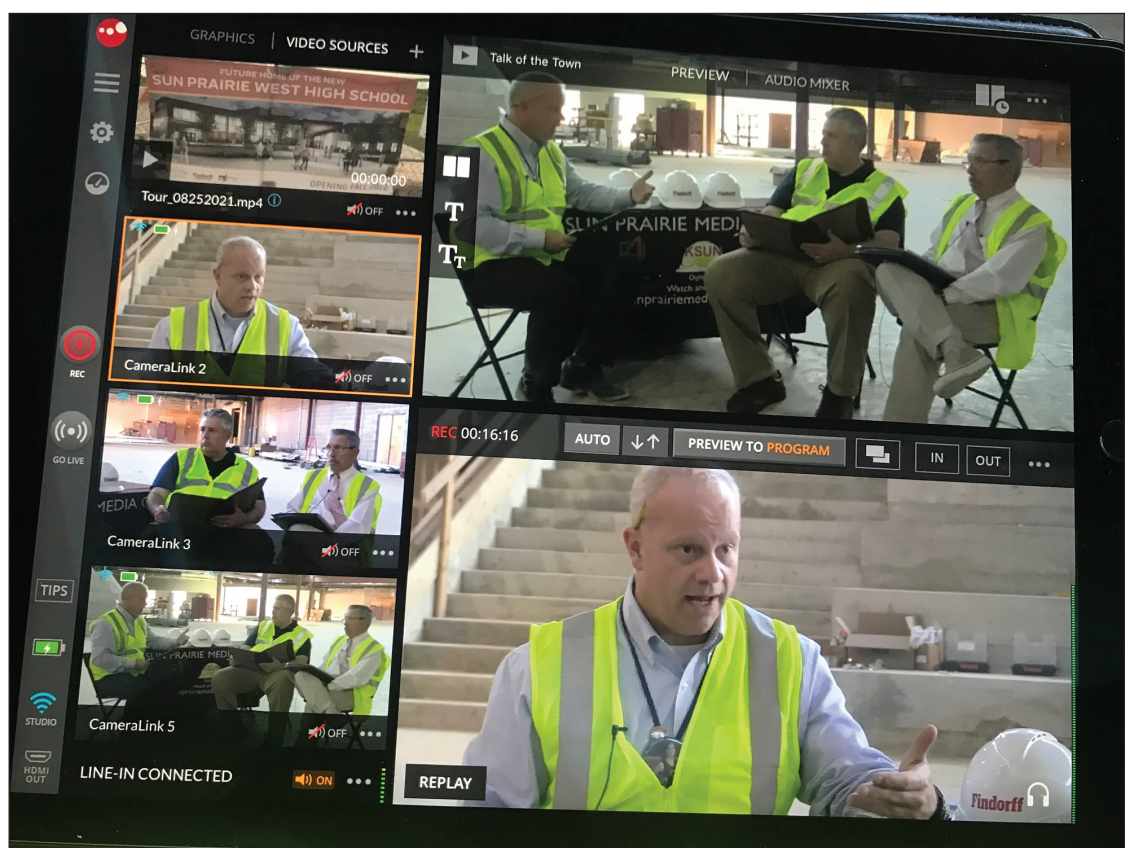
For many of us the resurgence of Covid has meant more changes in plans, readjusting daily routines, and a resumption of anxieties that come with the countless unknowns of this unrelenting virus. Moms and dads with kids too young to be eligible for vaccines face renewed, understandable angst as classes resume. Unfortunately, this virus has a staying power that's outlasted our hopes and a resiliency that's putting

our science and medical communities to the test.

As we rally once again, it is important we be mindful of the many faces of human sacrifice, those who go to work day after day uncertain of the difficulties they will face, but well aware they're the last line of defense separating a family from a painful loss to celebrating a joyous recovery. For the countless health care workers across our community, every new iteration of this virus brings new trauma. For 18 months they've had to console, guiding patients and families through the uncertainty and sometimes loss that comes with combating Covid-19. The cumulative effect has resulted in a significant toll being taken on our nurses, doctors, and all clinical and hospital specialists. Their days once again are marred by rising bed counts and increased illness.

We are all tired of Covid and its many reaches. As we grieve our inconveniences and losses, let us never forget those who have to suit up for endless hours each day to help another, all while living with the fear they may bring this devastating sickness back home to their families. The best way we can show our gratitude to those who directly face this tiring work

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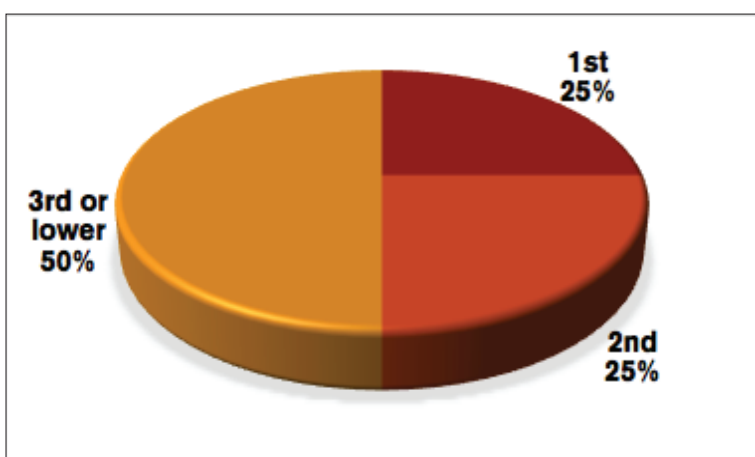


Sun Prairie Media Center

This photos shows a Sun Prairie Media Center iPad during the recording of the most recent episode of "Talk of the Town" directed by Mara Trusty of the SPMC. The episode was the first public affairs program to be recorded in the commons at Sun Prairie West High School, and features Sun Prairie Area School District Superintendent Brad Saron (lower right) and co-hosts Chris Mertes and Don Hooser (upper right) with Saron.

### ONLINE POLL

Where will the Wisconsin Badgers football team finish in the Big Ten West at the end of the regular season?



Check this week's poll question at [sunpraiestar.com](http://sunpraiestar.com) and pick up the **Friday, September 17 issue** for poll results!

### LETTERS POLICY

We gladly accept opinion letters on topics of local importance. Letters must be typed or emailed, include the name, phone number and address of the author and not exceed 400 words. Letters may also be posted on the newspaper's website.

Unsigned or anonymous letters will not be printed. Letters must be signed by one individual rather than multiple signatures.

Letters must conform to guidelines of civility.

The editor reserves the right to edit any letter for space, spelling and grammar, without changing the meaning or intent of the letter, or decline to publish any letter for any reason.

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### ET CETERA – CHRIS MERTES

## Are you checking out what the Sun Prairie Media Center has to offer?

Those of you community-minded residents of Sun Prairie who haven't discovered the Sun Prairie Media Center are missing out.

On a lot.

Not only is SPMC engaging the community through urging community members to produce programming, but it is also engaging the community through relevant programming.

High school sports like soccer, football, softball and baseball can frequently be found on one of the City of Sun Prairie's two cable access channels, KSUN and KIDS-4 (check cable listings in this newspaper for channel numbers on TDS and Spectrum cable systems). That's in addition to business and government programming.

One of the reasons to check out KSUN this month is a program that former alder Don Hooser and I co-hosted recently with Sun Prairie Area School District Superintendent Brad Saron. The program, "Talk of the Town," is a regular program that Don and I co-host, but this month's program took us to the new Sun Prairie West High School.

As far as I know (besides our website and the SPASD website), the video tour of the new Sun Prairie West High School is the first that I've seen. Guided by Saron during our "Talk of the Town" program, the tour takes viewers through the new high school from entry to commons to classrooms — and more.



Chris Mertes

Don and I asked the superintendent about various obstacles to the project, the 2019 referendum process, construction costs in addition to the annual cost to operate Sun Prairie West, different aspects of the two high schools, energy efficiency and more.

The program is also — as far as I know — the first Sun Prairie cable access program to take place inside the new school. You can hear some construction going on in the background if you listen very carefully during the interview, which takes place in the large, open commons area at Sun Prairie West High School.

The show is scheduled to air on KSUN on these dates and times during the next few days: Sept. 10 at 1 p.m.; Sept. 11 at 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.; Sept. 12 at 3:35 p.m.; Sept. 13 at 8 a.m., and Tuesday, Sept. 14 at 5 p.m. if there are no meetings preceding the Sun Prairie Plan Commission at 7 p.m.

If you think taping a show inside an under-construction high school to be groundbreaking, consider for a minute what's taking place on KIDS-4. It's the only cable access channel in the country (according to SPMC) that is programmed by and for kids.

It was part of the charge that

founder and former director Nancy Chase McMahon made to continue the channel. And its media literacy mission continues today, with SPMC seeking more child enrollees for the KIDS-4 program this fall. As I saw with my own daughter who went through the program, kids learn all the behind-the-scenes things that go into producing a TV show — from audio to camera operation. They even produce "Thursday Night Live" which airs live during the KIDS-4 season on the channel. In other words, the stuff taking place on these channels is history.

If you don't have cable, you can still access the programming on [kids4.tv](http://kids4.tv) and [ksun.tv](http://ksun.tv), or review the on demand video available on both channels (like "Talk of the Town," ahem, available on KSUN, or the other show I do "Inside Your City," with City Administrator Aaron Oppenheimer) at [sunpraiemedia.com](http://sunpraiemedia.com).

As if that is not enough, SPMC also offers a low power community radio station, 103.5 FM The Sun Community Radio, which will be celebrating its birthday with Trivia-Palooza next month. The only reason I'm mentioning it is that Don and I co-hosted a segment during Trivia-Palooza last year and NOBODY got any of our trivia questions correct.

Well, maybe our radio and Trivia-Palooza careers are

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