

Star News Editorials

Proud to be Wisconsin made

Wisconsin has always been a state where people do and make things.

It is a place where resources are put to work.

In 1851, the state adopted its current seal, which can be seen on every state flag. In the center of that seal is a shield divided into four areas representing agriculture (plow), mining (pick and shovel), manufacturing (arm and hammer), and navigation (anchor).

In the 171 years since the seal was adopted, those four areas continue to form the foundation of Wisconsin's economic success.

Wisconsin is a place where fertile fields, clear waters and the labor of farmers' backs help feed the world. It is a place where minerals deposited millennia ago are mined and refined. It is a place where the products from the field and the mines are tempered by innovation and molded by imagination and through manufacturing and entrepreneurship turned into thousands of products that help make everyday life better.

According to federal labor statistics, manufacturing accounts for 18.57% of the total output of the state with nearly 17% of the state workforce being employed in manufacturing in some way. This totals up to an impressive average of 472,000 people employed in manufacturing, a number that has bounced back to pre-pandemic levels and continues to rise with more than 7,700



Enerquip Thermal Solutions of Medford is proud to be Wisconsin made, and to help other Wisconsin-based companies grow and succeed.

manufacturing firms at work in the state. The combined output of manufacturing is about \$65 billion in the state economy.

While the numbers tell an impressive story on their

own, manufacturing is more than just output and economic impact statistics. Manufacturing is about putting the state's most valuable resource — the creativity and drive of its workforce — into action. In the drive to push Wisconsin ever forward, and fulfill the challenge that past generations enshrined in the state's motto, the talents and work ethic of Wisconsin residents continues to be the most important resource.

Manufacturing starts with a need and an idea of how to fill that need. Tinkerers, designers and engineers then develop that idea, taking it from a sketch on the back of a napkin into mass production. Along the way, they are called on to solve issues that arise, from sourcing materials to securing investors and attracting workers.

The items produced here in Central Wisconsin are as diverse as the people who call this area home. There are woodworkers who take the resources of the forests and put them into furniture and cabinetry. There are those who take the fruit of fields and turn them into beverages to be consumed and shared. Others work behind the scenes, producing the equipment and providing the expertise to help other manufacturers succeed and grow.

This week, we celebrate Wisconsin's manufacturing heritage with the annual Made In Wisconsin section. The section highlights products that are proud to be Wisconsin made.

Rib Lake board should drop downtown camera plan

After tossing around and then tabling the issue for months, members of the Rib Lake Village Board should drop plans to install streetlight-mounted video cameras in the downtown area.

The cameras are an unneeded expense at a time when budgets are already tight due to rising material and labor expenses. These costs include both the upfront installation expenses and long-term data storage and management of the cameras' video files.

After a handful of incidents where there was damage done to buildings in the village's downtown and a hydrant was struck by a motorist, the idea was raised to install security surveillance cameras to help law enforcement with monitoring the area. Under the proposal, "Big Brother" would always be watching what was going on in the village's usually sleepy downtown.

Village leaders had hoped to take advantage of the summer road project of rebuilding McComb Avenue to make it easy to install the conduit for the video feed and power to the proposed cameras. That idea has proved to be more hope than reality as hurdles were raised and cost estimates came in.

The camera equipment cost for basic units is about \$5,000 with another estimated \$2,000 in costs for running the needed conduit. For wireless camera systems

the cost estimates start at \$10,000, including installation. Upgrades to more functional 360 degree cameras would add thousands more to the project costs.

This is a lot of money to be spending on something that was not a budgeted expense.

Beyond the equipment and installation expense, there has been little discussion as to what the village police department would do with these files. Under Wisconsin's open records laws, the video footage would be considered public records and fall under the records retention rules. In addition, as a public record the village would have to ensure that people who requested to view or get copies of those records could do so.

Beyond these practical financial concerns, is the belief that people should feel comfortable walking down a street without the fear of being under constant surveillance by government agencies. What is next, searchlights, watch towers and a barbed wire perimeter fence to keep residents where they belong?

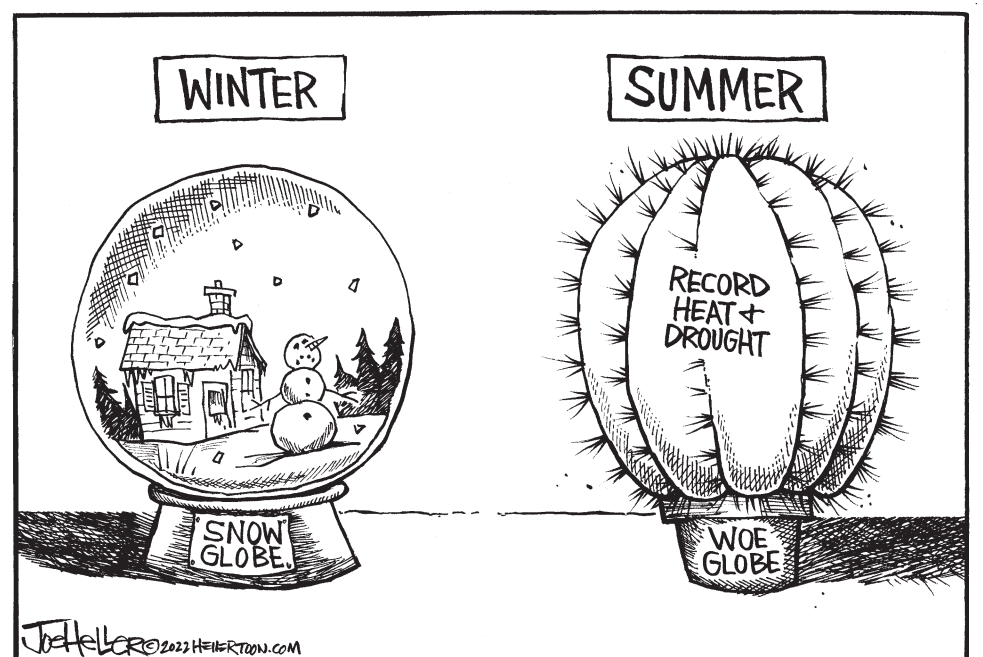
The societal cost of America sliding down the path of becoming a surveillance state far outweighs the hefty price tag of installation and upkeep of the proposed cameras.

If private businesses choose to install their own security cameras as a way to protect their property, they are welcome

to do so. Law enforcement, through the use of search warrants, already has a mechanism to access those recordings if needed for criminal proceedings.

With potential costs rising, members of the Rib Lake village board should drop plans to install surveillance cameras in the downtown.

Members of *The Star News* editorial board include Publisher Carol O'Leary, General Manager Kris O'Leary and News Editor Brian Wilson.



Star News Quote of the Week:

"I don't think the director of buildings and grounds did his homework."

— County board supervisor Rollie Thums objecting to the need to spend over \$200,000 to replace boat landings at Miller Dam. See the full story on page 1

Write a Vox Pop: Vox Pops, from the Latin Vox Populi or Voice of the People, are the opinions of our readers and reflect subjects of current local interest. All letters must be signed and contain the address and telephone number of the writer for verification of authorship and should be the work of the writer. Letters will be edited. No election-related letters will be run the week before the election. E-mail: starnews@centralwinews.com.

The mission of *The Star News*, as a local, community newspaper, is to support democracy by publishing editorials and letters to the editor that stimulate thought and discussion. Due to the ongoing divisiveness following the recent U.S. presidential election, we have decided to put in place a moratorium on editorials and letters that would further inflame partisan rancor and ill-will within our community of readers. We need a period of quiet so we can begin to listen to one another. The newspaper will continue to run editorials addressing issues that have local impact on our communities and readers. *The Star News* welcomes Vox Pops (letters to the editor) from our readers that address local issues and things that we cover in *The Star News*.