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WINTER WONDERLAND

Special Section

LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY SENTINEL

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WE CARE MORE.

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Valley sees fresh snow and bitterly cold temperatures, closing schools but creating new opportunities for winter activities

Photo by Taylor Scott, *Managing Editor*

After several inches of fresh snow this week, temperatures turned bitterly cold, leading the River Valley School District to cancel classes Wednesday.

The fresh snow created new opportunities for winter activities before the cold hit, leaving behind sledding and cross country skiing tracks in the snow.

Pictured at right is the view from the top of the sledding hill at the Spring Green Municipal Golf Course on Wednesday.

For more mid-winter activity ideas to break you out of the winter doldrums, see the Winter Wonderland special section enclosed.



Spring Green again takes up Kane dog boarding request after declining to appeal

Taylor Scott, *Managing Editor*

On Jan. 19, the Spring Green Plan Commission & Joint Extraterritorial Zoning Committee held a public hearing and discussed a request by Clinton Kane & Jill Janssen Kane for a conditional use permit for a commercial kennel & dog boarding at their property on Pearl Road. After hearing much feedback and discussion for nearly three hours, the body ultimately decided to take no action and to continue to work on the permit conditions at their next meeting.

The application seeks a conditional use permit to allow the garage of the Kane's home to be used for whelping and raising dogs that will ultimately be sold for research. The Kanes have another facility and would use this one to raise and wean the puppies before transferring them.

The Kanes filed a lawsuit in November 2019 against the Spring Green Plan Commission and Village of Spring Green Board of Zoning Appeals over

the denial of a conditional use permit to operate the facility. A Sauk County committee had previously unanimously approved a conditional use permit and the Spring Green Plan Commission and Joint Extraterritorial Zoning Committee ultimately denied the conditional use permit after some back and forth.

Sauk County Judge Michael Screnock found that the plan commission didn't adhere to what was required under statute when deciding on the permit and did not have authority to deny the Kanes' application, but "may impose reasonable and to the extent practicable, measurable requirements and conditions relating to that conditional use."

The Village of Spring Green Board of Trustees held a series of meetings in August, convening in closed session to discuss whether or not to appeal the decision of the court. Ultimately, the board declined to appeal the lawsuit.

Prior to the meeting the body received

several letters opposing the Plan Commission approving the permit or urging the body to consider conditions to apply when approving the permit. With over 40 participants in the virtual meeting, every attendee that spoke during the public hearing was opposed to the permit to varying degrees. The Plan Commission emphasized that it has its hands tied.

"Well, we have heard from, dating back obviously to the original hearings that were held in 2019, countless vocal community members opposing the approval of this conditional use at all," said David Saperstein, a trustee and plan commission member. "We're past that, because we did not approve it. And the applicants went to court and Judge Screnock said, 'No, you have to approve this.'"

The body heard eight conditions that had previously been proposed regarding the permit.

"Those are sort of a starting place because they are the only conditions that have been drafted so far. But I don't think that we are bound by them in any manner and ...I would like to rethink them," said Saperstein. "The fact that Judge Screnock determined that this conditional use permit had to be approved does not dictate what the conditions should be, that's left up to us. And that is our obligation under Section 4.0 of our zoning code."

"We have no obligation to give this applicant more standing than the rest of the community or the rest of their neighbors who are opposed... We are obligated to approve this. We are not obligated to make it profitable. We are not obligated to meet their demands. They do not demand from this board. They are the applicant, they request from this board."

The Plan Commission & Joint Extraterritorial Zoning Committee is set to meet next on Feb. 16 at 7:00 pm.

American Players Theatre: 2022 brings a return to The Road Back

American Players Theatre

We had hoped there would be no need to continue this column this year. We had hoped it would all be back to normal. Of course, it's not quite that. So while we anticipate that the 2022 season will look more like 2019 than 2021, we are under no illusion that there won't be challenges.

And so, because you are our people, and this is your theater, we introduce *The Road Back 2.0(22)*. We won't be here every week, but will keep you up to date on the hidden machinations that will bring the 2022 season to you, and you to it.

We're in an interesting spot right now. While we are planners by nature, it turns out the virus doesn't give a fig for our plans. (And more than 20 months into this thing, we know you all feel that). As we move ahead with planning the summer to come, Omicron looms large in our daily lives. Tough signs point to it being behind

us before the season begins, the fact is that we don't know what will come after it, or what safety precautions we'll need when the days get long.

In light of this, we've adopted a bit of an 80/20 philosophy. We're using 80% of our time, resources and brain power to forge ahead with our season as it is scheduled: a nine-play, repertory schedule, most-things back-to-normal season.

With the other 20%, we are planning for other scenarios. What factors would necessitate changing our schedule? How would we handle having to cancel a performance? Or multiple performances? What will COVID protocols look like for our audience when summer comes?

We can't know what COVID conditions will be three months from now when our production staff and company begin to arrive. Or five months from now when performances are in full swing. But we'll do our best to game out the possibilities

so when the unexpected happens, we'll be ready.

In the meantime, we are so excited about how we're spending that likely and hopeful 80% of our time.

Here are a few highlights:

—The Artistic staff is finishing up casting for the season, including the return of the Apprentice Company.

We'll share updates as offers are accepted.

—Production Manager Michael Broh and his staff are working to hire about a dozen people to fill out the 2022 production staff.

—Designs for all of the plays are well on their way to fruition, and plans are progressing for the 2022 design conference, which will take place in person and virtually for more than 100 artistic and production staff members in March.

—The 2022 Book of Summer is underway and will be heading to the

printer in just a few weeks. Can't wait to start planning? The Season Schedule is available now online (subject, of course, to change), and tickets will go on sale to returning patrons on March 21!

—Construction continues on our new artist housing, and they are growing like weeds. The two apartments buildings, named The Laurels, are scheduled to open later this year and will add 16 units (24 bedrooms) to our housing stock for visiting artists and artisans.

—Many APT apartments are getting facelifts thanks to a large furniture donation from Steve Brown Apartments. Furniture acquired second hand during the Obama administration is being replaced at long last.

And much, much more.

The 20% work is important too, and gives us peace of mind to keep working on the 80%. We look forward to sharing more details on 100% of it in the weeks ahead.