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## Magnificent manes

Wisconsin kids awarded for their mullets STATE, PAGE D3

## 'I'll stab y'all'

Co-owner of barbershop charged for attempted homicide LOCAL, PAGE B1

## Explainer

Why is polio returning? HEALTH, PAGE D5



MOSTLY SUNNY 82 • 66 FORECAST, B6 | WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 24, 2022 | [journaltimes.com](http://journaltimes.com) | \$2.00



ADAM ROGAN, ADAM.ROGAN@JOURNALTIMES.COM

St. Catherine's Assistant Principal Debbie Forrest, right, shows a student how to open a Yondr pouch Tuesday morning.

# Back to school, without a cellphone

**Locking pouches keep students' focus on learning**

**ADAM ROGAN**  
adam.rogan@journaltimes.com

RACINE — "Put your phone away" is something teachers at St. Catherine's High School don't say anymore. The teenagers still have their cellphones throughout the day, but they're inaccessible, required to be in magnet-sealed pouches that cannot be forcefully pried open by students itching to get back on Instagram or TikTok.

1200 Park Ave., for the first day of the 2022-23 school year Tuesday morning, they showed a staff member their phone, put it in their personal gray fabric pouch, clicked the magnet closed and then walked to their first class of the day. After the final bell, students hold up their pouch to a gray "unlocking base" attached to the wall at any of the school's exits, the magnet unlatches and the student can go home with cellphone in hand.

The high-strength magnets that hold each pouch closed are stronger than what could be undone by something in a science classroom or by brute force. They're



**Arendt**

If there's an emergency during the day and parents ask how they can get in touch with their kids, Principal Mike Arendt said he tells the parents, "Well,

made from neodymium. St. Catherine's students are still plugged into the internet. They each have an iPad, used for virtually every class, but the iPad has "parental controls" that block the use of texting or social media.

Please see PHONES, Page A4

MOUNT PLEASANT

# SOLD

Final remaining home in Foxconn Area 1 bought for \$950,000

**ALEX RODRIGUEZ**  
alex.rodriguez@journaltimes.com

MOUNT PLEASANT — The final property in Foxconn Area 1 that was not sold to make way for the underwhelming Foxconn development was finally sold Monday.

During a closed session Monday, the Mount Pleasant Village Board approved the purchase of 10640 S. Prairie View Drive, the only remaining house in a subdivision that had once included 13 homes.

The village purchased the property and its "extra land" for \$758,200 and provided relocation benefits of \$191,800. The village says the sale followed its established village formula for purchases of residential properties in the Foxconn areas, offering 140% of the market value of the residential component plus \$50,000 per acre of extra land.

The property size is 1.12 acres. The home and land are being purchased from James and Kim Mahoney. The Mahoneys over the past five years have made multiple offers to the village to sell their property, but it was not until Monday that the Village Board actually voted on an offer.

All of the Mahoneys' neighbors had sold to the village after receiving the 140% offers and while understanding that eminent domain was being threatened, meaning the local government could take the property by paying just the property value and no more. Opponents of how the village went about buying land to make way for Foxconn have continuously said Mount Pleasant trying to get the Mahoneys' property was unnecessary and an overreach of government authority.

"Mount Pleasant village officials have repeatedly claimed they used the same formula for all land acquisitions — 140% of fair market value (FMV) for residences. This perception of fairness is an illusion. Property owners who negotiated more aggressively were rewarded with reappraisals and/or enhanced relocation packages — outside the reported

Please see SOLD, Page A3

# Dueling day

Evers calls for tax cut as rival Michels tours Kenosha

**SCOTT BAUER**  
Associated Press  
**DANIEL GAITAN**  
Lee Newspapers

Gov. Tony Evers proposed a \$600 million annual tax cut on Tuesday — an election year proposal that's all but certain to be summarily rejected by the Republican-controlled Legislature that isn't due to meet in person again this year.

He announced the proposed cut at the same time as his Republican rival, Tim Michels, was touring Kenosha along with Congressman Bryan Steil and Republican attorney general candidate Eric Toney on the sec-



**Evers**

ond anniversary of sometimes violent protests over a police shooting. Michels has made Evers' reaction to the unrest in Kenosha a key plank of his campaign against the Democratic incumbent.

Michels accused Evers of trying to divert attention from the anniversary of the Kenosha unrest.

During his tour, Michels said he felt "the emotional scar" left on Kenosha. "You can fix build-

ings, you can rebuild businesses, but the fear that I still heard in peoples' voices today, the concern that they have that this could happen again, because they see no change in Madison. That's what November is all about. November is about change in Madison. November is about change of leadership."

Michels said those committing violent crimes in Kenosha "knew

Please see DUELING, Page A5

**■ More inside: Kenosha Police Officer charged with sexual assault, misconduct in office. Page B2**



SEAN KRAJACIC, LEE NEWSPAPERS

Gubernatorial candidate Tim Michels, left, and Congressman Bryan Steil, right, talk with officers Pablo Torres, second from left, and Pete Deates in front of the former Mangia restaurant on Tuesday during a tour and discussion on the unrest that took place in 2020. Mangia had closed for good prior to the rioting.

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# Phones

From A1

what did your parents do when you when you were in school? (They) called the office." If there's something less urgent, parents can also email their kids on their school email, accessible by iPad.

With cellphones out of students' hands, Arendt said behavioral issues are down, classroom performance has improved and students appear more engaged with other people — rather than with their phones — than they did when phones were still accessible.

"We've seen a dramatic reduction in our online harassment (reports), our online bullying, online drama between students," Arendt said. "We've had a dramatic increase in engagement. We've had a dramatic increase in our academic achievement since we implemented this just prior to the start of second semester last year (the 2021-22 school year). Our failure



YONDR

The powerful magnet, left, used to unlock the magnetically closed Yondr pouch and allow the cellphone inside to be released is shown here in this promotional image.

rates are down."

The pouches are produced by a company called Yondr. San Francisco-based Yondr was founded in 2014 and has continuously made headlines since as it eventually invented its own industry; it still doesn't really have any competitors.

One teacher, Frank Miles, has a daily tradition of standing at the third-floor landing of the west stairway

and saying "Hello" to every student as they walk up the stairs each morning. "Prior to Yondr," Arendt said, "maybe three or four students are going to say hi to him. Now ... almost every single person is engaged and saying 'Hi!'"

Besides St. Catherine's, more than other 1,000 schools in the U.S., Canada and Europe partner with Yondr for the same purpose. The cost to implement

# Schools, chuckles and music

Yondr has gotten more attention for its use by big-name musicians — like Bob Dylan, Alicia Keys and Jack White — who grew annoyed with seeing seas of cellphones rather than fans' faces at their shows. Comedians — like Dave Chappelle, John Mulaney and Kevin Hart — also got attention for using them in part because they didn't want their jokes leaking out on social media; there's a fear comedians could lose ticket sales if consumers would rather just hear their newest jokes online rather than in person.

Some courtrooms and other special events, like weddings, have made use of Yondr too.

Yondr is approximately \$15-30 per student, according to the company.

At St. Cat's, all students are given a pouch. But, if they lose or break the pouch, it's \$20 for a replacement. When one student showed up late on the first day of the 2022-23 school year without her Yondr — she said she couldn't find it after the summer — Arendt pulled a \$20 bill out of his pocket to pay for it.

# Online, all the time

Taking cellphones from

kids could also be a mental health boon.

A 2019 Pew Research Center study found that 95% of Americans ages 13-17 have access to a smartphone, with 45% saying they are "almost constantly" using the internet in some form or other.

Fifty-three percent of U.S. kids have a smartphone by the time they turn 11 years old, according to a 2019 Common Sense Media study. Those 11 year olds, born in 2008, were born just one year after the iPhone was

introduced by Apple, almost immediately transforming how Americans communicate with each other and connect with the internet.

This unprecedented connectivity is largely believed to be taking a toll on youth mental health.

"There's so many studies that have come out in the last few years about the social anxiety, stress, low self-esteem, teen suicide is up. Studies are showing and proving how destructive these devices can be. Not only the device itself, but the social media aspect of it," Allison Silvestri told CNBC in a feature about Yondr in schools in 2019; at the time of the interview, Silvestri had been principal of San Lorenzo High School in California, which uses Yondr. Studies largely don't blame smartphones and connectivity themselves for negative health effects, but rather overuse of the technology.

"The excessive use of the smartphone has been associated with impaired cognitive functions and mental health problems" in adolescents and young adults. "There are unique findings on the association between using smartphones, need of constant stimulation, deficits in everyday cognitive functioning and brain changes which should send alarm signals to clinicians and educators in the modern world," concludes a 2021 Israeli study published in the medical journal Frontiers in Psychiatry.

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