

SUNDAY

The Journal Times

Racine County's Daily Newspaper

Badgers fall hard

Wisconsin QB Mertz has a second half to forget against Notre Dame **SPORTS, PAGE C1**



Riding high at Whistling Straits

Americans dominating Ryder Cup going into final day of singles play **SPORTS, PAGE C1**



WARMER, CLOUDS & SUN **81 • 63** FORECAST, A12

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 26, 2021

journaltimes.com

\$4.00

PRITCHARD PARK REBORN



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Dave Giordano, right, spends time with his daughter on Sept. 14 at Pritchard Park, located at the intersection of Ohio Street and Durand Avenue (Highway 11) in Racine.

Invaders repelled, natives welcomed

How Pritchard Park has come back to life in just five years

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RACINE — Five years ago, Pritchard Park was a prime example of what happens when you ignore the land. Overrun with an invasive species, prone to flooding, ugly, damaging to Racine's water supplies. Negatives all around.

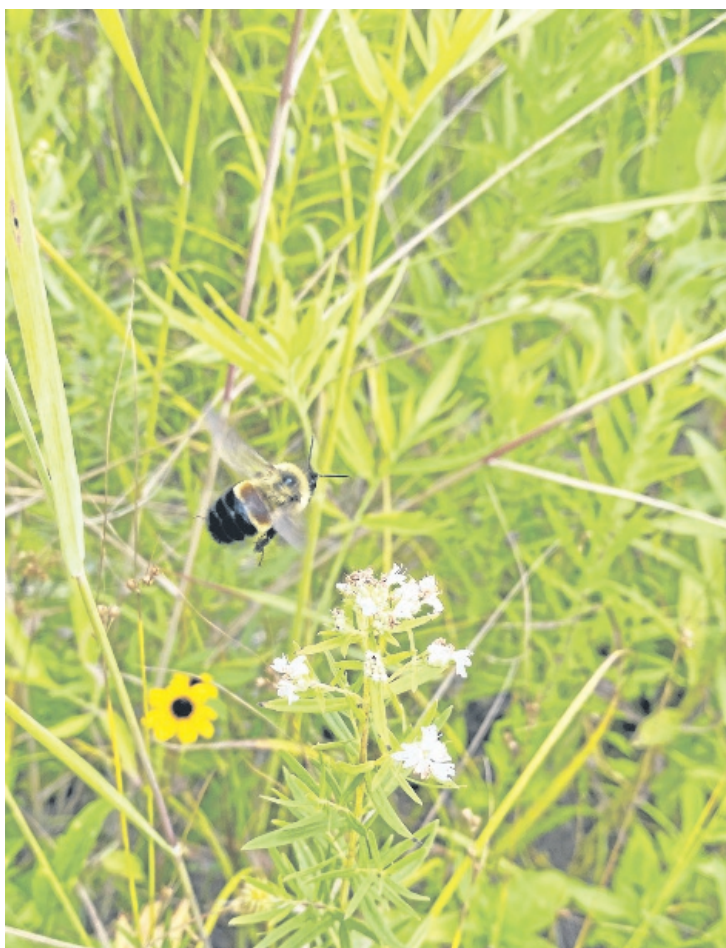
During a volunteer day about five years ago, attempting to make a dent in removing the invasive and damaging buckthorn, a woman said aloud: "This is never going to happen." That pessimism steered Dave Giordano's resolve.

Looking back, that volunteer couldn't have been more wrong.

The rooting-out process is simple but challenging. Giordano described it as "hack and squirt" — cut down the invader, spray a bit of herbicide at the base. Then you repeat that, on plant after plant, year after year.

There's still buckthorn in the park, but it's now a tiny minority of the plant population as opposed to the predominant resident. Five years ago, as much as 90% of plant life in Pritchard Park's 15 acres was buckthorn and dead ash trees.

"You'd be hard pressed to find a bee in here," Giordano said. Much less an endangered bee, such as the rusty patched bumblebee discovered for the first time in years at the park along Highway 11 (Durand Avenue) last month, one month after it re-emerged at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside. "When you



COURTESY OF SIMONE SORENSEN

An endangered rusty patched bumblebee is pictured on Aug. 4 in Pritchard Park.

eradicate buckthorn and bring back the natives, all the natives come back and they find their food sources."

Root systems and infrastructure

The restoration work is paying off. Not only have native species returned in force, but they're making a positive impact.

Deeper, more diverse root sys-

tems improve water quality for the surrounding area while also preventing erosion. In short: Living things help keep unliving human infrastructure, like roads and buildings, intact. It's plants and concrete working in tandem, not opposition.

"This kind of restoration in an urban area ... it doesn't happen enough," said Giordano.

Giordano has a master's degree in information technology. He

previously filled his days managing digital databases, leading marketing efforts and working in construction management. But then he started volunteering with Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network, an organization dedicated to protecting watersheds in the basin surrounding the Root and Pike rivers. Since 2015, he's been the nonprofit's executive director.

"We've gotta leave it better than when we got here," he said of how he came to lead an environmental organization, thinking about his five kids and the legacy, and planet, Generation X will leave behind.

At about 2:30 p.m. on Aug. 4, a rusty patched bumblebee was found in Pritchard Park by Maddie Ball, who was working alongside recent University of Wisconsin-Parkside graduate Simone Sorensen. It's one of the biggest signs of success in wild-life restoration and preservation locally in years.

It's not merely cool that an endangered bee was found. It's also evidence that the past five years' work has paid off.

"This is what success looks like," Giordano said.

Balance

As Giordano walked through the grass while being interviewed earlier this month, grasshoppers scattered alongside his footsteps.

Please see **BEES**, Page A8

■ **The bee is back:** For more on how the Rusty Patched Bumblebee was actually discovered both in Racine and Kenosha counties, and to learn more about the bee, turn to **Local**, Page B1.

REDEVELOPMENT

Lake Ave. project advances

Market-rate housing proposed at Downtown site

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RACINE — There is once again movement on the long-discussed redevelopment of property at the intersection of Lake Avenue and Gaslight Drive — albeit a bit scaled back from the plan proposed two years ago.

The property at 233 Lake Ave. was once a gas manufacturing plant, but could become the home of 200 market-rate housing units with lake and/or harbor views.

The City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday to enter into a development agreement with Hovde Properties of Madison, which plans a \$28 million redevelopment for the site.

TID No. 21

The development agreement will obligate the city to provide certain incentives, which the developer will then leverage to

Please see **REDEVELOPMENT**, Page A8

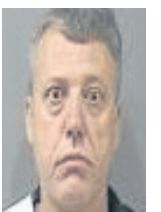
ELLSWORTH CORRECTIONAL

Ex-nurse found not guilty of sex assault

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UNION GROVE — A corrections nurse accused of having sexual relations with an inmate was found not guilty of all charges on Thursday after a three-day jury trial in Racine County Circuit Court.

Jeremy J. Deppisch, 51, was charged in July 2018 with three counts of second-degree sexual assault by corrections staff.



Deppisch

Case history

The Racine County Sheriff's Office responded to the Robert E. Ellsworth Correctional Center in Dover to look into allegations of a nurse having a sexual relationship with an inmate seven months before.

According to the criminal complaint:

The investigator discovered the allegations went back to January 2018.

The allegations against Deppisch were that he would call the inmate to the Health Services unit or meet her during meal times.

There was also an allegation that he wrote a false prescription for her, but he was not charged with that at trial.

The Ellsworth Correctional Center is a minimum-security facility for the supervision of adult female offenders.



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LOTTERY	A2	OBITUARIES	B3-B6	RACINE COUNTY	B1	SPORTS	C1



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SPIRITS OF NORWAY

Winery hires new manager

Stanley to oversee events, tasting room

JOURNAL TIMES STAFF

TOWN OF NORWAY — Spirits of Norway Vineyard & Winery hired Kristen Stanley as the new tasting room manager and event coordinator.

Stanley recently retired as a public affairs superintendent/military photographer from the United States Air Force and is a graduate from the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, New York.

“Her military core values and food service skills sure pair well with her new position here at the winery,” a news release from Spirits of Norway stated.

Stanley has traveled around the globe and lived in England, New York, and 38 years in Hawaii. She moved with her family from Honolulu to Franklin in 2016 and purchased a 100-year-old farm property. She said even though she left “paradise,” she appreciates all that Wisconsin has to offer and loves being a part of the community.

Getting the job

During a Sunday drive by the vineyard with her husband, Stanley noticed the Spirits of Norway grapevines at 22200 W. Six Mile Road. She went to the vineyard’s website to inquire about tours and tastings. The Tour ‘N’ Taste Experience was opening soon — it officially opened in May — and



Stanley

Stanley and her husband booked a reservation with a few other couples. They had a great experience and scheduled a second visit with other friends later in the summer.

During Art in the Vineyard, a wine tasting and painting event on Sept. 4, vineyard owner Randy Larson mentioned he was hiring a tasting room manager and event coordinator. After reading the job description, Stanley said she thought: “What better opportunity to pull out of retirement and utilize my job skills while staying in the local area?”

Stanley’s new position was officially announced Sept. 16.

“Kristen will surely make a great addition to the staff here and we welcome her as she joins us at the Spirits of Norway,” the release stated. “Her culinary background gives her the creative opportunity to pair up food with wine.”

Stanley is especially fond of Unforgettable, her new favorite Spirits of Norway red wine, and she said Tropical Lime takes her back to the beach.

Attendees of Wine About Wednesday, a free wine tasting event, can meet Stanley at the Irish Cottage II, S98W12532 Loomis Court, Muskego, on Wednesday, Oct. 13. The event also celebrates Stanley’s birthday.

Bees

From A1

The six-legged critters look like rats when the light turns on in the kitchen. But instead of carrying disease, grasshoppers are small-scale pollinators and attract seed-spreading birds at Pritchard Park, for whom the grasshoppers are dinner.

There weren’t many grasshoppers here five years ago. They don’t care for buckthorn.

The park is owned by Racine County, but Root-Pike WIN does a lot of the upkeep, with support from the Fund for Lake Michigan and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

One bird you won’t see much of anymore in Pritchard is the goose — at least, they’re now avoiding the forested area opposite the pond at the corner of Ohio and 21st streets, the northeast corner of the park, where Root-Pike WIN is planning its next project. Geese don’t care for grasshopper dinners and prefer hanging out around the buckthorn that’s becoming increasingly tough to find.

That’s a good thing. Goose excrement is riddled with phosphorous and E. Coli, respectively a mineral and a bacteria; both can ruin water supplies. Geese aren’t fans of tall grasses — tall grasses that are naturally supposed to grow at Pritchard Park, and better for the local environment.

“We’re going to process these pollutants naturally,” Giordano said. Of the park’s current state: “It’s got all these native species doing mitigation work on this stormwater, and that’s making an impact downstream.”

Without these kind of systems, groundwater, lakes and rivers can lead to health hazards. “Sediment is one of the big polluters to the Root River; so is phosphorous and nitrogen. (Native) root systems break down those pollutants,” Giordano said.

According to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: “As polluted water makes its way to the oceans, water quality can be affected, which often results in the closing of local beaches due to unhealthy water conditions. Stormwater carries disease-causing bacteria and viruses. Swimming in polluted waters can make you sick.”

Racine’s lakefront beaches have been closed to swimmers about a dozen times this summer due to high e. coli counts. Smarter, more effective green spaces in urban areas could help reduce beach closures.

These intentional changes “Put things back into equilibrium. Turf doesn’t do that,” Giordano said.

Failure to protect parks

The discovery of a rusty patched bumblebee was exhilarating news for staff of the Root-Pike Watershed Initiative, definitive proof that their restoration efforts have borne results.



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Simone Sorensen photographs a plant in Pritchard Park in Racine, near where she and Maddie Ball discovered the endangered rusty patched bumblebee.

Bees need warm, dense places to survive winters — mouse holes are an option in Pritchard Park, as is dense brush. (Bumblebees don’t have hives as honeybees do.)

To survive until spring, should some bees winter in the forest at Pritchard Park, they’ll need food sources. Buckthorn is useless to bumblebees. But now at Pritchard Park they have a buffet: Liatris, aka blazing star, black-eyed susan and ox-eyed daisy wildflowers, Canada wild rye, Virginia mountain mint, not to mention goldenrod.

There’s also milkweed, a plant that monarch butterflies cannot live without. It’s the only plant they lay their eggs on, and the only thing caterpillars eat when born.

The Michigan Lily, also known as the Turk’s Cap Lily, a flower with fiery petals and one of bumblebees’ favorite meals, reappeared in Pritchard Park without being planted. “They came back on their own,” Giordano said, noting that their seeds could “survive” on the ground for more than a decade before beginning to grow once the conditions are right.

Giordano called the rusty patched an “indicator species,” meaning its status shows how well other related species are doing. If the rusty patched is there, that means the whole area is probably

in good shape.

“If you build it, they will come” works pretty well here,” Giordano said, quoting from the 1989 film “Field of Dreams.” “We’re just scratching the surface of restoring natural land types in Wisconsin.”

Agricultural damage

Nan Calvert, program director for Root-Pike Watershed Initiative Network’s “Respect Our Waters” public outreach and education program, said the agricultural damage from losing pollinators would be in the billions of dollars.

This is what happens when you take care of the land and address the mistakes of the past. “They left it alone. The invasive species found their way in,” Giordano said of those who failed to protect Racine’s parks in recent decades.

That harm is being undone. “You’ve got a system that’s more beautiful. It’s feeding our endangered pollinators ... and you’ve created an incredible sense of place here,” he said, noting the family playing on the swings surrounded by trees and greenery, and the bridge built by Eagle Scout Tommy Rouse last summer. “We’ve got people connecting with the landscape again.”

Joe States of Lee Newspapers contributed to this report.



PFIZER VIA AP

In this March 2021 photo provided by Pfizer, a technician works on a line for packaging preparation for the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at the company’s facility in Puurs, Belgium. Billions more in profits are at stake for some vaccine makers as the U.S. moves toward dispensing COVID-19 booster shots to shore up Americans’ protection against the virus.

COVID-19 vaccine boosters could mean billions for drugmakers

TOM MURPHY
Associated Press

Billions more in profits are at stake for some vaccine makers as the U.S. moves toward dispensing COVID-19 booster shots to shore up Americans’ protection against the virus.

How much the manufacturers stand to gain depends on how big the rollout proves to be.

U.S. health officials late on Thursday endorsed booster shots of the Pfizer vaccine for all Americans 65 and older — along with tens of millions of younger people who are at higher risk from the coronavirus because of health conditions or their jobs.

Officials described the move as a first step. Boosters will likely be offered even more broadly in the coming weeks or months, including boosters of vaccines made by Moderna and Johnson & Johnson. That, plus continued growth in initial vaccinations, could mean a huge gain in sales and profits for Pfizer and Moderna in particular.

“The opportunity quite frankly is reflective of the billions of people around the world who would need a vaccination and a boost,” Jefferies analyst Michael Yee said.

Wall Street is taking notice. The average forecast among analysts for Moderna’s 2022 revenue has jumped 35% since President Joe Biden laid out his booster plan in mid-August.

Most of the vaccinations so far in the U.S. have come from Pfizer, which developed its shot with Germany’s BioNTech, and Moderna. They have inoculated about 99 million and 68 million people, respectively. Johnson & Johnson is third with about 14 million people.

No one knows yet how many

people will get the extra shots. But Morningstar analyst Karen Andersen expects boosters alone to bring in about \$26 billion in global sales next year for Pfizer and BioNTech and around \$14 billion for Moderna if they are endorsed for nearly all Americans.

Those companies also may gain business from people who got other vaccines initially. In Britain, which plans to offer boosters to everyone over 50 and other vulnerable people, an expert panel has recommended that Pfizer’s shot be the primary choice, with Moderna as the alternative.

Andersen expects Moderna, which has no other products on the market, to generate a roughly \$13 billion profit next year from all COVID-19 vaccine sales if boosters are broadly authorized.

Potential vaccine profits are harder to estimate for Pfizer, but company executives have said they expect their pre-tax adjusted profit margin from the vaccine to be in the “high 20s” as a percentage of revenue. That would translate to a profit of around \$7 billion next year just from boosters, based on Andersen’s sales prediction.

J&J and Europe’s AstraZeneca have said they don’t intend to profit from their COVID-19 vaccines during the pandemic.

For Pfizer and Moderna, the boosters could be more profitable than the original doses because they won’t come with the research and development costs the companies incurred to get the vaccines on the market in the first place.

WBB Securities CEO Steve Brozak said the booster shots will represent “almost pure profit” compared with the initial doses.



SUBMITTED RENDERING

The redevelopment of 233 Lake Avenue is to include 200 apartments, some with views of Lake Michigan or the harbor.

Redevelopment

From A1

obtain outside funding for the project.

The city has agreed to provide a \$2.6 million developer grant in addition to a developer-funded, 17-year incentive paid through TID No. 21.

TID No. 21 was created in 2018 in anticipation of redevelopment of the site.

A TID earns money in the following way: The city sets a base value when the TID is created. As the property value increases due to the development, the difference between the base value and increased value will be set aside for the developer.

The developer may then pledge the TID funds as security for additional financing.

The development agreement includes the caveat that the “Racine Works” ordinance will be in place, which will require construction work hours to include 20% for qualified and eligible low-income city residents.

Additionally, the developer will

be required to incorporate LEED energy efficiency improvements and obtain at least a Silver certification for the final structure.

2021 proposal

Hovde Properties has had its eye on the site for some time.

On May 3, 2019, Hovde entered into an offer-to-purchase agreement with the city’s development authority for the purposes of acquiring a 98-year lease of the site.

At that time, Hovde’s proposed \$40 million development of the site included the construction of two mid-rise, market-rate residential apartment buildings totaling at least 180 units, and a limited-service hotel encompassing approximately 100 guest rooms and a small restaurant with a bar.

Two years and one pandemic later, the newest proposal does not include a hotel, but the multifamily units have expanded.

The latest proposal intends 200 market-rate rental housing with community space and a fitness center for residents, among the amenities.

History

The 3.5-acre city-owned tract was formerly owned by We Energies and was acquired in 2014 from Wispark LLC, which is the development arm of We Energies.

Before the city acquired the property, We Energies demolished existing structures and undertook environmental remediation on the site.

An Agenda Briefing Memorandum outlined the extensive environmental issues connected with the property.

Because there had been a gas manufacturing plant on the site, there were three gas tanks, four coal tanks, and coke bins on the property.

The ABM indicated there have been two phases of environmental remediation at the site and contamination mitigation is ongoing.

Despite the mitigation, the first floor above ground level can only be utilized for non-residential space.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources may mandate additional conditions in the future, which could likely lead to increased costs to the developer, according to the ABM.