



## Packers' game plan turns Rodgers into offensive line's best friend

SPORTS, 5B

# Oshkosh Northwestern

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# 'We just cannot keep going like this'

## White Christmas for Wisc.?

### Mid-week warm up may melt chances for some

**Melissa Siegler** Stevens Point Journal  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Are you dreaming of a white Christmas?

Well, it might not be in the cards for parts of Wisconsin this year.

With record warm weather forecast this week, small accumulations of snow are likely to melt. Today's high could get up to 62 in parts of the state, and the rest of the week will experience highs between 36 and 44. So if you don't have much snow on the ground now, your chances are diminished.

Mike Cellitti, a meteorologist with the National Weather Service in Green Bay, said that there is some potential for small accumulations across the state, but there are not any big storm systems expected between now and Christmas. However, that could still change, Cellitti said.

Right now, your likelihood of having snow on Christmas largely depends on which part of the state you live in.

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Guests Paul Griesbach, left, and Raymond Adkins enjoy a home-cooked meal at the Day By Day Warming Shelter.

**ABOVE:** Zach Taylor prepares his mat to spend the night Dec. 8 at Day By Day Warming Shelter, 449 High Ave. Guests arrive when the shelter opens at 6 p.m., and it can hold up to 25 guests. The temporary shelter is open overnight October through April and this season has already turned away people 153 times, up from 72 total last season.

PHOTOS BY DAN POWERS/USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

**"At this point, we would have already filled a 50-bed shelter most nights this season."**

**Molly Yatso Butz**  
Executive director, Day By Day Warming Shelter

## Oshkosh warming shelter turns away record number of people

**Katy Macek** Oshkosh Northwestern | USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

**O**SHKOSH - At Day By Day Warming Shelter, St. Nicholas Day is a big deal. • Guests staying at the overnight shelter last Monday received a welcome St. Nick's gift: a warm pair of socks, a fitting present as outdoor temperatures dropped to single digits. • A volunteer walked around with a bin filled with thick, multicolored socks for guests to select their chosen pair. • It could be easy for those staying at homeless shelters to become nothing more than numbers, but Molly Yatso Butz and the shelter's staff and volunteers don't let that happen.

"Those socks match your personality perfectly," Yatso Butz, the shelter's executive director, told the guest she was eating dinner with that evening.

Amanda Hammond, operations director, thinks the connection stems from developing programs to help the homeless make progress. One example is the Gateways to Goals program that encourages folks to set goals, such as for housing, a job, education, financial stability, and then take specific steps to achieve them.

"We're a cohesive team, and we look at the whole person, not just their situation," Hammond said. "We know names and relate to them; we become a family."

But this family is growing, fast, and it has far outgrown its 25-person capacity limit in the basement of Most Blessed Sacrament Parish's St. Peter's site, 449 High Ave.

Its 11th season opened Oct. 15, and staff have already had to turn more people away than it did its entire last

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## Prices reasonable for 'must win' games

### Packers fans should have affordable ticket options for next 4 games

**Richard Ryman** Green Bay Press-Gazette  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

**GREEN BAY** - For the Green Bay Packers, who are in the hunt for the No. 1 seed in the NFC playoffs, every one of their four remaining games are "must win," which provides interesting opportunities for Packers fans looking to attend games.

Three of those games might be "must win" for the Packers' opponents, as well. All four games have good secondary market ticket prices, although each carries some baggage.

If Green Bay ties with Arizona and Tampa Bay, because Arizona loses

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# National Guard leader pressed for answers

## Senator asks for data about high suicide rate in the force

**Katelyn Ferral** Milwaukee Journal Sentinel  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Responding to a Milwaukee Journal Sentinel investigation into the high suicide rate in the National Guard, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin has asked the head of the force to release specific numbers of deaths and provide details about how the Guard can provide better care for its members.

In a letter to Gen. Daniel Hokanson, chief of the National Guard Bureau, Baldwin cited several findings and possible reforms highlighted in the Journal Sentinel's investigation last month, including the need for a one-stop shop of mental health resources tailored to the force.

"If federal and state services for Guard members, including mental health services, are not tailored in a way

that accounts for this highly irregular and evolved profile of the National Guard, then we are falling short of our duty to support our servicemembers," wrote Baldwin, a Democrat from Wisconsin who serves on the defense subcommittee of the Senate Appropriations Committee.

In her letter, sent Thursday, Baldwin is also asking for what funding is needed to address gaps in mental health care for Guard members.

The Journal Sentinel investigation chronicled how four Wisconsin Guardsmen died by suicide in a five-month span in 2020 and early 2021 after serving in Afghanistan. The investigation also detailed how Guard leaders and lawmakers have failed to keep pace with the distinct mental health burden facing the force.

The suicide rate in the National Guard is higher on average over the past five years than the rate among full-time and reserve military personnel. In 2020, 120 Guard members nationwide died from suicide, up from 90 the year before. Guard leaders will not release the

numbers of suicides by state, citing privacy concerns.

Two of the Guardsmen profiled by the Journal Sentinel tried to get help but either faced long delays in care or were given inaccurate information about services for which they were eligible.

The men also expressed concerns to friends and family about the stigma of asking for help, a cultural problem state and federal Guard leaders have pledged to fix. In her letter, Baldwin said it was critical for politicians and Guard leaders to improve their understanding of the distinct issues that Guard members are facing.

The Guard, intended to be a state-based militia used seldomly, has been increasingly deployed to meet myriad other needs throughout the pandemic, including policing protests, driving school buses and serving as nursing assistants in Wisconsin psychiatric facilities.

Guard units across the country have been called up more in the last year and a half than in any 18-month period since World War II, and there's no cap on the

number of times a soldier can be activated.

"Each state must have subject matter experts for suicide prevention that is a fit for their state, and these programs should receive federal funding considering that Guard's outsized role in supporting federal missions at home and abroad," Baldwin wrote.

The National Guard Bureau declined to be interviewed about Baldwin's letter.

"It would be inappropriate for us to comment on interpersonal correspondence between elected officials and the Chief of the National Guard Bureau," bureau spokesman Wayne Hall said.

On a separate Guard issue, U.S. Rep. Jackie Speier of California, who chairs the House Armed Services Committee, reaffirmed she will hold hearings on how the force handles sexual assault allegations. She said the hearings would occur sometime next year. Previously, Speier said the hearings would take place this past summer, a pledge that followed a Journal Sentinel-Cap Times investigation published in March.

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## Shelter

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season. Through Nov. 30, they had to turn way homeless looking for overnight shelter 153 times, compared with 72 last season, which ran from Oct. 15, 2020, to April 15, 2021.

"It's been insane," Yatso Butz said. Yatso Butz said the number of new guests — those not seen before this season — is also higher than usual. There were two new guests alone on Monday night.

### Space constraints limit other shelter services

The space not only limits the number of beds but also storage and efficiency. Laundry is piled in a small room to the side of the shelter, with just one washer and dryer that runs constantly through the night. There are just two showers, one for men and one for women that

doubles as an overflow shower for men, which make up the majority of shelter guests.

Volunteers make food at home and bring it in to serve, as the kitchen doesn't have enough space for meal prep. On Monday, St. Mary's Catholic Church in Winneconne volunteers brought in spaghetti and meatballs with sandwiches, salad, carrots and cookies.

In the large room where mats are spaced out, there is one outlet. Guests with ankle bracelets (which judges order to monitor people in the court system) receive outlet priority in bed placement — there were five on Monday.

"We just cannot keep going like this," Yatso Butz said.

That became even more evident with the COVID-19 pandemic, when the cramped space forced staff to pit safety against people sleeping in the cold.

"It's difficult to space out 25 mattresses in that space as it is," Yatso Butz said after a COVID-19 outbreak forced the shelter to close for 10 days over the Thanksgiving holiday.

### Efforts for new site progress despite opposition

A shelter committee selected a site at the northwest corner of Ceape Avenue and Broad Street this summer after working three years on feasibility at five different sites. They recently got city council's approval for rezoning that site and the proposed new shelter's general development plan, which would operate year-round and serve 50 to 65 people a night.

"At this point, we would have already filled a 50-bed shelter most nights this season," Yatso Butz said.

The Oshkosh Plan Commission on Tuesday voted 7-0 to approve Day By Day Warming Shelter's specific implementation plan, which Planning Services Manager Mark Lyons said is the last piece of land use approval the shelter would need for its proposed permanent, year-round location. Specific plans would still need to be approved.

Day By Day still needs to finalize funding to purchase the property, which

Oshkosh Housing Authority owns. City staff had planned to use \$150,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to acquire the property. However, the city Redevelopment Authority voted to delay purchasing the property in November.

Several RDA and community members at that meeting expressed concerns about finding the best use for that property, which has sat empty for years.

But guests inside Day By Day feel differently. Several expressed frustration at not finding a permanent home with more updated resources, including the gentleman eating dinner with Yatso Butz Monday.

If and when shelter plans become a reality, though, he's sure of one thing: "Even if we were in a larger shelter, we'd still be eating dinner together like this," he told the executive director. "That won't change."

Contact Katy Macek at [kmacek@thenorthwestern.com](mailto:kmacek@thenorthwestern.com) or 920-426-6658. Follow her on Twitter @KatherineMacek.

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