



## COVID-19 still a concern as Bucks navigate the NBA playoffs

Sports, 7B

# Oshkosh Northwestern

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Program Director Denise Holz reaches for a bottle of shampoo in a cramped storage area in 2021 at the Day By Day Warming Shelter. PHOTOS BY USA TODAY NETWORK-WISCONSIN

## Vaisakhi celebrates Sikh culture in Fox Valley

**Benita Mathew**  
Appleton Post-Crescent  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

MENASHA - It was a day of celebration and respect for Sikh culture and faith at the Sikh Temple of Fox Valley on Sunday.

People from around the region gathered at the gurdwara, a Sikh place of worship, in Menasha to celebrate Vaisakhi.

Vaisakhi is celebrated on April 13 or 14 each year and is recognized as the day Sikhism began as a collective faith.

Sikhism is the fifth-largest religion in the world. Over 100 people regularly practice the faith at northeast Wisconsin's temple in Menasha.

Sikh families gather at gurdwaras around the world to celebrate their culture, reflect on their faith, and honor the sacrifices of the generations before them.

### A brotherhood of warriors

The holiday started out as a harvest

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# Taking it Day By Day

### Shelter closes after record season with eye on year-round facility

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

OSHKOSH - For the first time in at least a decade, Larry has an apartment to call his own.

Larry, a 64-year-old man who asked not to use his last name to protect his privacy, has been legally blind since 1996. He grew up in Fond du Lac and rented a friend's house for a while. When the house was sold, he had nowhere to go and ended up traveling around the area. He spent the last winter at Day By Day Warming Shelter.

Just two months ago, he had no idea what would happen last weekend, when his shelter-provided motel vouchers ran out and the warming shelter stopped providing overnight services.

Thanks to help from Day By Day's Program Director Denise Holz and Outreach Specialist Maddie Conley, Larry was able to secure his own apartment on the fourth floor of Marian Manor.

"I don't know what I would have done," he said. "Probably took off on the road, traveling, or sleeping on the streets here. Some folks will live in a



Items clutter a small serving area outside of the kitchen at the Day By Day warming shelter in Oshkosh. The shelter has outgrown its current space and has had to turn some people away.

tent, but I can't do that."

Larry said he fell on hard times due to facing financial issues stemming from a divorce. While his journey has

been difficult, he's grateful it has a happy ending that now all of his fellow

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## New podcast examines power of prosecutors in Wisconsin

**Wisconsin Watch**  
Special to Appleton Post-Crescent  
USA TODAY NETWORK - WISCONSIN

Wisconsin Watch and WPR are launching a new, seven-part podcast and web series, Open and Shut, that shines a light on the power of the prosecutor — and its impact on victims, the accused and the justice system.

For nearly three years, investigative reporter Phoebe Petrovic has examined the actions of two former prosecutors in the Fox Valley, former Outagamie County District Attorney Vince Biskupic and former Winnebago County District Attorney Joe Paulus.

"This deeply sourced journalistic series is must-listen audio," said Dee J. Hall, managing editor of Wisconsin Watch. "From hidden recordings, jailhouse tape and never-before heard

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# Shelter

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shelter mates will have.

Day By Day has run on a temporary basis, from October through April, since it opened in the basement of Most Blessed Sacrament Parish's St. Peters site, 449 High Ave., in 2011, but Executive Director Molly Yatso Butz is hopeful this is the last season they'll close in spring.

Shelter staff and its board have been working since the shelter opened to find a permanent location for a year-round shelter that can better serve Oshkosh's growing homeless population.

If funding and construction goes as planned, she's hopeful a crew could break ground on a new, 13,000-square-foot, single-story shelter at the northwestern corner of Ceape Avenue and Broad Street this May. If that happens — there has been community debate over the site selection — the shelter could transition to its full-time location in April 2023.

"We were never meant to be here for 12 years, and the need has continued to grow," Yatso Butz said. "It's time (for a full-time shelter), and I think it's going to make a difference in our community."

The timeline is ambitious, but it's needed.

From Oct. 15, when the overnight shelter opened, to March 31, staff had to turn away 522 people because the shelter was at capacity. That's 450 more than the same time period a year before.

During that same time period, the 25-person shelter reached capacity on 124 of the 158 nights it was open (it had to close for 10 nights in November due to a COVID-19 outbreak).

An average of six to 14 people per night were told they couldn't have a warm place to sleep.

"It's such a difficult time of year," Yatso Butz said. "With this year being incredibly busy with record-breaking turn-aways, it's even more difficult than previous seasons."

The shelter serves a wide range of people. From Oct. 15 to March 31, it provided a place to stay for 129 men and 31 women, most between the ages of 25-44. The majority identified as white, 31 as Black, five as American Indians, one



This artist's rendering shows the proposed new Day By Day Warming Shelter. PROVIDED BY T.R. KARRELS AND ASSOCIATES

**"It's generating community support and everyone understands the real need. ... I think people will really see it when we close and see how many people without homes are truly living in this community."**

**-Executive Director Molly Yatso Butz**

as a Native Hawaiian, eight were multi-racial people and one person's race wasn't reported.

Of those people, self-reports showed 35 had a mental health disorder, four had alcohol and drug use disorders, 20 had chronic health conditions, 8 had developmental disabilities and 31 had physical disabilities.

As the affordable housing crisis worsens and the community becomes more aware of ways to address homelessness, Yatso Butz thinks people are beginning to understand how vital it is for a year-round overnight emergency shelter.

"It's generating community support and everyone understands the real need," she said. "I think people will really see it when we close and see how many

people without homes are truly living in this community."

Though it has stopped its overnight services, Day By Day's Summer Outreach Program still allows guests access to basic needs, such as laundry, showers and a meal, as well as support services and resources Mondays through Thursdays.

Last summer, the outreach program provided almost 7,000 hours of services for 110 people, including 47 new guests. The shelter also opened from 6 p.m. July 28 to 4 p.m. July 29 to protect 12 guests from life-threatening weather for the evening.

Day By Day was recently one of six programs to receive approval for a \$10 million federal grant to address home-

lessness in Winnebago County. The \$3.5 million allocated for the shelter would cover construction costs on the new building.

The shelter also will receive a \$150,000 Community Development Block Grant from the city to purchase the land and has started a fundraising campaign to raise an additional \$1 million to \$2 million for ongoing expenses and operating costs.

The new building could accommodate 50 to 60 guests per night and provide year-round shelter and support services. If funding goes as planned, Yatso Butz is hopeful that construction can start in May.

Though he now has his own place, Larry said he plans to visit the new shelter when it opens — this time, he wants to be there to help folks going through the struggles he knows so well.

"I'm looking forward to getting the new place up here, getting the dirt dug up," Larry said. "When it opens, I told Molly, I'll be the greeter."

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

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