



Teams play when would-be opponents cancel
 SEE SPORTS

T-Wolves clip Arrows in first meeting on gridiron

Rigsby reunion Alumni of one-room schoolhouse reflect on vivid lessons learned
 SEE PAGE 2A

Fatal week on area roadways

Tuesday's crash joined a tragic Sunday with two more fatal accidents

On Tuesday afternoon, around 3:08 p.m. emergency responders raced to the scene of what would be another fatal traffic accident on Grant County roadways - the third one within a three-day span, which has led to at least four people have died.

By comparison, there were only four traffic fatalities in all of 2020.

In this most recent crash, Nicole R. Ronnfeldt, 29, Fennimore, was driving north on Roger Hollow Road, just past the intersection with Townline Road, when her van went off the road into the west-side ditch, then hit a culvert and became airborne.

Ronnfeldt, who according to the Grant County Sheriff's Office was ejected from her van, was taken by Lancaster EMS to Grant Regional Health Center in Lancaster, where she succumbed to her injuries.

Lancaster EMS had been paged to assist as it had initially been reported as there were multiple people injured. Fennimore EMTs, which were there with two ambulances, assisted Lancaster EMS in the transport.

Fennimore Police, Fire and EMS, Lancaster Fire and UW Med Flight assisted at the scene.

The crash is under investigation. Ronnfeldt was the seventh person

to die on Grant County highways in 2021, and this was the third fatal accident in a three-day span.

Sunday was one of the deadliest days on the county roads in recent years, with three people dying in two separate accidents.

Three people died and three people were injured in two Grant County crashes Sunday evening.

Linda Miller, 52, and Daniel Miller, 12, were pronounced dead at the scene by the Grant County coroner after their buggy was hit by a van on STH 35, approximately 150 yards east of Porters Bridge in the Town of Beetown around 9:25 p.m.

Marvin Miller, 50, Nathan Miller,

14, and Rachael Miller, 7, were transported by Lancaster and West Grant EMS to Grant Regional Health Center in Lancaster and Crossing Rivers Health in Prairie du Chien, then to UW Hospital in Madison with life-threatening injuries.

The Millers were in a buggy that was rear-ended by a van driven by Timothy Hill, 33, Lancaster. The Grant County Sheriff's Office said Hill did not see the buggy before the collision.

One horse died in the collision, and the other horse was dispatched by an officer at the scene due to injuries.

Lancaster Fire assisted at the scene. This accident is under investigation, and Dreckman said it would be weeks

before any determination is made. According to the initial findings, the buggy was straddling the fog line of the road. Because of the damage, the investigators are still trying to determine the amount of reflective striping on the buggy, and checking such things like if the lighting system was engaged.

Before that crash, Jeremy Gengler, 44, Fennimore, died when his motorcycle crashed on Wisconsin 35 near University Farm Road in South Lancaster.

According to the Sheriff's Office, Gengler was riding east on 35 around 7 p.m. when his motorcycle drifted off the roadway onto the gravel shoulder, then

the grassy ditch. Gengler lost control and the motorcycle flipped several times. Gengler, who was not wearing a helmet or other safety equipment, was ejected from the motorcycle.

Gengler was taken by Lancaster EMS to Grant Regional Health Center, then was transported to UW Hospital in Madison, where he died.

Lancaster Fire assisted at the crash scene.

With this being the fall, and with the possibility of additional traffic being on the roadway, Dreckman talked about being safe during harvest season, both for drivers and implement users.

"There are many things to say, from both the driver side and the operators or the slow moving vehicle/implements," Dreckman stated.

To drivers - Make sure you pay attention, especially now during harvest season and follow the laws in regards to passing slow moving vehicles.

Operators of buggies or implements of husbandry - Make sure all your equipment is operating properly and during the appropriate times (lighting) and use slow moving vehicle signs and reflective tape as much as you can. Both need to make sure they doing everything possible to keep the roads safe.

Board rejects removing COVID order

Supervisor claims told by school administrator health director threatened to arrest him, backtracks later and says never talked to them

BY DAVID TIMMERMAN
 NEWSEDITOR@TDS.NET

With their second straight meeting seeing protestors across the street, the Grant County Board of Supervisors met Tuesday to deal with whether or not to remove a proclamation that implemented special powers for different parts of the county government to act during the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as give them liability and unemployment protections.

With an immediate motion by Pat Schroeder, and second by Steve 'Porter' Wagner, the board jumped right in on whether they should rescind the proclamation that they gave temporary powers to deal with things during the COVID-19 pandemic last year.

The proclamation had been approved in 2020 which gave greater authority to the County Board Chair, on dealing with issues that may arise quickly as part of the pandemic.

The proclamation dealt with allowing the chair to deal with potential staffing issues during the pandemic, the opening and closing of county offices, and allowing board members to attend meetings virtually (and be counted as part of the quorum and allowed to vote).

Part of the reason for the proclamation was, at the time, the uncertainty members of the board would be able to meet, in person, and



In most years, winter coats are needed for the annual Harvest Festival Parade, but in 2021, summer attire was more comfortable on a warm day.



School board to vote on mask matrix

BY DAVID TIMMERMAN
 NEWSEDITOR@TDS.NET

On Oct. 6, the Lancaster Community School Board will have voted on whether to approve a mask matrix for the district, creating a defined set of rules of when masks will be required in schools, and when they will be optional during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Meeting for their second, and likely final time, the ad-hoc committee that had been set up to create the policy met last Wednesday to come up with an idea of how to move forward.

District Administrator Rob Wagner first updated the committee on his discussions with the Grant County Health Department, both in an individual meeting on Monday, and a joint meeting with the other district administrators in the county that the health department has on Tuesdays.

Kindrai said he had pitched the ideas that the committee had brought up at their first meeting, which was trying to come up to alternatives to the quarantine guidelines in place if masks are optional. Currently, if students are not masked have a close contact with a positive case (within six feet for at least 15 minutes in a day) they must quarantine.

The committee had raised the idea of having unvaccinated students stay in school masked, similar to what vaccinated children can do. The group also floated the idea of having elementary students remain in school within their classroom, masked, if they had been exposed to 1-2 cases, then sent home to quarantine if the level went to three or above.

Lancaster | SEE 5A

OCTOBER **Breast Cancer** AWARENESS MONTH

Early detection saves lives. Schedule your mammogram today.

Crossing Rivers Health Prairie du Chien, WI | 608.357.2244
 crossingrivers.org/mammo

County

FROM PAGE 1A

deal with issues that may quickly arise.

Corporation Counsel Ben Wood explained that with most of the board in-person for the meeting, getting together to meet and handle situations may mean the full board may not need that provision.

However, he pointed out for individuals like Dwight Nelson, attending the meeting virtually due to a medical issue, those who attend virtually would not be counted in the quorum, and not be allowed to vote on items.

In addition, actions like a program to help in getting and retaining staff at Orchard Manor that were approved last month, were under the proclamation, and rescinding it would mean having to re-implement that program again, and in the meantime all the things done to retain and hire staff would go away.

Health Director Jeff Kindrai said that the county would lose state liability protections that are covered under the emergency order, and shift to the county insurance.

The county would also possibly pay unemployment benefits to temporary workers who are then let go, which they do not under the emergency order.

The board voted against the rescinding, 5-12, with Schroeder and Wagner joined by Roger Guthrie, John

Patcle, and Lester Jantzen in the minority to remove the measure.

Supervisor accuses health director of threats

Before the board got to whether they would strip the proclamation, one of its members attempted to strip Grant County Health Director Jeff Kindrai of his powers to deal with quarantines of individuals during the pandemic.

"We have been overlooking a lot of things in this room," Supervisor Steve 'Porter' Wagner told the board, who made several accusations at Kindrai, and repeated a number of claims he had gleaned off of social media over the recent weeks, as well as calls and emails he has received.

"There are a lot of people upset," Wagner continued. "You are overstepping your power."

Wagner stated to the board that he had been personally told by a school superintendent that he would be arrested if the school district did not comply with the county's quarantine orders, which follow closely with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services guidelines.

"That never happened," Kindrai responded.

Wagner reiterated that he had talked to a superintendent over the phone.

While Wagner claimed, in the meeting, that he heard it from the superintendent himself, during a telephone

conversation with the Herald Independent in the afternoon after the meeting, Wagner admitted he did not talk to a superintendent directly about this, that he got it from a parents' group on Facebook which he feels has direct contact with the administrator, who he would not name.

"These are concerned parents," Wagner said of where he got the information Tuesday afternoon.

The Herald Independent contacted every district administrator in Grant County about if they had ever been told they would be arrested if their district did not comply with health orders. Not one reply said that accusation ever happened.

Wagner implied that those who did not vote for taking action against the health department would likely not return to the board next spring, and will be voted out by the public.

But the board never got to vote on Wagner's motion, as Corporation Counsel Ben Wood declared it out of order, as the county board had no authority to strip the power for the health director position.

Wood explained that the county board has no authority over local school districts, therefore never gave the health director authority to have any oversight of those districts.

The power over quarantining people comes within state statute. "You cannot make a motion to override state statute," Wood explained.

Wood continued, noting that Kindrai's power is not absolute - he cannot pass mask mandates or make blanket orders to close businesses due to the pandemic going on, something he said Kindrai is in agreement with, and recent court cases have upheld.

Where Kindrai is acting on is specific cases, where statute allows for having people quarantine for being positive of having close contact.

Wood stated that he does not see taking legal action on any specific case, unless it was so egregious, where someone who was sick off knowingly was going out and spreading an illness.

"Can he sue a school district?" Wagner asked.

"I don't know what he would be suing them for," Wood responded.

While prefacing it with not wanting to set a precedent with his words that, if in five years, they had such an over-the-top issue something had to be done, Wood said about the current situation "I don't think we would ever be suing school districts," saying he could never imagine a case while he is corporation counsel for the county.

Roger Guthrie put the blame on the debate at the state level, where the State Superintendent should have made it clear about universal guidelines for all of the school districts.

"If we had guidelines for every district in the state, I don't think we would have any problem at all," Guthrie explained.

Supervisor Gary Ranum said that, like many on the board, he received numerous calls and emails about the subject.

"None of the emails or calls came from people in my district," Ranum explained.

Looking to get more information on the situation, he said he reached out to the local school administrator, and talked to them about things.

The district administrator told Ranum they had started the school year as mask optional, saying they took the recommendations from the health department as recommendations.

The district saw cases, and students out for close contact, skyrocket, and now are under a mask mandate, and the cases and quarantines have dropped substantially.

"A lot of times we don't like what he tells us," Ranum relayed on the reaction his administrator had on what they hear from Kindrai. "But he is right."

Hot Mic moment

The meeting of the board was segmented into two parts, with a public hearing and

discussion on new supervisory district maps for the 17 members of the board in the afternoon at 1 p.m.

Because of that, the board went into recess for lunch, which left the cameras live, as well as the microphones for several minutes into the break.

During that recess time, the microphones picked up Supervisor Robert Scallon talking about the recent COVID-19 debate, where he received a call from a former member of the board in the southern part of the county, who insisted Scallon, who represents the northern part of the county, take action.

"I want this done. I'm your boss," Scallon said he was told.

A county employee noted the numerous emails that have come in on the topic, some very derogatory.

"These emails, what some people say about a human being, that makes me sick," was overheard on the microphones before they eventually went silent for the remainder of the recess.

Some supervisors unhappy with redrawn maps

The afternoon session was dedicated to reviewing proposed maps for supervisory districts for the county board.

Like any elected official who represents a region, all representative maps must be redrawn every 10 years to utilize the updated census numbers.

The idea is to make sure each supervisory district is close to being the same size, with little difference in population to give equal representation.

County Clerk Tonya White discussed the process, which attempts to make clean lines, using streets to create borders. She noted they attempted to keep municipalities as much in tact as possible, including keeping the number of divisions of townships down to two, at most.

Under the different proposed maps that were created, the Administrative Committee sent the third of four to the full board. That one did divide the Town of Boscobel into three different supervisory districts.

Because of delays in the census data, delays happened with the process, compacting the process. The maps should be approved before Dec. 1, which is when county board candidates can start taking out papers.

The posting process for the review of the maps requires three weeks before the next meeting, which White said meant having a legal notice printed in the newspaper essentially next week to make deadlines.

A couple of board members wondered about changes to their districts they currently represent, moving them to cover other areas.

Dale Hood said that for the second time he has seen that his district changed, completely changing what district he lives in.

White explained that they tried their best to make sure the districts were equal in size, and where a current supervisor lives never entered into the equation.

"I can't do it (draw the lines) based on where you live because that is illegal," White responded.

Supervisor Mark Stead responded that a couple of the plans he saw would have divided Platteville Township four ways, and the last time it was divided three ways, so he was happy to see it divided two ways this time.

Hood wondered about changing the number of supervisors, which is the purview of the board when they are creating new maps every decade.

White said the current timeline just didn't give them enough time to consider that.

Mike Lieurance, who represents the City of Lancaster, because he lives in an outlying neighborhood of the city, would be moved into the same district which is represented by Pat Schroeder.

Lieurance wondered about keeping more neighborhoods of the city together, which would retain the goal White had said was part of the drawing of maps - to keep municipalities together.

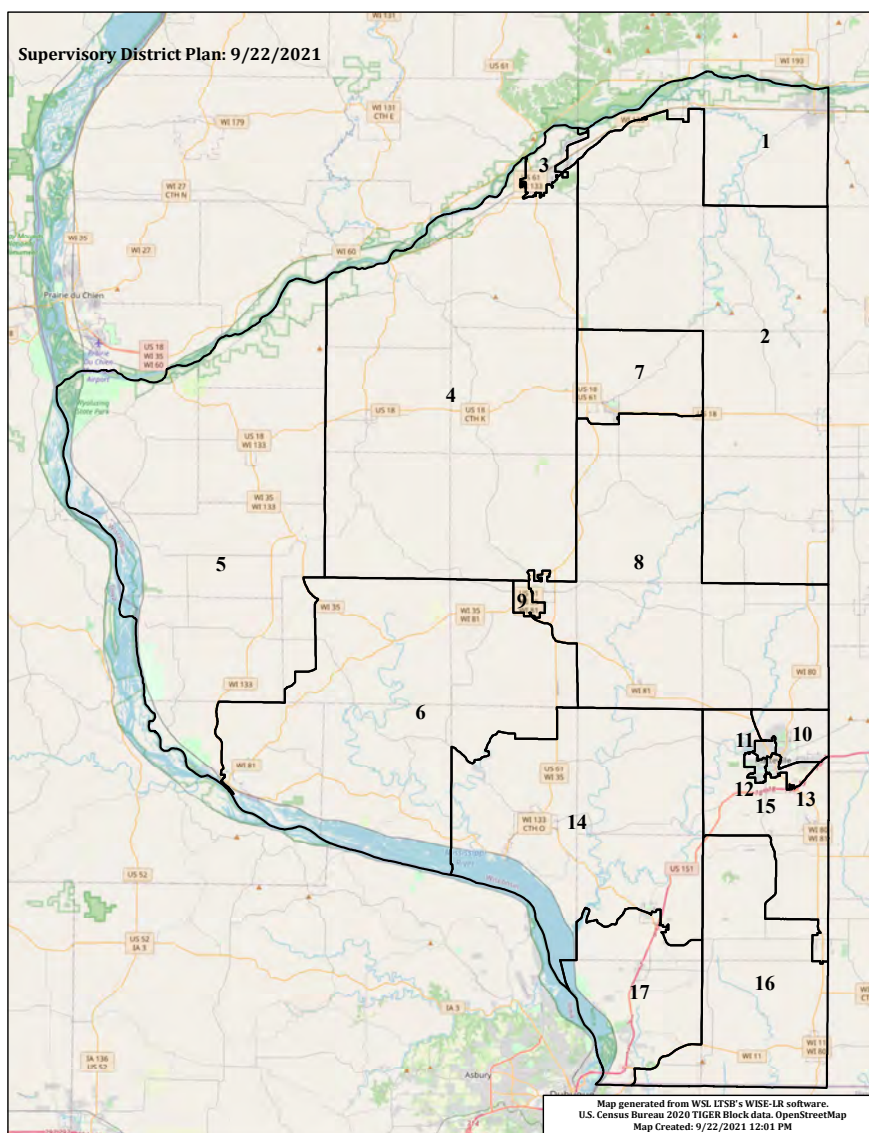
"If I take that away, I got to take that from somewhere else," White responded.

Gary Ranum raised the idea of keeping the Town of Watterstown whole as part of the plan.

White said there were several issues when it came to the City of Boscobel that rippled out to surrounding towns. For one, the Wisconsin Secured Detention Facility, which had a count of 458 inmates in the census, impacted the maps for around the city, as did a parcel of the Town of Boscobel that is within the city borders, and the maps cannot create an island.

The board approved the plan, which now gets sent to the municipalities. The municipalities may make alterations as they will be creating their own representative districts, and the county lines will attempt to follow those lines.

Earlier in the meeting, the board reviewed the 2022 preliminary budget, as well as approved rules for employees who reside in the new Community Services Building.



TIM SLACK AUCTION & REALTY, LLC and **Tri-County Realty** SWLLC

Chik Klais & Vondra Estate
ONLINE AUCTION
October 13, 2021 6PM (Soft Close)

Coins, Neon Signs, Advertising, Milk Bottles
Check website for more info: www.timslackauctionrealty.com

REAL ESTATE AUCTION

12311 Borah Road,
Fennimore, WI
THURSDAY,
OCT. 7TH • 6PM
(Live & Online)

DESCRIPTION: Country living 3-4 BR, Remodeled 2 story home, 2 car detached garage, 1.16 acre country lot. **TERMS:** 1) Starting Bid of \$100,000.00. 2) Online Bidding & Live 3) The winning high bidder on this property will be required to sign a Wisconsin Real Estate Offer to Purchase upon conclusion of the bidding and deliver the required non-refundable earnest money deposit of 3% of purchase price with 48 hours of the close of bidding. 4) A 3% Buyer's Fee will be added to the final high bid price to determine the final selling price of the property. **View by appt as well. Call 608-723-4020 or 608-822-3454.**

We will offer this property Live & Online! Prebid starting now!
VISIT www.timslackauctionrealty.com and click "Online Auctions" button!

Registered WI Auctioneer: Tim Slack, CAI WI License #32

10126 Circle Rd.,
Lancaster
608.723.4020

RESIDENTIAL LAND COMMERCIAL
Tim Slack, Broker

525 Lincoln Ave.,
Fennimore
608.822.3454

COMMUNITY HEALTH NEEDS ASSESSMENT

YOUR *Voice* Matters

Attend a focus group and let your voice be heard.

Area hospitals and health organizations in Grant and Crawford Counties are once again collaborating to conduct a Community Health Needs Assessment. Community members are invited to attend a one-hour focus group, held virtually or in-person.

YOUR VOICE MATTERS and your insight regarding current health issues, resources and trends will result in collaborative efforts to address pressing health concerns.

FENNIMORE
Wed., October 6 • 11:30 a.m.
Southwest Wisconsin Technical College
Main Entrance, Room 430
1800 Bronson Blvd.

GAYS MILLS
Mon., October 11 • 5:30 p.m.
Gays Mills Community Center
16381 WI-131

BOSCOBEL
Thurs., October 14 • 5:45 p.m.
Blaine Gym • 104 E. Oak St.

LANCASTER
Mon., October 18 • 6:30 p.m.
Grant Regional Health Center
Education Center • 507 S. Monroe St.

PRAIRIE DU CHIEN
Wed., October 20 • 5:30 p.m.
Prairie du Chien Memorial Library
125 S. Wacouta Ave.

PREFER TO ATTEND VIRTUALLY?

Scan the QR code with your smart phone camera to register.

Wednesday, Oct. 13
12:30 p.m.

REGISTER HERE



Monday, Oct. 18
5:30 p.m.

REGISTER HERE



Tuesday, Oct. 19
9:00 a.m.

REGISTER HERE



Find more information on Facebook @CHNAVoice