TWITTER.COM/LEADERTELEGRAM Leader Telegram.com 22/1 PAGE 12A FRIDAY/SATURDAY/SUNDAY • FEBRUARY 25-27, 2022 EAU CLAIRE AND THE CHIPPEWA VALLEY'S LEADING NEWS SOURCE SINCE 1881

Volume 52 Number 40 4 sections 42 pages



**SPORTS** - Menomonie has two advance to D1 semifinals at state wrestling tourney/1B YOUR REGION · Local entrepreneurs pitch startup ideas including app, solar projects/3A

### Russia attacks Ukraine; peace in Europe 'shattered'

By Yuras Karmanau, JIM HEINTZ, VLADIMIR ISACHENKOV AND Dasha Litvinova

ASSOCIATED PRESS

KYIV. Ukraine — Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine on Thursday, unleashing airstrikes on cities and military bases and sending troops and tanks from multiple directions in a move that could rewrite the world's geopolitical landscape. Ukraine's government pleaded for help as civilians piled into trains and cars to flee.

President Vladimir Putin ignored global condemnation and cascading new sanctions as he unleashed the largest ground war in Europe in decades, and chillingly referred to his country's nuclear arsenal

SEE UKRAINE PAGE 2A

» Preserving agriculture land Tiffany seeks to repeal wind, solar subsidies. **Page 3A** 

» Cinema celebration Midwest WeirdFest returns to Eau Claire next weekend. Page 8B

#### **INDEX**

Aces	91
At Home	12E
Business	11E
Classifieds	1
Crossword	. 8D, 14I
Getting Out	6E
Great Outdoors	7E
Horoscope	81
Moments	14[
Opinion	9A
Public notices	6D, 7I
Region	3A
Sports	1E
Sudoku	81
Valley Arts	8E
Weather	12A
Wonderword	8D, 9I

#### Monday Impact of inflation

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STAY HEALTHY

KEEP CALM

STOP THE **SPREAD** 

Protect against COVID-19

» FOLLOW PRECAUTIONS

# Universities spend COVID relief money



Staff photo by Dan Reiland

Students walk to class on UW-Eau Claire's campus on Thursday. Local universities have allocated eight-figure federal COVID relief funds to pay for pandemic-related expenses, send emergency grants to students and stem the impact of lost housing, dining and tuition revenue.

By Sarah Seifert

LEADER-TELEGRAM STAFF

■ AU CLAIRE — UW-Eau Claire and UW-Stout have ■ allocated eight-figure federal COVID relief funds to pay for vaccine clinics, COVID tests, remote learning, emergency student grants and to shore up financial impacts from millions in lost housing, dining and tuition

U.S. universities received three

#### Half of funds went to students, much of remainder covered lost revenue

rounds of federal relief funding in three phases of the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund, or HEERF. The funding is aimed at helping the schools recover from pandemic-driven financial

UW-Eau Claire most recently received just over \$20 million and UW- Stout received \$14.8 million in HEERF III funds after Congress passed the American Rescue Plan Act in March

At least half of HEERF III funds must be spent on emergency grants to students, prioritizing those in need or who are facing hunger, homelessness and other hardship. That amounts to roughly \$10 million of UW-Eau Claire's HEERF III funding and \$7.4 million at UW-Stout. (As of December, just over 7,000 students had received an emergency grant, according to UW-Eau Claire's website.)

SEE RELIEF PAGE 6A

SAWDUST STORIES

# 'Tis the season for 'Freezing Man'



The Black Rock Desert in Nevada hosts Burning Man every summer on what used to be an ancient lakebed. Anyone who's been there will tell you it's not a "festival" but a temporary metropolis, Black Rock City, created every year by "Burners" who come to assemble giant art installations or to appreciate them, and, of course, to party and burn Here on Lake Hallie, it seems like we host

"Freezing Man" each time a group of anglers comes out to ice fish. At least that's what my new neighbor, Ken Smith, calls it. He recently showed me a photo he took from his front porch of five guys huddled on the back side of their pop-up ice shelter. Ken and his wife Kim Ferguson are in the midst of their second winter on Lake Hallie. They notice things us old timers no longer do. I love Ken's concept of

Freezing Man.

Just like at Burning Man, a temporary village materializes on Lake Hallie. Ours involves dudes in Pac boots and Carhartt

gear on four-wheelers and snow machines surrounded by Eskimo-brand shelters that are a bit like grown-up pup tents.

My husband says each time he watches someone set one up it looks like a cat thrashing around inside a gunny sack. One afternoon Bruce and I watch a guy move his to another spot. Rather than pulling it on the ice, he simply lifts the nylon shelter a few inches off the ground while standing inside. All we can see is a levitating tent with boots.

Anglers adhere to the Burning Man mantra "leave no trace," though I've noticed the occasional too-small blue gills left on the ice. They attract bickering eagles, which bring neighbors like me to our windows with binoculars.

Burning Man is held in an extreme environment, just like Lake Hallie in winter.

There are other similarities. Vendor free? Check. Everyone's expected to participate? Check. Balancing cooperation, self-reliance, individual expression and creative collaboration in a community? All checks.

SEE SAWDUST PAGE 2A

Patti See

See is an award-winning author whose work has appeared in Brevity, Salon Magazine, The Wisconsin Academy Review, The Southwest Review, HipMama, Inside HigherEd and many other magazines, journals and anthologies. She wrote the blog "Our Long Goodbye: One Family's Experiences with Alzheimer's" which has been read in more than 100 countries, and she is a frequent contributor to "Wisconsin Life" on Wisconsin Public Radio. She lives in Lake Hallie with her husband, writer Bruce Taylor. Her essay collection, "Here on Lake Hallie: In Praise of Barflies, Fix-it Guys, and Other Folks in Our Hometown," is forthcoming in 2022 from the Wisconsin Historical Society Press.



#### TODAY IN HISTORY

Today is Friday, Feb. 25, the 56th day of 2022. There are 309 days left in the year.

#### Today's Highlight in History

On Feb. 25, 1964, Muhammad Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) became world heavyweight boxing champion as he defeated Sonny Liston in Miami Beach.

#### On this date

In 1901, United States Steel Corp. was incorporated by J.P. Morgan.

In 1913, the 16th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving Congress the power to levy and collect income taxes, was declared in effect by Secretary of State Philander Chase Knox.

In 1919, Oregon became the first state to tax gasoline, at one cent per gallon.

In 1954, Gamal Abdel Nasser became Egypt's prime minister after the country's president, Mohammed Naguib, was effectively ousted in a coup.

In 1957, the Supreme Court, in Butler v. Michigan, overturned a Michigan statute making it a misdemeanor to sell books containing obscene language that would tend to corrupt "the morals of youth."

In 1986, President **Ferdinand Marcos** fled the Philippines after 20 years of rule in the wake of a tainted election; Corazon Aquino assumed the presidency.

In 1991, during the Persian Gulf War, 28 Americans were killed when an Iraqi Scud missile hit a U.S. barracks in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

In 1997, a jury in Media, Pennsylvania, convicted chemical fortune heir John E. du Pont of third-degree murder, deciding he was mentally ill when he shot and killed world-class wrestler David Schultz. (Du Pont died in prison in December 2010 while serving a 13- to 30-year sentence; he was 72.)

In 2020, U.S. health officials warned that the coronavirus was certain to spread more widely in the United States; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged Americans to be prepared. President **Donald Trump**, speaking in India, said the virus was "very well under control" in the U.S.

#### Ten years ago

A gunman killed two American military advisers with shots to the back of the head inside Afghanistan's heavily guarded Interior Ministry as protests raged for a fifth day over the burning of Qurans at a U.S. army base. Lynn D. "Buck" Compton, 90, a veteran whose World War II exploits were depicted in the television miniseries "Band of Brothers," died in Burlington, Washington.

#### Five years ago

Democrats chose former Labor Secretary Tom Perez as their new national chairman during a meeting in Atlanta. A man accused of driving drunk plowed into a Mardi Gras parade crowd, injuring more than 30 people (**Neilson Rizzuto** later pleaded guilty to 11 felony counts of negligent vehicular injuring and 14 related misdemeanor counts; he was sentenced to roughly three years behind bars.)

#### One year ago

The Senate parliamentarian ruled that an increase in the minimum wage would have to be dropped from the \$1.9 trillion COVID-19 relief bill that Democrats were trying to push through Congress. At a Senate hearing to examine wages at major companies, Costco's CEO said the company would increase its starting wage to \$16 an hour, surpassing most of its main competitors.

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The Leader-Telegram strives for accuracy in all stories. But if mistakes occur, a correction will be printed. Contact Assistant Editor Liam Marlaire at 715-833-9215 for assistance or email liam.marlaire@ecpc.com.

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Monday-Thursday: Single Copy \$1.50 Friday: Single Copy \$2.50

LEADER-TELEGRAM USPS 166-560 ISSN 0891-0227 701 S. Farwell St. WISCONSIN LLC P.O. Box 4001 Eau Claire, WI 54702 Periodicals postage paid at Eau Claire, WI Published daily and Sunday by APG Media of Wisconsin, LLC. Editorial direction by The Eau Claire Leader-Postmaster: send address changes to Leader-Telegram, P.O. Box 4001, Eau Claire, WI 54702

Newsroom:	
Main Number	833-9203
or	1-800-236-7077
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# Lake Hallie ice fishing contest began in 1980

FROM PAGE 1A

Burning Man's experiment in "temporary community" goes back to the San Francisco Bay area, 1991, when a small group set fire to a wooden structure in the shape of a man. Freezing men on Lake Hallie go back to the 1840s when Blue Mills loggers might have gathered around a small fire, more for utility than an artist's statement.

**Burning Man attracts** upwards of 40,000 participants at \$400 a pop. I had to do the math twice. A cool \$16 million. The Lake Hallie Sportsman's Club's annual ice fishing contest the first Saturday in February brings out maybe a hundred, if you include the kids and dogs. You buy a dollar raffle ticket to enter or six tickets for \$5.

Burning Man attendees must bring along all supplies including food, water and tools. If you forget something vital, your best bet is to make friends with your neighbors. On ice fishing contest Saturdays this is exactly the culture on Lake Hallie. Anglers share food, drinks, lures and stories.

In the broadest sense Freezing Man takes place on lakes every weekend, January to early March, all across the upper Midwest when bars sponsor outdoor contests on ice: from Bar Flyz 72nd annual Ice Fisheree in Prairie du Chien to the first annual Max's Ice Fishing Contest on Long Lake. Tricked out four-wheel racers known as SxS, short for side-by-side — could



Contributed photo by Ken Smith

Anglers take part in "Freezing Man" festivities on Lake Hallie.

become the next Iceman 500 Champion on Balsam Lake. Rose's Bay Resort in Weyerhaeuser offers its 10th annual Bowling on Ice.

Today and tomorrow, Wabasha sponsors its 29th annual Grumpy Old Men Festival, where you can fish, tip back a few around a bonfire on ice, or jump through a hole cut in the Mississippi. Bruce and I agree: this last event would make anyone grumpy.

The Brainerd Jaycees sponsor their Americas Ice Fishing Tournament, which allows you to fish wherever you want in the U.S. one Saturday in January as long as you share a video of yourself and your catch via the FishDonkey app. Pre-pandemic "virtual ice fishing" would seem like a joke. but a \$50 fee enters you to win a \$25,000 cash prize for snagging the biggest walleye, northern, crappie, perch or sunfish.

Closer to home we've got the annual Jig's Up Blugold Contest on Lake Wissota and the Sportsman's Club contest on Lake Hallie, which didn't happen last year because of the pandemic — the first time in 42 years.

The Earth's increasing temperature means ice is changing on Lake Hallie and on other northern hemisphere lakes. This affects wildlife habitat and fish reproduction, not to mention the length of the ice fishing season. As a kid I remember ice skating on Lake Hallie around my BFF's birthday, December 8. Now some risk-taking anglers might be out by mid-December, but I don't set foot on the lake until at least Christmas, when I see my neighbor Larry Luedtke

with his auger. In that regard, Larry is the grand poobah of Lake Hallie's Freezing Man. He's been visiting this lake since 1960 when he started dating Pat Smetana, who'd become his wife. Her dad Jerry built the family cabin on Lake Hallie when his plan to purchase a lot on the Chippewa River fell through. After Jerry died, Pat and Larry retired here from West Bend in 1996. Five years later he lost his beloved Pat. Larry knows

the cabin's next owners: his daughter and grandsons love coming here, no matter the season.

This year it's minus-1 degree when the first vehicles arrive for the ice fishing contest on Lake Hallie, a tradition started in 1980. No one yet knows that the winning northern pike will be a whopping 13.6 pounds — over five pounds heavier than the runner up. Or that below-zero wind chills will keep even a diehard like me from walking the lake to talk to anglers.

By 7 a.m. I hear the familiar whir of an ice auger, though the competition technically doesn't start for another five hours. Across the lake, neighbor Kim is making a crowd-sized batch of chocolate chip cookies. She'll package them in Ziplocs to give away at the registration tent. From our toasty kitchen, Bruce and I watch it go up and then see the port-o-potty unloaded from a truck bed. Bruce poses the question of the day: Just how cold is that toilet seat?

## Putin warns other countries not to meddle

**» UKRAINE** FROM PAGE 1A

He threatened any

country trying to interfere with "consequences you have never seen." Ukrainian officials said

their forces were battling Russians on a multiple fronts, and had lost control of the decommissioned Chernobyl nuclear power plant, scene of the world's worst nuclear disaster.

"Russia has embarked on a path of evil, but Ukraine is defending itself and won't give up its freedom," Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy tweeted.

In Washington, U.S. President Joe Biden announced new sanctions against Russia, saying Putin "chose this war" and that his country would bear the consequences of his action.

The sanctions will target Russian banks, oligarchs, state-controlled companies and high-tech sectors, he said, adding they were designed not to disrupt global energy markets. Russian oil and natural gas exports are vital energy sources for Europe.

Zelenskyy urged the U.S. and West to go further and cut the Russians from the SWIFT system, a key financial network that connects thousands of banks around the world. The White House has been reluctant to immediately cut Russia from SWIFT, worried it could cause enormous economic problems in Europe and elsewhere in the West.

Zelenskyy, who earlier cut diplomatic ties with Moscow and declared



Associated Press

Smoke rises from an air defence base in the aftermath of a Russian strike in Mariupol, Ukraine, Thursday.

martial law, described Russian forces advancing on a series fronts, including a "difficult situation" developing in Kharkiv, Ukraine's second-largest city, just over 20 kilometers away from the eastern border with Russia, and Russian troops slowly advancing from the north on the city of Chernihiv. He said a Russian airborne unit at an airport just outside Kyiv, the capital, was being destroyed.

He appealed to global leaders, saying that "if you don't help us now, if you fail to offer a powerful assistance to Ukraine, tomorrow the war will knock on your door."

Both sides claimed to have destroyed some of the other's aircraft and military hardware, though little of that could be confirmed.

Hours after the invasion began, Russian forces seized control of the zone around the now-unused Chernobyl plant after a fierce battle, Zelenskyy adviser Myhailo Podolyak told The Associated Press.

A Ukrainian official said Russian shelling hit a radioactive waste repository and an increase in

radiation levels was reported. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the sensitive

matter. A nuclear reactor at the plant 130 kilometers (80 miles) north of Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, exploded in 1986, sending a radioactive cloud across Europe. The damaged reactor was covered by a protective shelter several years ago to prevent radiation leaks.

"This is one of the most serious threats to Europe today," Podolyak said.

The chief of the NATO alliance said the "brutal act of war" shattered peace in Europe, joining a chorus of world leaders who decried the attack, which could cause massive casualties, topple Ukraine's democratically elected government and upend the post-Cold War security order. The conflict was already shaking global financial markets: Stocks plunged and oil prices soared amid anonymity.

concerns that heating bills and food prices would skyrocket.

Condemnation rained down not only from the U.S. and Europe, but from South Korea, Australia and beyond — and many governments readied new sanctions. Even friendly leaders like Hungary's Viktor Orban sought to distance themselves from Putin. British Prime Minister Boris Johnson said he aimed to cut off Russia from the U.K.'s financial markets as he announced sanctions in response to

the invasion. As the first major world leader to make a big move, Johnson announced a freeze on the assets of all large Russian banks and plans to bar Russian companies and the Kremlin from raising money on British markets.

Johnson said of Putin: "Now we see him for what he is — a bloodstained aggressor who believes in imperial conquest."

A senior U.S. official said the U.N. Security Council was expected to vote Friday on a resolution condemning Russia for the attack and demanding the immediate withdrawal of its forces. The vote will proceed even though the legally binding measure will almost certainly be vetoed by Russia, said the official, who wasn't authorized to discuss the matter publicly and spoke on condition of

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