

## Your Right to Know — Outsiders can't block records access

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quickly resolved and any responsive records made available as soon as possible.

Problem solved, right? Wrong.

In 2020, Wisconsin Manufacturers and Commerce brought a case that, had it succeeded, would have made the Woznicki Fix almost meaningless and the right to block the release of public records expansive.

Alerted that the Wisconsin Department of Health Services

intended to release data on certain businesses with two or more COVID-19 cases, WMC and two other trade groups sued to block release under a different law: Wisconsin's declaratory judgments act.

Initially, WMC was successful. It convinced a circuit court to put a stay on the release of records while the case was litigated.

But this summer, the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled 4-3 that the Legislature had "in no uncertain terms" limited the right to review and

block release of records. It concluded that WMC's claim was barred by the statute. The group has since filed a motion for reconsideration, which remains pending.

While WMC lost the case, it did succeed in blocking the release of these records for nearly two years, until long after this information was useful from a news-gathering or public health point of view.

And it demonstrated that battles transparency advocates think they have won sometimes have to be fought

again. Let's hope that this time, the win sticks.

*Your Right to Know is a monthly column distributed by the Wisconsin Freedom of Information Council (wisfoic.org), a group dedicated to open government. Christa Westerberg is the Council's vice president and a partner at the Pines Bach law firm in Madison, Wisconsin. She filed an amicus brief in this case on behalf of the Council and other organizations.*

## Wisconsin Life: Meet the real John Wick of Mazomanie, Wisconsin

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assassin John Wick, for his grandfather. And the assassin's wife, Helen, for his grandmother," said Wick. "It was Keanu Reeves, who in a desire to create a series of movies, removed the name 'Scorn' and gave it the name 'John Wick.'"

So, what does he think of the movies that bear his name and have racked up more than half a billion dollars at the global box office?

"No, I haven't seen them. And Derek knows I haven't seen them. But on the internet I followed them and kept track of the numbers — the showing," said Wick. "I don't go to movies, because I can't hear them. I don't have a television, because I can't hear it."

Despite not seeing — or hearing — them, he has enjoyed the movies' success.

"Oh yeah, it's been a lot of fun," he said smiling.

In the movies, Wick fights against villains who killed a puppy that was a gift from his recently deceased wife. As I sit

here with Mr. Wick, it occurs to me just how important Helen, who died five years ago, is.

The real John Wick grew up on a farm, joined the U.S. Navy, and had a long career in construction. He proudly points out the size of his family — his "clan" as he calls them — which includes 58 people.

Despite all the fun, outlandish aesthetics and action of the film, perhaps what makes these movies so popular is how they capture the bond between two people.

When someone we love is taken in real life — usually simply by time rather than assassins — we are left to go on without them. But we refuse. We hold on, and in our memories, in the stories we tell, we keep them here in our world, just a little longer.

"Over the years, Helen and I often went into Madison, to eat and go to a movie. Just the two of us," reminisced Wick.

John Wick's grandson told a story that's been seen and heard by millions of

people. Here in Grandma Mary's diner, surrounded by clattering dishes and far from Hollywood, the original John Wick tells his own story. They're not about the movies that bear his name, but of the films he used to see, all those years ago, and the person with whom he saw them.

*An original version of this story ran on Wisconsin Public Radio's 'Wisconsin Life.'*

*Matt Geiger is a Midwest Book Award Winner, a national American Book Fest Finalist, and an international Next Generation Indie Book Award Finalist.*



Photo contributed by Angela Major/WPR

John Wick, right, and Rosie Peterson, left, share a greeting at Grandma Mary's Café.

## Ben Mulwana selected as 2022 Spring Green Musician in Residence

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Brown.

The idea was born from a collaboration between Springboard, a local civic

incubator, and The Shitty Barn Sessions, a local music venue known for bringing a variety of high quality music to Spring Green. We wanted a way to provide a

fair wage for creation and performance, promote growth among local artists via collaborations, and bring even more original music to Spring Green.

Administrative and financial support for the program is generated from volunteers, local performance venues, The Shitty Barn Sessions, River Valley ARTS and The Wisconsin Arts Board.

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### AND MORE!

We are a new, all volunteer local news source that holds a strong belief that by working to keep our communities informed and engaged on a variety of topics including arts & culture, events, community news and serving as a watchdog for our local governmental bodies, we can help create a strong identity for our community and ignite positive growth and change throughout the area.

Interested? Send us your area(s) of interest and a resume to:

[editor@valleysentinelnews.com](mailto:editor@valleysentinelnews.com)

*Internship will be unpaid, interns will be required to sign a FLSA-compliant internship agreement. If credit is available from intern's educational institution for participation in an internship, we are glad to work with you to meet any requirements for receiving credit.*

Want to help build community? Know a college student that's looking for a summer or fall internship for academic credit or to gain experience? Already attending village board or school board meetings and want to record or report on them? Want to engage with arts & culture, ag, businesses and other topics important to our community? Want to take scenic walks or drives delivering papers to subscribers and businesses?

We have so many ideas to grow and do more for our community, but we need help, we *CANT* do it alone. If you want to be a part of something bigger please email us and let us know what your interests are:

[editor@valleysentinelnews.com](mailto:editor@valleysentinelnews.com)

### Areas in most need:

- Sports reporting
- Municipal meeting recorders/reporters
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### Upcoming special sections/editorial notes:

#### September 22:

**Autumn Antics (Special Section)** – Everything apples, autumn and fall! A special section and autumn activities guide to take you through your autumn antics in the Valley and day trips beyond. Section sponsorship, premium positions, sponsored content, events and activities listings and display ads available.

#### October 6:

**Spooky Season (Special Section)** – MAY BE MOVED TO OCTOBER 20 – Everything spooky! A special section and spooky activities guide to help you plan your spooky activities in the Valley and day trips beyond. Section sponsorship, premium positions, sponsored content, events and activities listings and display ads available.

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#### November 17:

**2022 Deer Season Forecast (Special Section)** – TBA – Inquire if interested.  
**Thanksgiving Recipes** – TBD – Dependent on participation.

#### December 1:

**Local Holiday Gift Guide (Special Section)** – TBA – Inquire if interested.

#### December 15:

**Blaze Orange Board (Special Section)** – TBA – Inquire if interested.

All special sections subject to change and participation. The more support and engagement we get, the more we can offer the community together.

More information: [valleysentinelnews.com/advertising-businesses](http://valleysentinelnews.com/advertising-businesses)