



The FREEMAN

A Trusted News Source Since 1859

\$1.50

Thursday, October 27, 2022

gmtoday.com

WAUKESHA CHRISTMAS PARADE ATTACK

BROOKS GUILTY

CONVICTED ON ALL 76 COUNTS

Last-minute move for mistrial fails; victims glad for justice

By Brian Huber
bhuber@conley.net.com
2622-513-2674

WAUKESHA — Darrell Brooks Jr., the man behind the Waukesha Christmas Parade incident, was convicted of all the charges against him Wednesday.

Brooks, 40, stared without an expression from behind his face mask, then bowed his head into his hands clasped at his forehead as Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Dorow read the 76 guilty verdicts against him. The jury deliberated for just under two hours before breaking Tuesday night, then deliberated a little more than an hour Wednesday before word of a verdict was announced.

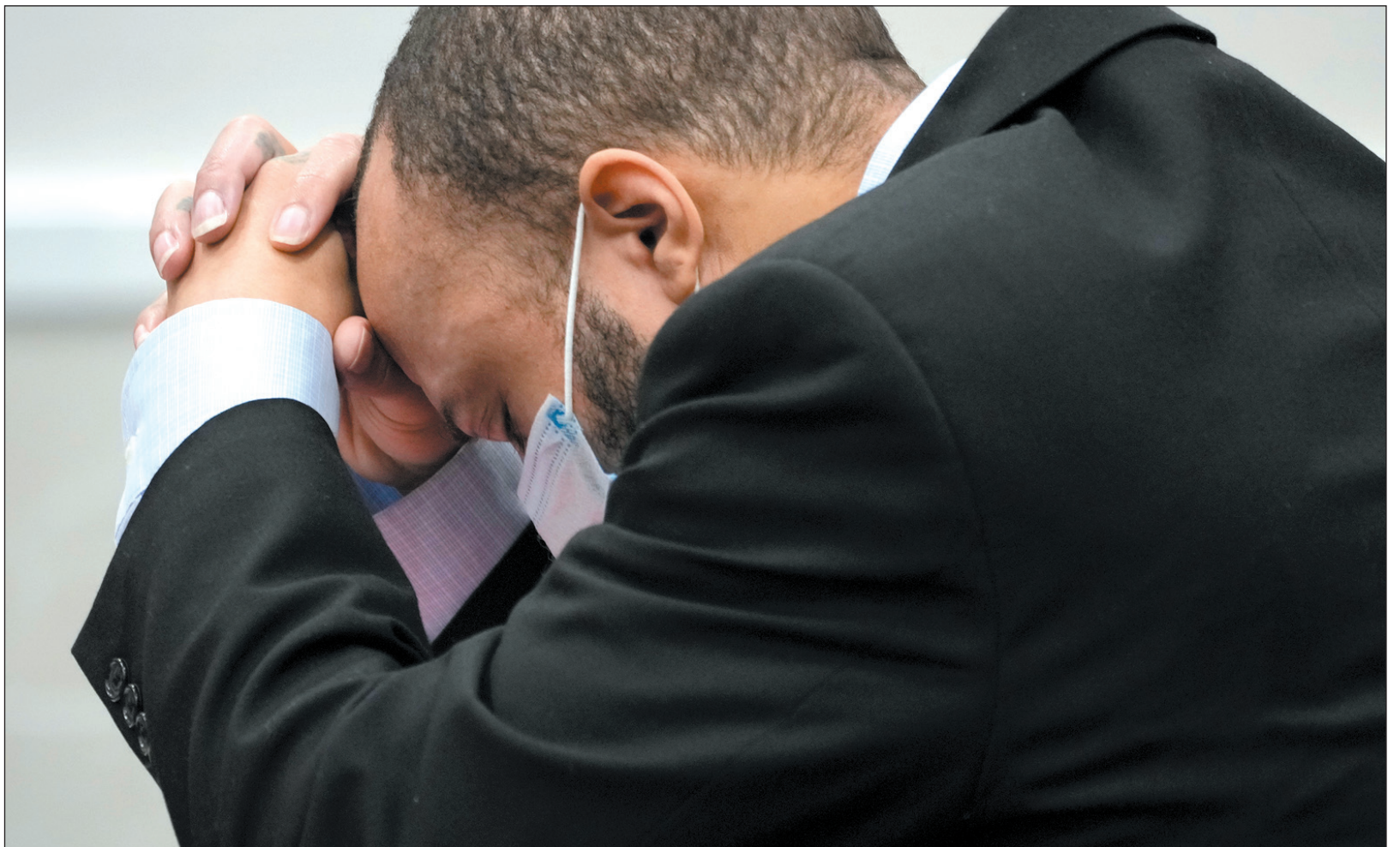
It took Dorow the better part of 30 minutes or more to read the verdicts. At one point as she did so, a man in the courtroom yelled, "Burn in hell, you piece of sh**!" Dorow ordered the man removed immediately.

Brooks was charged with six counts of homicide by the use of a dangerous weapon, six counts of hit-and-run causing death, 61 counts of first-degree recklessly endangering safety using a dangerous weapon, two felony counts of bail jumping and one misdemeanor count of battery after he plowed his mother's red Ford Escape through the route of the Waukesha Christmas Parade last Nov. 21 in an incident that attracted international attention. It cost Virginia Sorenson, Tamara Durand, Wilhelm Hospel, LeAnna Owens, Jane Kulich and Jackson Sparks their lives, and dozens more were injured.

See VERDICT, PAGE 6A

More inside

- ▶ Former DA Paul Bucher's insights on verdict. **6A**
- ▶ Community reaction. **7A**
- ▶ Timeline of events. **7A**



Mike De Sisti/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Darrell Brooks reacts as the guilty verdict is read during his trial in Waukesha County Circuit Court in Waukesha on Wednesday.



Mike De Sisti/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

Waukesha County Circuit Court Judge Jennifer Dorow reads the verdicts for all 76 counts against Darrell Brooks during his trial in Waukesha County Circuit Court on Wednesday. Brooks, who represented himself during the trial, was charged with driving into the Waukesha Christmas Parade last year, killing six people and injuring dozens more. The jury found him guilty on all counts.



Mike De Sisti/Milwaukee Journal Sentinel

A container holding the ashes of Virginia "Ginny" Sorenson, one of the Dancing Grannies killed in the Waukesha Christmas Parade, sits on the ledge between the gallery and the courtroom as the verdict is read during Darrell Brooks' trial in Waukesha County Circuit Court in Waukesha on Wednesday.

INDEX

Business.....**5B**
Classified.....**6B**
Commentary.....**4A**
Crossword.....**4B**
Dilbert.....**5B**
House & Home.....**4B**
Lottery.....**2A**
Obituaries.....**5A**
Sports.....**1B**
Stocks.....**5B**
TimeOut.....**8B**
Weather.....**8A**

Volume 164 No. 153

Fun Things To Do This Weekend

"Clue on Stage," 7:30 p.m. today, Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, Sunset Playhouse, 700 Wall St., Elm Grove. <https://sunsetplayhouse.com>, 262-782-4430

"The Play that Goes Wrong," 7:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday and 2 p.m. Sunday, Waukesha Civic Theatre, 264 W. Main St., Waukesha. 262-547-0708, www.waukeshacivictheatre.org

Trick or Treat at The Corners, 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday, The Corners of Brookfield, 20111 W. Bluemound Road, Town of Brookfield

Trunk or Treat, 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday, The Church at Waukesha, 2816 Madison St., Waukesha. There will be a Hallowed House that

offers a trip through time, refreshments, balloon animals, face painting. Waukeshachurch.org

Downtown Waukesha Trick-or-Treat, 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, downtown Waukesha.

Waukesha Farmers Market, 8 a.m. to noon Saturday, corner of West St. Paul Avenue and West Broadway. Final market of the season.

"Spooky Space," 11 a.m. to noon Saturday and **"Space Aliens: Looking for Life in the Universe,"** 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium at Retzer Nature Center, S14-W28167 Madison St., Town of Genesee.

Oconomowoc Lions Halloween Parade, 3 p.m. to

5 p.m. Saturday. Parade travels through downtown Oconomowoc. Lions offer free food and drink at Village Green Park. The parade starts at 4 p.m. at Fowler Park and goes through downtown to First Bank. Cash prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd places for floats and there be 10 \$20 cash prizes for costumes.

Hogwarts in Hartland, 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Saturday, Sunday and Monday, 1100 Lisbon Ave., Hartland. Free event. Nonperishable food items collected for Hartland Food Pantry.

Wisconsin Rummage-O-Rama, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Sunday, Waukesha County Expo Center, 1000 Northview Road, Waukesha. \$4 admission.

WEATHER



Tomorrow:
Sunny
High 58
Low 36

See complete forecast on 8A



TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE FREEMAN, call 262-542-2500 or go online at: gmtoday.com/subscribe

- ALTO-SHAAM COMMERCIAL-LEVEL COMBI OVEN/STEAMER-GAS
- STEEL CHAIRS
- VARIOUS KITCHEN DISHES AND UTENSILS

RESTAURANT SELL OUT SALE!

If interested please contact 414.704.6144 • By appointment only!

27409036



WAUKESHA COUNTY



The FREEMAN

A Trusted News Source Since 1859

\$2

Saturday, November 19, 2022

gmtoday.com

KM wins state championship



Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

Kettle Moraine senior Nolan Schopp makes a one-handed catch up the middle of the field during the WIAA Division 2 state football championship Friday at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison. For the first time since 1988, the gold ball is heading back to Kettle Moraine as the Lasers trounced West De Pere 27-10 in the Division 2 state championship game. Look for full coverage on Page 1B.

WAUKESHA CHRISTMAS PARADE TRAGEDY

One-year remembrance ceremony to be held on Monday

Community invited to come together for support, continued healing

By Faith Rae frae@conley.net.com 262-513-2644

WAUKESHA — On Monday, Nov. 21, the city will be holding the one-year remembrance ceremony for the Christmas Parade tragedy at Cutler Park, 321 Wisconsin Ave.

The ceremony will be held at the Les Paul Performance Center in Cutler Park beginning at 4:39 p.m. Everyone is invited to join and honor the lives lost, support those who are still suffering and come together as a community.

“Continuing to heal. That’s my overriding theme,” said Mayor Shawn Reilly on Thursday. “The community experienced major, major trauma, and we need to continue working on healing.”

The ceremony will include a moment of silence and remarks from Reilly, Governor Tony Evers, Fire Chief Steve Howard, Police Chief Dan Thompson and the Rev. Patrick Heppe from the Catholic Communities, who was injured during the parade attack last year.

At the end of the ceremony, Reilly will ask everyone to again light their homes or businesses in blue lights to show unity and support for all the victims. There will also be a song at the end, which Reilly says he will be keeping a surprise.

The city will be live-streaming the event on the city’s Facebook page, @CityofWaukesha, and Healing Hearts of Southeast Wisconsin and the Resiliency Center will be at the ceremony for anyone attending in person who needs to talk or is looking for support.

There will be limited quantities of free blue light bulbs courtesy of Batteries Plus and there will also be blue glow bracelets courtesy of Educators Credit Union.

The Waukesha Public Library, 321 Wisconsin Ave., will close at 4 p.m. on Monday for the ceremony.

See CEREMONY, PAGE 7A

Kimberly defeats Mukwonago in close battle for Division 1 title

Mukwonago senior receiver Trevor Bouche is consoled by Kimberly junior Cody Obermann (20) and senior Connor Schiessl after the Papermakers’ game-clinching interception in the fourth quarter of the WIAA Division 1 state football championship Friday at Camp Randall Stadium in Madison. In a closely-fought, back-and-forth battle, Mukwonago came up just short in the final seconds of the Division 1 state championship game, as the Indians fell 34-30 to Kimberly. Check Page 1B for full coverage.



Dave Radcliffe/Freeman Staff

Volume 164 No. 169



7 97883 00075 2

INDEX

Business.....5B	Lottery.....2A
Classified.....6B	Obituaries.....7A
Commentary.....4A	Sports.....1B
Crossword.....8B	Stocks.....5B
Dilbert.....5B	Weather.....8B

WEATHER



Tomorrow: Mostly sunny High 29 / Low 22

See complete forecast on Page 8B

INSIDE

Condo residents to appeal federal judge’s ruling ▶ Page 3A

TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE FREEMAN, call 262-542-2500 or go online at: gmtoday.com/subscribe

Personal Injury ♦ Business Litigation

SCHOTT, BUBLITZ & ENGEL s.c.

The Right Legal Team – Right Here in Waukesha

262.827.1700 640 W. MORELAND BLVD. • WAUKESHA • www.sbe-law.com

Attorney Pat Schott

Attorney Kevin Bublitz

Celebrating our 25th year in Waukesha County



PREP FOOTBALL
Hamilton sneaks past Oconomowoc
▶ 1B



What's the dish?
A roundup of Waukesha County restaurant news ▶ 4A



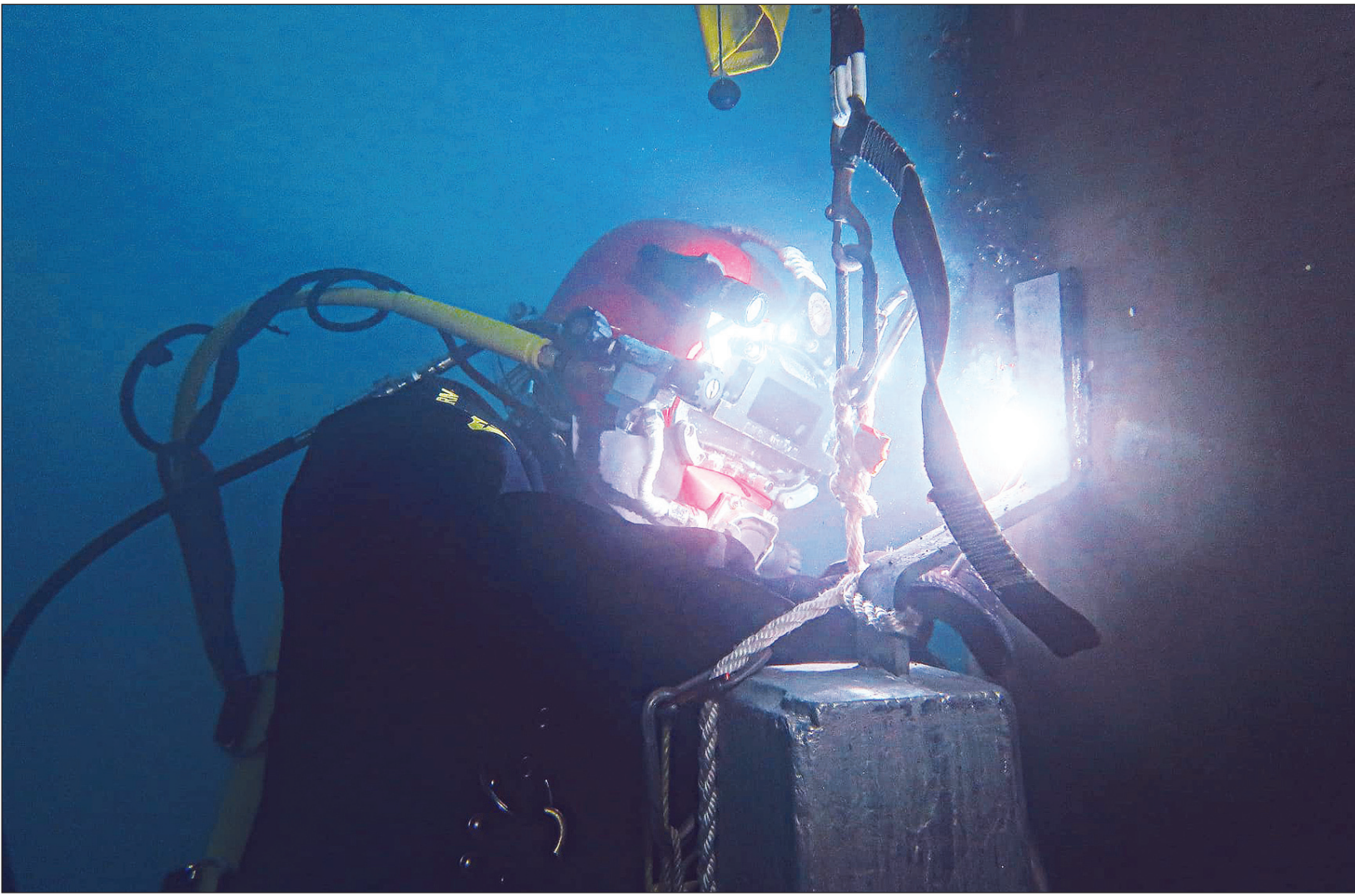
The FREEMAN

\$2

Saturday, August 26, 2023

gmtoday.com

UNDERSEA ADVENTURER



Courtesy of Steve Rupp

On June 12, 2022, John Ditkof welds a 250-pound anode to the steel pilings on the newly constructed pier at Palmer Station in Antarctica to help prevent corrosion. He dove for 4 hours and 35 minutes, the second-longest dive in the history of the United States Antarctic Program (USAP).

Part 1 of 2

To the Ends of the Earth

Waukesha County's own globetrotting deep-sea diver reflects on experiences

By Isabella Kostolni
ikostolni@conley.net.com
262-513-2651

How much does a cold brewski cost in Adak, Alaska? For a 24-pack of Heineken, it'll run you \$82. How about a week's worth of internet? That's a cool \$221.

What about commercial dive school? You'll have to pony up about \$30,000. Encountering a leopard seal on the job once you've received your diving certification? Possibly your life.

But the feeling of relief as you finally resurface after spending hours underwater repairing a dock thousands of miles from civilization? Priceless.

Wisconsin native and WCTC welding instructor John Ditkof has been there, done that. All of that. His journey began at none other than Waukesha County Technical College. After graduating from Brookfield Central High School in 2004, serving as a torpedoman in the Navy, being deployed to Iraq a couple years later, briefly studying planetary sciences and geology at UW-Waukesha, and gallivanting around the country, Ditkof finally decided on being a tradesman.

See UNDERSEA, PAGE 8A



Courtesy of John Ditkof

John Ditkof has encountered a variety of wildlife while on the job, including this king crab in Sand Point, Alaska in 2020. He was repairing a dive vessel when a local deckhand used Ditkof's phone to snap a photo of him with the colossal crustacean.

UNDERSEA ADVENTURER

A two-part series

Who is John Ditkof? From serving as a torpedoman in the Navy to graduating from WCTC's welding program to becoming a commercial diver, he's done it all. And he's seen it all too. This globetrotting John-of-all-trades has visited every continent, took a dip in every ocean, and stepped foot in all 50 states. But some of his most exciting adventures have happened at the ends of the earth.

TODAY: Read about Ditkof's background, education, and the details of his commercial diving gigs in Antarctica, Alaska, and the Arctic. He's taken every job from dark to dangerous to disgusting.

TUESDAY: Since welding underwater in the coldest, most remote corners of the globe wasn't adventure enough for Ditkof, he decided to take on another specialization. This time involving a little bit of American history ... and a few explosives.

OCONOMOWOC

Imagination Station reopens after mouse sighting

City set out traps, cleaned equipment during closure

By Katherine Beck
kbeck@conley.net.com

OCONOMOWOC — Five days after Oconomowoc decided to close Imagination Station Playground upon a report of a mouse and a burrow on the large playground, it was reopened, but not without criticism from the public.

The city posted on Facebook on Monday that an exterminator will work to remove the mouse and a thorough review for burrows will be completed. The playground was then fenced off with a sign that read "closed until further notice for maintenance."

In the hours and days after the initial posting, city residents criticized the decision to close the playground.

"It made our city look foolish," wrote Nathan Schacht on Facebook. Similar comments were "what a joke" and "absolutely ridiculous." Some people commented sarcastically, like Bill Ritchie who said, "Imagine that ... a mouse in the great outdoors living its best life. How dare it do that!"

Others came to the city's defense, such as Ian Pilak. "Good job taking care of a wonderful feature of the Oconomowoc community," he said.

Erin Sondrol also agreed with the city's approach. "Totally agree with how the city handled it. That park is unique and any damage done by rodents could cost taxpayers plenty."

And making sure it was safe to reopen was important to the city.

City Administrator Mark Frye said the exterminator was contacted to determine if rodents had been tunneling under the surface.

"Our concern was the integrity of the rubberized surface of the playground so action was taken to avoid possible damage from burrowing," Frye said in an email.

See IMAGINATION, PAGE 3A

SOUND OFF

What do you think?

Phone: 262-513-2641
Email: soundoff@conley.net.com

Volume 165 No. 108



INDEX

Business.....7A	Lottery.....2A
Classified.....7B	Obituaries.....9B
Comics.....5B	Sports.....1B
Commentary.....5A	Stocks.....7A
Community.....6B	Weather.....10B

WEATHER



Tomorrow:
Mostly sunny
High 72 / Low 56

See complete forecast on Page 10B



• **COMMENTARY:** Debate put Wisconsin in the spotlight. **5A**

• **NEWS:** Nikki Haley sees boost after Milwaukee debate. **6A**

TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE FREEMAN, call 262-542-2500 or go online at: gmtoday.com/subscribe



Attorney Pat Schott



Personal Injury ♦ Business Litigation
SCHOTT, BUBLITZ & ENGEL s.c.



The Right Legal Team – Right Here in Waukesha

262.827.1700 640 W. MORELAND BLVD. • WAUKESHA • www.sbe-law.com



Attorney Kevin Bublitz