

LOWER WISCONSIN RIVER VALLEY SENTINEL

-EST. 2020-

Spring Green, Wisconsin

WE CARE MORE.

Thursday, May 4, 2023 | Vol. 4, No. 8

FREE, Single-Copy



Inside this
edition

Lake Louie Brewing
'Major Water Relocation Project'

Pages 1, 9

BEST OF THE RIVER VALLEY
2023 Nominations Open

Pages 1, 5

Can bipartisan support save
arts funding in Wisconsin?

Page 11

Lake Louie Brewing announces 'major water relocation project' with the move of Lake Louie from Arena to Verona

Paul Verdu, Lake Louie Brewing / Wisconsin Brewing Company

Lake Louie Brewing Company announced that they plan to relocate the body of water known as Lake Louie, from Arena Wisconsin to Verona Wisconsin. The moving of the lake will reunite it with the brewery that produces Lake Louie Brewing beers.

Lake Louie Brewing was founded by Tom Porter in 2000 when he cashed in his 401K to start a brewery out of his garage in Arena, WI. He named the brewery after the lake that sits on his property, which was named after his Uncle Louie. Later in 2019, Tom sold Lake Louie Brewing to Wisconsin Brewing Company (WBC) based in Verona. Tom shuttered his brewery and all of Lake Louie Brewing beers are now



Photo contributed by Wisconsin Brewing Company

Pictured is Tom Porter, founder of Lake Louie Brewing, which was started in Arena in 2000.

produced in Verona. Despite this sale and closure of his facility, the body of water known as Lake Louie still sits on Tom's property, far away from the new home of its namesake brewery.

In the fall of 2022, Wisconsin Brewing Company announced that they would be putting all of their attention and investment behind Lake Louie Brewing and announced a new visual identity

for the brand at the same time. "We are putting all of our focus on Lake Louie Brewing," says Paul Verdu, President of WBC. "Having Lake Louie so far away from our brewery just doesn't make sense. We have no choice but to move the lake."

Thus, planning for this historic lake relocation project has been underway for months. On Saturday, May 6, 2023, Lake Louie will be moved from Arena to WBC's beautiful property in Verona. "Sure, I'm a little sad to see it go, but I still love Lake Louie Brewing, and it needs to be next to Lake Louie lake," said Tom Porter. "Plus, maybe they'll finally leave me alone now."

continued on page 9

Valley Sentinel announces the 2023 Best of the River Valley reader poll, nominations open now

Valley Sentinel is excited to announce our 3rd Annual **Best of the River Valley** reader poll! Again, drawing inspiration from cities like Eau Claire, Madison and Milwaukee, we're excited to facilitate this reader poll that showcases your voice in sharing the best of what our area has to offer to our community and those who visit it.

As with last year, with winners announced in June, the Best of the River Valley is designed to maximize engagement with area businesses and attractions heading into the busy summer months.

The poll results will be on stands during the Spring Green Arts & Crafts Fair and for the season opening of American Players Theatre.

The Best of the River Valley is not only a complement to existing guides that help community and newcomers alike navigate our area, but also — especially now more than ever — a time to share where you believe the area is headed,

what the area needs to focus on, and also a place to brag about your business or your favorite Old Fashioned, with a healthy competitive spirit.

As voting opens towards the end of May, tools will be made available to businesses and those interested to share the poll and get out the word and drum up support for their favorites. But no funny business! Literally. Exchanging free or discounted goods and services for votes is prohibited.

The poll will focus on the goings-on of the past year, from June 2022 to May 2023. Nominations will generally be limited to 15 miles around the Spring Green area — Arena, Lone Rock, Plain and Spring Green — unless stated as regional. The poll will cover various categories from the staple business services, to outdoor adventures, to arts and culture. Winners will range from businesses to

continued on page 5

The (not so) Plain and Simple Correspondent: A Slap (in the face) For Earth Day

Katie Green, Columnist

Happy Earth Day, friends! Are you out there picking up trash? Polishing up your bicycle to get to the market in lieu of driving? Eating vegetarian faux meat and pretending you like it? As I ponder how I might make a difference, it was disappointing to read in the Wisconsin State Journal, “Republicans on the Legislature’s budget committee voted Tuesday to kill funding for the largest proposed land conservation project in Wisconsin history over concerns about the \$15 million purchase of 56,000 acres of forest land that would have been open to both logging and recreational use. Republican lawmakers objected in November to using \$4 million from the state’s Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program to help finance the purchase of the property east of Rhinelander in northern Wisconsin known as the Pelican River Forest. The rest of the funding for the conservation easement would come from a federal grant. Efforts to address lawmakers’ concerns since objections were raised were unsuccessful, Sen. Mary Felzkowski, one of the Republicans who objected to the project, said Tuesday. She was among the 12 Republicans on the Legislature’s Joint Finance Committee who voted to kill the project, while all



Katie Green

four Democrats voted to fund it.”

This land proposal certainly seemed like a win-win for all residents of Wisconsin and others who travel to our state to recreate, leave lots of filthy lucre in pockets of businesses who cater to them, and to enjoy the beauty of our verdant hills, meadows, bogs and forests filled with life. The spiritual element is likewise a large element. Some of us, such as was true of our famous Aldo

Leopold, John Muir, and Gaylord Nelson, require retreats into peaceful natural surroundings. For us it is not a luxury but a necessity. Human brains are altered for the better when exposed to doses of unalloyed Mother Nature, scientists have discovered. Slow down, calm down. Observe. Be a humble speck in a variegated tribe of beings.

Are the foes of the plan also against pure air and drinkable water? The proposal would link two other state forest preserves, allowing a much bigger, healthier landscape for the species of wildlife, including trees, small shrubs and plants as well as birds, beasts, and insects that have steadily migrated north in recent years to try to get away from deadly heat building up to the south. They are our companions on the planet and we are mutually interdependent. Fishing, hunting, snowmobiling, water sports, skiing, and hiking would all still be possible if it were a refuge. And since sustainable logging would still be an option, only the most delusionally-fanatical tree-hugger could work up a head of steam in opposition, presumably. What puzzles me is, what else is the Knowles-Nelson Land Stewardship Program Fund for? The project seems like a perfect fit. No taxes would add to the burden you already carry, since the Federal government would pick up the rest of the tab for purchase beyond that provided by the Knowles-Nelson Fund. Republicans, explain thy selves.

One chief reason given for Republican opposition is that the plan would eliminate “future potential development,” according to Senator Mary Felzkowski. Heck, yes, that’s the point. Since revenues from conventional tourist sources, hunting and fishing licenses and the like would balance out what mineral extraction industries or filling the north woods with vacation homes would bring in, the plan would be much more in line with efforts to stave off the climate disaster now hanging over us like the Sword of Damocles. In another self-serving move, the legislature proposed Assembly bills 141-2 aimed at preventing any attempts to take fossil fueled, carbon-producing equipment off the market -- gardening equipment, gas stoves, lawn mowers, etc., substituting electric and battery-powered items. Heaven forbid that we should “destroy the free market”, as the co-author of the bills

complained might happen. No matter that the American Lung Association and other organizations whose mission is to enhance your chances to live long and prosper, are against the bills. Our neighboring state of Minnesota has banned such polluting equipment by 2025. All efforts in Wisconsin to follow suit have been foiled by the American Petroleum Institute, WI Manufacturers and Commerce, Koch Bros., and other mega-corporations and organizations listed in opposition, who don’t stay up nights worrying about the health and welfare of the 99%. Or themselves. They aren’t going to escape the consequences either if we avoid dealing with a steadily unraveling ecology. They are rowing against the current, which carries them closer and closer to the roaring falls with each passing day.

The River Valley’s own Howard Marklein, who voted against the conservation plan, was among the 12 Republicans on the Legislature’s Joint Finance Committee. Remember, the four Democrat members voted for it and for keeping in view the long term viability of generations to come. Keep that foremost in your mind in the next voting cycle.

Meantime, pushing back strikes me as a good plan. Better than just sitting around wheezing, or watching your asthmatic children wheeze. Keep leaning on your elected reps. Work to elect better ones who value realistic life-affirming policies for our communities over perks for large corporations and keeping their wealthy friends’ taxes low. A teacher I met recently told me how she was able to spend seven years on a nature preserve on an island in Panama doing primate research as a young woman when, technically speaking, she wasn’t yet qualified to apply. She showed up every day at the administrator’s office to point out how passionate she was to go, how she had been studying primates since childhood, and was the very person they needed. Laura was polite but wouldn’t take no for an answer. After weeks of this pressure, much like Chinese water torture, in exasperation the administrator told her, “If you promise to never pester me again, you may go.” Pester! Pester! As the recent State Supreme Court election results demonstrated, popular sentiment can sometimes prevail even in a heavily gerrymandered state such as ours.

Playlist for Earth Under Threat

Poet activists, song writers, and performers have been alarmed for as long as I can remember about the fate of our earth, and have lifted their voices to bewail, to warn, but also to celebrate the earth in the hope of arousing protective feelings in the bosoms of fellow travelers. And action. Since in a true sense every day is Earth Day, here’s a short list of voices in various moods reflecting on the challenges, well worthy of listening to as you decide how you can contribute:

- Joni Mitchell, “Big Yellow Taxi”;
- Dar Williams, “Go To the Woods”;
- Brad Paisley, “Gone Green”;
- Hozier, “Wasteland, Baby”;
- The Source, “Honey & The Sting”;
- Kacey Musgrave, “Oh What A World”;
- Pixus, “Monkey Gone to Heaven”;
- Louis Armstrong, “What A Wonderful World”;
- Pete Seeger, “From Way up here the Earth is Just a Ball” [the earth as seen from space];
- Paul Simon, “American Tune” [asking “what went wrong?”];
- Chanticleer, “What you Gon’ to Do When the World’s on Fire?” and “Didn’t it Rain?” [traditional gospel tunes];
- Randy Newman, “A Few Words” [re Supreme Court decisions] and “Political Science”;
- Leonard Cohen, “Democracy is Comin’” and “May the Lights in the Land of Plenty Shine on the Truth Some Day”;
- Credence Clearwater, “Who’ll Stop the Rain?”;
- Bobby McFerrin, “The 23rd Psalm” and “Medicine Man”;
- Iris Dement, “Living in the Wasteland of the Free”;
- Van Morrison, “The Beauty of the Days Gone By.”

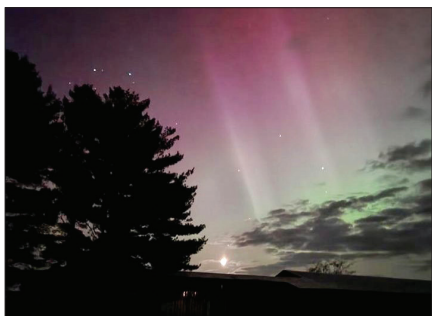
Katie, who until recently lived in Plain, has been writing for fun and profit since childhood. Self-described as opinionated, she writes in the interests of a more loving, better-functioning world for all. She may be reached at katiwegreen@icloud.com.

ON THE COVER

“Northern lights at the Octagon Barn” (2023)
Photo by Lauren Dochnahl



The River Valley was graced with beautiful sights like this on the evening of April 23, as solar activity from the sun created northern lights, or aurora borealis, that lit up the sky for several hours. Photos were taken at the Octagon Barn in Spring Green.



Submit your artwork or photography for cover consideration:
editor@valleysentinelnews.com

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,
The well-being and education of every child should be our top priority. Children are our legacy! Older generations retire as youth takes their rightful place in society. They are becoming our leaders and caregivers.

Our entrenched conservative state legislature has steadily defunded PUBLIC education. In response, progressive State Senator Chris Larson wrote the following: “As ranking member of the Senate Education and Universities Committees, I’ve consistently pushed

Dear Editor,
In a recent newsletter, Senator Howard Marklein, justifying plans to cut state benefits, told the story of some guy he knows who said he was “competing with the couch” for employees. I’m certain Marklein’s buddy is not a data scientist, because according to Wisconsin Workforce Development, at present more people in Wisconsin are in the workforce than ever before in state history.

Maybe couch-guy was one of Marklein’s billionaire donors—you know the

back against attempts to undermine our public schools and shift an ever-increasing amount of resources toward unaccountable private schools. What you may not know is that we spend about \$200 million each year to fund private education in our state that comes directly from state aid intended for neighborhood public schools.”

“Voters across the state have approved hundreds of referendums to boost public school funding in recent years, because they know how important education is to strong communities.

type, someone who has tons of money and thus no motivation to work? If the Senator worked on increasing taxes for billionaires instead of regular people, those dudes might have to get off their couches?

Another recent report, based on data from the nonpartisan Wisconsin Policy Forum, shows that Wisconsin ranks 43rd among states in funding the UW/public university education. Is Wisconsin aiming, with the closing of UW-Richland and other campuses, to reach 50th

The voucher programs that take this ever-increasing share of money out of our PUBLIC SCHOOLS operate outside of public view with little regulation, no community input, and almost zero transparency...”

Our Constitution demands SEPARATION of church and state. Is this siphoning off of public money to unaccountable private schools appropriate? Definitely NOT!

Lee D. Van Landuyt
Hillsboro, Wisconsin

place? Would that please couch-sitting, no funding-for-public-education billionaire donors?

Dorothy Thompson
Richland Center, Wisconsin

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

continued on page 5