



Fat Tire Tour of Green Bay returns for seventh year
City Pages



Bay Port girls tennis begins season
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Hank Vossberg, 13, is a many-times-over national champion motorcycle racer in multiple events and looks to continue his run of success this season. **Submitted photo**

West De Pere Middle School student dominates in motocross

BY KAITY COISMAN
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

DE PERE – Hank Vossberg is a 13-year-old student getting ready for his eighth-grade year, but racing has been a part of his life since he was in diapers.

“He wasn’t even two years old, and he had a little 50cc dirt bike with training wheels, and he just rode around in the backyard. I put in a throttle control so he couldn’t go too fast, but yeah, he’s been riding since then,” said Hank’s father, Billy Vossberg.

Hank’s racing didn’t start until two years later at age four when he raced mini bikes, later turning to racing full-size bikes at 10 years old.

Hank Vossberg is a many-times-over national champion motorcycle racer in multiple events and looks to continue his run of success this season.

Motorcycle riding and racing has been a three-generation hobby for the Vossberg family.

Billy Vossberg remembered riding on his father’s gas tank when he was little and also raced when Hank was a baby.

This has led to the family tradition of friends and family all riding and racing together.

There is not a lot of time outside

of racing for the Vossberg family, because they race 10 months out of the year.

“... as soon as the summer is over, we ride into October and go down south for a big race at the end of the year, and then as soon as the ice is frozen, we are out riding on the ice until it melts in March, and then we are back at it in April,” Billy explained.

Hank has managed to squeeze in some other hobbies, including football, skiing and mountain biking.

Billy explained that there are many life lessons to be found in the sport.

“A lot of managing lots of situations that require decision making and making choices, making plans and preparations and all the things to make it go right. With riding the bike, it is one thing to go out and ride around, and it’s another thing to kind of get to the pointy end of the stick to get the bike better and to get people to help you with your suspension or your motor, like what is the bike doing, how it is going, how can we change things, what is it doing on a certain part of the track and not the other and gearing and all kinds of things. It has been a fun progression for him

See **VOSSBERG** page 3

A journey to kinship and change

BY KRIS LEONHARDT
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

DE PERE – Former participants of a 1970s visionary study-abroad program gathered Aug. 9-11 to celebrate the individuals who made it possible.

In a time when study-abroad programs were uncommon, the St. Norbert College program led the way for dozens of existing programs today and passage into an area needing assistance.

It all began with a Christmas-time conversation between St. Norbert College Professor Frank Wood and Sister Marie Esterre, where the sister expressed the need for English teachers in the growing community of Arequipa, Peru.

Sister Marie Esterre was Wood’s sister-in-law and had recently been named Mother Superior of the St. Joseph of Carondelet in Arequipa.

From there, a plan for a nine-



Barbara Bobrowitz speaks during the dedication of the benches on the St. Norbert College on Aug. 12. **Kris Leonhardt photo**

month “living-teaching-learning” program, as coined by the *Sheboygan Press*, was born in conjunction with the Catholic University of Santa Maria.

Organized by the college’s experimental studies program and foreign language department as

the first Hispanic study abroad program under the direction of Wood and Daniel Ritter, the program would provide students with the opportunity to experience a new culture while conducting classes in English.

See **PERU** page 10

Providing a second chance for a solid future

BY MELANIE ROSSI
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

GREEN BAY – Incarcerated students from the Wisconsin Department of Corrections (DOC) walked across the stage and earned their college diplomas in a ceremony held Aug. 10.

The 11 students each earned a 15-credit certificate in Industrial Maintenance by completing a 15-week course through a partnership with Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College (NWTC).

Now in its fourth year, the course teaches students employ-

able skills that can be put to use in high-demand jobs after release or through employment within the DOC.

Customized by NWTC from its usual nine-month plan into only 15 weeks, the Industrial

See **FUTURE** page 4

The Union Hotel: Generations in the making

BY RICK COHLER
CONTRIBUTING WRITER

DE PERE – McKim Boyd is the fourth generation of the Boyd family to operate the Union Hotel in De Pere, now in its 106th year in business.

The original building dates back to 1883, when De Pere businessman Nic Altmeyer recognized the need for lodging and dining accommodations in the area and built a two-story hotel at 200 North Broadway.

The structure replaced the Union House, which dates back to at least 1867.

The Union Hotel was a two-story structure with many “fire-proof” features including an exterior featuring Cream City Brick, a thick fire wall between the hotel and the adjacent city hall building



The Union Hotel is located at 200 North Broadway. **Rick Cohler photo**

to the north, a steam heat system that is still in use today and electricity, according to the Union Hotel website.

The building featured a first floor restaurant, with the original bar located where the front lobby

is today, and the dining room in its current location.

Above the restaurant were 11 guest rooms, a sitting room, a parlor and a lobby.

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HOTEL
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An addition, containing what is today's bar, was constructed two years later. A second addition in 1903 added the third floor to the building. In 1914, the hotel was sold to Albert Kabat and his family; however, due to the untimely death of Kabat four years later, the hotel was sold to Boyd's great grandparents — August and Antonia Maternowski. With the help of their 12 children, the family business continues to this day. "They redid the rooms and added on a horse barn to stable the horses for the city's fire department until about 1925 when the fire department got its first fire truck," Boyd said.

One of the first big business challenges was Prohibition, but Boyd said the family found a way around it.

"We actually had a distillery which my great aunt Ceil ran," Boyd said. "She was a single woman all her life, prayed the Rosary every day and made our home brew.

"The unwritten rule with the local law enforcement was 'Don't overserve the man of the house. If you do, you're going to be our first stop when the feds come around.'

"In the beginning, the feds would let the local authorities know they were in the city as a courtesy, and they would tip everyone off.

"The funny thing was that Great-Grandpa was written up in the De Pere Journal. There was a bootlegger from Milwaukee who came up and was trying to sell his stuff but Grandpa

had his own business. So not only did he run him out of town, but he called the police, and they got the guy and confiscated all their booze. So August Maternowski is written up as this nice guy, but he was a shrewd businessman."

Boyd said when Prohibition ended, many bars, including the Union Hotel, remodeled their establishments anticipating a windfall.

"What windfall? You kept serving all through Prohibition," Boyd mused.

The greater Green Bay area was impacted by the Great Depression but not as bad as other parts of the country, largely due to the city's most famous product, toilet paper.

"It's not to say that it did not have its impact but it wasn't as severe as some other parts of the country," Boyd said. "We were fortunate, we had a full hotel. The hotel used to be a bigger part of their income and the restaurant and the bar continued through."

The interior of the hotel has had little change through the years, with Boyd and his family maintaining much of the layout and style.

Walking in gives the diner the impression of being in a place which honors its past.

The hotel maintains 19 rooms — four of them have their own bath and shower and are nicely appointed, while others share facilities.

Until cars became more common, the hotel also boarded De Pere High School students who lived too far from town to make the daily commute.

The Union Hotel has featured fine dining since its founding in 1883.

"In that time period you would have had long-term, short-term guests and overnight guests," Boyd said. "A trip from Milwaukee to Green Bay would have taken six days or so. The room rent would have included dinner and breakfast, served family style. The Union adopted a supper club style featuring steak and seafood and daily specials after World War II."

Years ago, the Boyd family decided to close on Fridays and leave the Friday night fish fries to the area taverns, but is now open daily.

Today, the Union Hotel is perhaps best known for its Christmas Madrigal dinners where singers dressed in Renaissance garb serenade each table with a requested Christmas carol.

De Pere resident Rita Barretta brought the idea back from California, and the reservations pack the hotel's dining rooms each night in December.

The Union Hotel has also enjoyed a long-running relationship with the Green Bay Packers, hosting many of the coaching staff for dinner.

"Every head coach has



McKim Boyd as a boy in the Union Hotel bar.

Submitted photo

had dinner here," Boyd said.

Boyd has been part of the Union hotel since a boy of eight when he started bringing up beer bottles from the cellar.

He also bussed glassware in the bar and worked as a dishwasher.

Boyd left the Union for college and a 15-year career as a math teacher and coach at Wrightstown High School, though he often could be found bartending at the Union.

He took a year's leave of

absence in 1996 to help his father at the hotel, then began to take over the operation.

"At the end of the year, I realized it was in my blood," he recalled.

Two of Boyd's sisters, Mary and Ann, have worked at the hotel full-time for several decades.

Both work in the management of the business and Ann is the hotel's pie baker.

Their brother, Patrick, works part-time after his retirement from the Wright-

stown School District.

"On rare occasions, Patrick's twin brother James, who's the mayor of De Pere, makes an appearance behind the bar," Boyd said.

It looks like the Union Hotel will remain in the Boyd family for at least a fifth generation with Boyd's two children, Annamarie Lenhart and Mitchell Boyd along with his sister Mary's son, Sam Boyd, involved.

"Which means we should be in good shape for the next 40 years," Boyd said.

OBITUARIES



Cyril D Kohlbeck peacefully passed away of old age in the morning of August 8, 2023.

Born December 22, 1922, he would have been 101 if he had lived 'til December, the same age as his mother at her time of death.

Dad came from a very poor family of 9. They barely made a living on a very poor farm. Besides milking cows, income was had by growing green beans for the canning company. He got off the farm by taking a job in Green Bay with the Larsen Canning Co. Growing vegetables was something he knew.

Cy married Carole Mae Sweet on October 16, 1948. Mom had business training and was a great benefit to Dad. She kept the household running smoothly when he was away. Mom passed away on April 3, 2003. They were married 55 years.

Dad always had a burning curiosity and a great sense of exploration. That led to family moves to Ohio and then Idaho before landing back in Ashwaubenon.

Five sons survive. Steve and Barb Kohlbeck, their three boys, Aaron and Sara, Benjamin and Dana, and Adam and Jennifer. Son Tom and Wendy Kohlbeck, their two boys Ross and Amber and Brent and Janene. Son Jim and Sue Kohlbeck, their three children, Lindsey and Danny, Kirk James Kohlbeck, and Kelsey and Kyle. Fourth son Mark and Tammy Kohlbeck, their two children Martha and Brad and Jacob and Cailee and youngest son Bill and Karen Kohlbeck and their three daughters, Shannon and Donny, Caitlin Kohlbeck, and Bailey and John. There are 22 great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

After Mom died, Dad was fortunate enough to meet Rose Beauvais. They were close in age, had many things in common, and were great companions for 16 years. Rose passed away in 2021.

Dad was a member of the building committee undertaking construction of a new Nativity parish. He was on the parish council and read at mass for many years, maintaining a keen interest in Nativity. He served on the Ashwaubenon village board and had many outside business interests, partnering with one son or the other in a mobile home and several athletic shoe ventures.

Dad enjoyed fishing although, truth be known, he wasn't that good at it. He was a great joke teller. His first book was a joke book. His delivery, however made his jokes much funnier.

Mom and Dad traveled extensively. He loved Mexico. He really came a long way from a poor kid of the depression. He thought outside the box, sometimes hard to follow but never boring.

Services are Thursday, 8/24 at Nativity of our Lord parish. Visitation is 9 to 11, mass to follow and lunch after services.

To leave a special message for the family online please visit www.NewcomerGreenbay.com



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