



# Ladysmith News

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Vol. 128, Number 44

Ladysmith, Wisconsin 54848

Thursday, February 9, 2023

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New hospital, clinic fully open March 13

## Medical center opening date draws closer

By Luke Klink

A new medical center is on schedule to open soon in Ladysmith, a huge investment that keeps medical care nearby for area residents and good-paying professional jobs in the community.

Ground was broken on the new Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith in July 2021 in a development projected to exceed \$35 million.

The new MMC-Ladysmith will include about 75,000 square feet of departmental areas and, with circulation and support spaces, about 98,000 gross square feet of floor space. This modern two-story facility will include space for the Critical Access Hospital and medical offices for local physicians, visiting Marshfield Clinic Health Specialists and other healthcare providers.

Marshfield Clinic Health Systems officials say the provider is meeting and exceeding its commitment to the community.

MMC-L Chief Operating Officer Jeff Euclide called the new facility, "a new era of health care for our area."

"Myself and our team of dedicated leaders, providers and staff are delighted to share the new Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith with the community and begin seeing patients in our new facility in mid-

March," Euclide said. "The opening of our new facility demonstrates Marshfield Clinic Health System's commitment to providing high quality health care to Rusk and surrounding counties for years to come."

The development comes after years of negotiations with Rusk County officials to develop a new medical center to replace the current Marshfield Medical Center-Ladysmith and Marshfield Clinic facilities on College Avenue near Wis. 27.

To develop a new medical center to combine both facilities, Marshfield Clinic Health Systems paid the city of Ladysmith \$680,000 for the 11 acre site along the south side of Port Arthur Road west of Wis. 27 and close to Walmart with an opening date target of the first quarter of 2023.

The new facility is on track for the emergency department and in-patient units to be moved on Saturday, March 11. All other services will open on Monday, March 13.

The new facility features 11 all-purpose patient rooms to serve inpatients, six prep & recovery rooms for same-day surgery and seven infusion rooms. There are medical offices for the Rural Health Clinic, primary care providers, visiting MCHS specialists

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## Confession in cold case 1990 murder of former Ladysmith school student

By Luke Klink

A cold case involving the murder of a young man who briefly attended Ladysmith High School in the early 1980s and whose body was found dismembered in California on Halloween weekend in 1990 may have been solved.

The Los Angeles Police Department and District Attorney George Gascon announced this week that a leading suspect, Darrell Lynn Madden, has confessed to the murder of William Arnold Newton. A story of the announcement appeared this week in the *Los Angeles Times*.

Newton was born July 26, 1965, in Eau Claire. He attended grade school and junior high school in Eau Claire before moving to Ladysmith in 1979.

A 1981 Ladysmith school yearbook lists a "W. Newton" as a sophomore. There is no listing in the years before or after that. Newton and his mother moved to Oklahoma City after his freshman year of high school.

From that point on, Newton was a runaway and on his own, eventually landing in West Hollywood. His feet and head were found in a garbage container on Oct. 29, 1990. The rest of his remains were never found.

In California, Newton acted in gay pornographic films more than three decades ago under the name Billy London and Billy Porter. He also produced gay pornographic films under the name Bill E. London.

A new light was shined on the cold case last year when a witness claimed he saw Newton leave a bar on the night of his death with a man who looked like the Milwaukee mass murderer Jeffrey Dahmer. Dahmer allegedly was questioned about Newton by law

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**OPENING SOON** — Marshfield Clinic Health Services officials are projecting its new medical center in Ladysmith will be fully open on March 13 after emergency and in-patient units are moved two days earlier. The facility features 75,000 square feet of departmental areas and 98,000 square feet of floor space combined on two levels. Clinic treatment rooms are in the upper level along the street, where the majority of people will enter. Hospital, emergency and extended stay rooms are on the lower level on the east side of the building. More pictures of the center's interior are in this week's *Ladysmith News*.

— News photo by Luke Klink

## Kroeze concert highlights fundraiser

By Luke Klink

The Ladysmith Sons of AMVETS Squadron 127 hopes to hit all the right notes this month with its latest fundraising effort, hosting an evening with the popular recording artist, Chris Kroeze.

The squadron is now selling a limited number of tickets for the performance set for Saturday, Feb. 25, at JS Supper Club & Catering, near Ladysmith.

Tickets are \$50 each with only 250 tickets available. Each is good for admission to the show, appetizers and a grand prize drawing. Doors open at 5 p.m. with the concert from 7-10 p.m.

This fundraiser is somewhat of an encore for the squadron, which hosted a similar event in the fall of 2021. At that time, the organization held a raffle drawing for a select number of available seats at a sit-down dinner and a Chris Kroeze concert.

Squadron Commander Dave Roth notes this time everyone with a ticket will be able to attend.

"What is best this time is when you purchase a ticket you are in the door," Roth said.

As an added incentive, everyone at the show will be entered in a grand prize drawing for a Henry Golden Boy rifle with an estimated value of more than \$500.

Founded in 1983, Sons of AMVETS is a nationwide service organization comprised of male descendants of American veterans. As part of the larger AMVETS organization it works to improve quality of life, advocate legislation for increased benefits and care and provide and support charitable assistance to veterans, their families and community.

Ladysmith Sons of AMVETS Squadron 127 is relatively new in the organization. It formed in 2021, but already has the largest membership in the state. The squadron currently has 42 individuals in its ranks, of which 15 are lifetime members.

As a military support group, most of its volunteer activities lean toward



**RETURN ENGAGEMENT** — Barron County resident Chris Kroeze performs in November 2021, during a Ladysmith Sons of AMVETS Squadron 127 fundraiser. The popular area performer will be back in Rusk County on Saturday, Feb. 25, at JS Supper Club west of Ladysmith. There is a limited supply of 250 tickets available for the show to help raise money for the group's community service activities.

— File photo

supporting the Armed Forces in some way.

Squadron 127 helps maintain the US flags and bronze markers at gravesites of military veterans buried at Riverside Cemetery. Its members also participate at military veteran funerals, holiday events, parades and area fundraisers.

"We really dedicate a lot of time," Roth said.

The local squadron hopes to raise \$12,500 through the concert fundraiser, helping fund its activities in Rusk County.

Some of the raised funds also will be used to make a donation to Warhawk Service Dogs, based in Council Bluffs, Iowa. Its service animals address the suicide rate that exists

among veterans and special circumstances of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

Warhawk founder Kevin Doncaster is on a mission to honor his fallen friends by getting free service dogs to veterans in all 50 states.

Doncaster spent 14 years as a Marine and Department of Defense contractor. He was badly injured when his helicopter took fire in Iraq and took three years to recover. However, like so many veterans, his battle with PTSD persisted when he got home.

Warhawk already has placed two dogs in Rusk County.

Roth said the donation to Warhawk is "because of the service he gives to veterans with PTSD in this area."

Roth hopes the public turns out to

support the squadron and its fundraiser. He said it is all for a good cause in support of the area veterans, their families and community. He notes the continued popularity of Chris Kroeze after his huge run in the public spotlight about five years ago.

In 2015, he began a busy stretch of playing over 175 shows a year, and creating a large and loyal fan following. That popularity soared in 2018, when he appeared on NBC's hit TV show "The Voice," making it all the way to the finals in a runner-up finish. In the finale, Kroeze sang the original song "Human," which was Top 10 on the Billboard HOT 100 and TOP 5 on the iTunes TOP 100. His vocal and guitar skills, combined with a small-town charm, led to Kroeze to become the most streamed artist in the show's history.

A popular live performer, Chris continued to perform at a frantic pace maintaining an average of over 175 shows a year through 2019, and the crowds have gotten bigger and bigger. He headlined a show at Aquafest for over 5,500 fans and has had a number of stops in which he has sold out multiple nights in a row, yet he still returns for pop-up shows at local bars he used to play at in his career.

Kroeze has developed a large military fan base as well, in 2020 making his 10th overseas tour. He is also a recipient of the Red Cross Community Hero Award.

Roth said the squadron wanted to welcome Kroeze back after the success of the group's 2021 fundraiser. He added Kroeze's support of the military dovetails perfectly with the group's mission.

"He is very patriotic," Roth said in describing Kroeze.

A portion of fundraiser proceeds will be donated to support other Rusk County services.

Tickets are available now at the following locations: Lamperts, Ladysmith Fresh Market, Jays on 8, Adventures Bar, VMA Drop Zone and JS Supper Club.

# Flambeau Cancer Fundraiser this week

The walls of Flambeau School are adorned with hearts in memory or in honor of those who have fought cancer. The school district and the Flambeau Forever Foundation announce the "Hearts To Hearts" project as a school-wide effort to raise awareness and connect with friends and family. As part of this social-emotional lesson, students created at least two hearts. The first heart was personalized with an uplifting message and mailed to a family, friend or organization who have battled cancer. A matching heart

is posted at the school with a name and location. This project shows not only the incredible reach of cancer, but also that anyone of any age can make a difference. Some students chose a family member or friend. Some students chose to share hope with organizations such as St. Jude's Children's Hospital, Women With Courage or Joshua's Camp. Hearts have been mailed all over the country, with a second heart here to symbolize their connection to students and community. Through 2021, the event has helped

raise \$165,020 in the effort to help find a cure for cancer and assist those coping with the disease. This project is led by the Flambeau Cancer Benefit Committee, and funded by the Flambeau Forever Foundation as part of this year's grant awards. Hearts To Hearts serves as the culminating lesson for the school's 16th annual Cancer Relief Benefit, which is being held on Friday, Feb. 10. The benefit will continue with fundraising, hair donations to Children With Hair Loss, chili feed, and a special guest speaker from Joshua's Camp.

# Cold case: Confession may help solve murder

Continued from Page A1

enforcement while alive, but denied being involved in the killing. According to the *Los Angeles Times*, a confession to Newton's murder came after years of painstaking research from a team of internet sleuths including a stay-at-home father, Clark Williams, a documentary filmmaker, a pair of podcast hosts — one of whom is author Christopher Rice — and two Los Angeles Police Department detectives. Det. John Lamberti began looking into the case again last year, while filmmaker Rachel Mason was working on a documentary film about the unsolved crime. Rice and cohost Eric Shaw Quinn were covering it on their podcast, "The Dinner Party Show." They began sharing notes. On Monday, detectives confirmed they had secured a confession in Newton's murder. His alleged killer, they said, is Madden, another former gay porn actor in West Hollywood. Madden is currently serving a life prison sentence, convicted of abducting and brutally killing another gay man years after Newton's murder. Integral to the investigation was

Williams, who now lives in Sherman Oaks, Calif. He reached out to Mason to simply provide some background to the filmmaker about what it could have been like for Newton growing up in Wisconsin, as he was from the same area. "When Billy was murdered in late October, 1990, I was actually living in Ladysmith as the campaign manager for then Ladysmith Mayor, Marty Reynolds in his bid for the State Assembly. As you may know, I got involved in the investigation into [Billy's] murder after seeing recent press coverage profiling the unsolved case of someone from my hometown," Williams said in an email. "I even visited Ladysmith in early February 2022 to uncover any information that could help me better understand Billy's difficult life." Williams dug up criminal records that placed Madden in L.A. around the time of Newton's murder, which was also a time when skinheads were causing widespread problems across Southern California. Lamberti and his partner, Det. Tamara Momayez, began digging into Madden. They discovered that the gay porn production company Madden

had worked for was in a building on Santa Monica Boulevard that backed onto the alley where Newton's head and feet had been found. On Jan. 4, Lamberti and Momayez sat down with Madden, who now identifies as a transgender woman and an Orthodox Jew named Daralyn. Eventually, the detectives eased into the subject of Newton's murder, and Madden came clean, Lamberti said — confessing in a recorded interview to abducting him from Santa Monica Boulevard at dusk. According to Lamberti, Madden told the detectives she and her skinhead friends had seen Newton walking along the street and "basically targeted him for robbery." Madden said she approached Newton "and kind of put [her] arm around his shoulder," then calmly told him that they were going to rob him and "probably beat the crap out of" him, and that he was going to go with them without making a scene, Lamberti said. Lamberti said Madden told them she couldn't remember where they had taken Newton, but that she had ended up strangling him to death, which matched the coroner's findings.



**SUPPORTING THE ARTS** — The Rusk Area Arts Alliance recently awarded grants to local school art programs. The grants were presented to Larisa Butters (North Cedar Academy), Monica Nohr (Bruce schools) and Georgia Balko (Ladysmith schools) by Rusk Area Arts Alliance President Nancy Wheeler. They each receive a \$100 donation for their art programs. Student artwork can be seen in the lobby of the Rusk County Community Library through March.

— News photo by Meggan Meissegeier



**ART ON DISPLAY** — Student artwork can be seen in the lobby of the Rusk County Community Library through March.

*Arts Alliance supports area school art programs*



**STUDENT ART** — This acrylic painting entitled Shades of Purple was painted by An Luong Vu, who attends North Cedar Academy in Ladysmith.



**STUDENT ART** — This acrylic painting entitled Trees was painted by Tyler Bader, who attends Bruce High School.

# Utility awarded grant to improve, improve rural electric grid, security

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is investing \$19.4 million to help two electric cooperatives expand and modernize Wisconsin's rural electric grid and increase grid security. One recipient is based in Cornell and serves parts of Rusk County and the Holcombe area. "These are exciting, long-term infrastructure investments that will help rural electric cooperatives and utilities build and improve their systems," said Rural Development State Director for Wisconsin Julie Lassa. "Ultimately, this investment will strengthen opportunities in our rural communities while making the electric infrastructure more reliable and affordable for the residents and businesses who depend on it." Chippewa Valley Electric Cooperative is receiving a \$6.5 million loan to connect 573 consumers and build and improve 75 miles of line. This loan includes \$424,700 in smart grid technologies. Chippewa Valley Electric is headquartered in Cornell, Wisconsin and serves 7,695 consumers over 1,262 miles of line in five counties in northern Wisconsin. They are Chippewa, Rusk, Barron, Dunn and Taylor counties. This includes: ■ The entire Townships of Holcombe, Ruby, and that portion of the Township of Colburn located east of County Highway D, Chippewa County; the Township of Aurora, Taylor County; ■ The entire Townships of Rusk, Big Bend, Washington, and Willard of Rusk County; ■ The north half of the Township of Sand Creek, Dunn County; the north half of the Township of Auburn and the entire Village of New Auburn; the Township of Sampson; that portion of the Township of Birch Creek located west of County Highway E, Chippewa County; the Township of Dovre, Barron County;

■ The entire Townships of Cleveland and Estella; that portion of the Township of Birch Creek located east of County Highway E, Chippewa County; ■ The entire Townships of Arthur, Delmar, and Edson and that portion of the Township of Colburn located west of County Highway D; that portion of the Township of Goetz located east of State Highway 27, Chippewa County; ■ The south half of the Township of Auburn, the entire Townships of Bloomer, Woodmohr, Cooks Valley, Tilden and Howard, Chippewa County; the south half of the Township of Sand Creek, Dunn County; and ■ The entire Townships of Eagle Point and Anson, that portion of the Township of Goetz located west of State Highway 27, Chippewa County. Dean Ortmann, president and CEO of Chippewa Valley Electric, told Wisconsin Public Radio federal loans allow them to serve members more efficiently because they can save 2 percent on interest rates. "It's not a handout. We're paying the government back for borrowing money from them at a rate that they request," Ortmann said. "Overall, it's a good program. It was definitely essential in the beginning of the co-op, or you wouldn't have electricity in the rural areas." The USDA also announced the Oconto Electric Cooperative is receiving a \$12.9 million loan to connect 614 consumers and build and improve 157 miles of line. This loan includes \$325,000 in smart grid technologies. Oconto Electric is headquartered in Oconto Falls, Wisconsin and serves 10,068 consumers over 1,500 miles of line in five counties in northeastern Wisconsin. USDA is investing in 64 projects through the Electric Loan Program. This funding will benefit nearly 2 mil-

lion rural people and businesses in Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Indiana, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The loans include \$613 million to help rural utilities and cooperatives install and upgrade smart grid technologies. Smart grid can be a catalyst for broadband and other telecommunications services in unserved and underserved rural areas in addition to improving grid security and reliability. In the coming months, USDA will announce additional energy infrastructure financing. The Biden-Harris Administration's Inflation Reduction Act provided more than \$12 billion to USDA for loans and grants to expand clean energy, transform rural power production, create jobs and spur economic growth. This funding will help make energy cleaner, more reliable and more affordable. USDA's Electric Loan Program can help finance wind, solar and natural gas plants, as well as improvements to produce cleaner energy from coal-fired plants. Local utilities also use the loans to invest in infrastructure to deliver affordable power to millions of residential, commercial, and agricultural consumers. Rural Development provides loans and grants to help expand economic opportunities, create jobs, and improve the quality of life for millions of Americans in rural areas. This assistance supports infrastructure improvements; business development; housing; community facilities such as schools, public safety, and health care; and high-speed internet access in rural, Tribal, and high-poverty areas. For more information, visit <https://www.rd.usda.gov/wi>.

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# Have right ID to vote in Feb. 21 spring primary

Wisconsin Department of Transportation Division of Motor Vehicles (DMV) reminds voters to check and be sure that they have the proper identification needed to vote in this month's primary, Tuesday, Feb. 21. Wisconsin driver licenses or IDs are the most common form of identification used for voting purposes. A federally compliant REAL ID card is not required to show at the polls.

The Wisconsin Elections Commission notes other forms of identification are valid for voting, such as military or student ID cards. To see if a card meets the requirements, visit the Wisconsin Elections Commission website. Voters looking to get their first Wisconsin ID can turn to DMV for help. To obtain an official ID card, there are documentation requirements such as

a birth certificate. If all documentation is not readily available, the ID Petition Process (IDPP) may be used to obtain a receipt valid for voting while the remaining documents or verifications are obtained. DMV offers this service and ID cards for voting purposes free of charge. DMV's toll-free hotline (844) 588-1069 is available for questions on obtaining an ID to vote.