



Got her goose:
Another rare bird spotted, **B8**

Cards take off:
South Shore girls surge
into season, **B1**



Ashland Daily Press

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Slime time



The goo developed by a trio of Northland College students could help capture metal-ion pollution from used electronics or industrial waste. It is normally colorless, but after binding to copper ions the goo turns bright turquoise. (Contributed photo)

Northland students create goo that could clean up environment

BY **TOM STANKARD,**
tstankard@ashlanddailypress.net

Three Northland College students are developing a "smart" otherworldly goo that one day could be a key to cleaning up industrial waste.

Undergraduate students Mary Johnson, Phoebe Cahill and Rachel Fine developed the goo as part of their research into chelating polymers — materials that tightly bind to metal ions floating in water.

Johnson and company hope the stuff can one day help recapture metal found in used electronics and



Fine



Robertson



Northland College student Mary Johnson, with colleagues Phoebe Cahill and Rachel Fine, have developed a goo that could help reclaim trace metals from the environment. (Contributed photo)

industrial waste.

Chemistry Professor Nicholas Robertson said to think of the goo as working like the claw game at an arcade. The substance needs to ad-

here to the metals scientists hope to scour from the environment without latching on to other substances, he said.

SEE GOO • PAGE A5

Local entrepreneurs prosper through pandemic

BY **TOM STANKARD,**
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The COVID pandemic didn't seem like an ideal time to open a new business, but the Bay Area did surprisingly well during the two years that the virus ravaged the country's economy.

Aroma Coffee was among 20 businesses that opened their doors in Ashland during the pandemic, Ashland Area Chamber of Commerce Director Mary McPhetridge said. A similar entrepreneurial spirit fueled business growth in Washburn. Opening Owner Meg Gustafson said opening Aroma as the economy shut down was a gamble, but she weathered the storm and remains optimistic about what's to come.

Across the country, a similar entrepreneurial spirit took root during the pandemic, according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. Even as unemployment rates soared and many businesses closed their doors, went online or cut staff, the U.S. saw the largest increase in new business applications in recorded history, the chamber said.

In 2020, more than 4.3 million new-business applications were filed, up 24% over the previous year, with retail seeing the largest boost, up 58%, according to Census statistics.

Immigrants, Latinos, people with no high school degree and people in middle age, between 45 and 54, drove the trend, the Census found.

Washburn Area Chamber of Commerce Director Melissa Martinez has an idea of why so many new-business owners jumped in when things turned down.

"During COVID, people decided to take a chance because they saw how communities backed businesses. They saw a support system," she said.

That support has helped ScareCrow Pizza in Washburn, for example, flourish. "It was takeout-only for its first half of existence. It says a lot about them. How many restaurants can start with only takeout and survive that economic challenge?" Martinez asked.

Ashland is no different, City Administrator Brant Kucera said.

"It's a really tight-knit community here," he said.

The entrepreneurial spirit was strong in Tony Miller, who wanted to be his own boss and accomplished that by opening The Gitch Nutrition on Main Street during the heart of the pandemic.

SEE ENTREPRENEURS • PAGE A5

Sushi? BBQ? What's your pleasure?

Local leaders work to lure new businesses

BY **TOM STANKARD,**
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Bizy Wygonik has a craving for something the Bay Area doesn't really offer.

Unless she makes it herself, the Stagecoach Bar and Grill owner usually must travel to satisfy her hunger. Having a BBQ joint in town would solve that problem.

Madelaine Kemp, on the other hand, has a hankering for the kind of fish Lake Superior can't provide: Sushi. The Ashland woman loves the Japanese rice delicacy.

Ashland business and government leaders have heard those cries for help — and more — especially since City Administrator Brant Kucera



Donald Tourtillott serves a customer an order of fries at Stagecoach Bar and Grill in Ashland. Local business and government leaders are trying to attract more restaurants to town because they tend to help other businesses by encouraging people to stay and shop longer. (Tom Stankard/Staff photo)

began floating the idea of luring a wine bar to the former radiator-repair shop the city recently bought.

Ashland Area Chamber of Director Mary McPhetridge

said she and other business leaders are eager to help new businesses get off the ground.

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Superior Diocese releases names of clergy with credible claims of child sex abuse

BY DANIELLE KAEDING
Wisconsin Public Radio

The Catholic Diocese of Superior has released names of almost two dozen clergy that it says have had credible claims of sexually abusing minors made against them, including one removed from the ministry as recently as September.

The diocese published 23 names of alleged abusers on its website Tuesday evening. Many of the allegations are of abuse that took place 30 years or more ago. However, records show Father James Bartelme, 71, is on administrative leave after being removed Sept. 8 for alleged abuse that took place in Superior from 1990 to 1991.

The website for the diocese shows Bartelme retired in 2016. He was assigned to parishes in Chetek, Barron, Cameron and Strickland. Online court records show no charges have been filed against Bartelme.

The diocese said the list stems from three separate reviews of clergy files, including one analysis by private security consulting firm Defenbaugh & Associates, Inc. Bishop James P. Powers of the Catholic Diocese of Superior apologized on behalf of the church and said he prays for healing for survivors of abuse, their families and friends.

"I wish we could go back in time and undo all of the hurt and pain, the sins of the past. But we cannot," said Bishop James P. Powers in a letter to parishioners. "What we can do is learn from the past and do everything in our power to never repeat the abuse. I firmly believe that the Diocese

of Superior is clearly on the right path in protecting our children."

The list of the accused includes priests and other faith leaders who have served with the diocese, including credible allegations at other dioceses outside Wisconsin. Those named:

- Theodore Ahrens
- Thaddeus Augustyn
- James Bartelme
- Edward Beutner
- Michael Charland, OMI
- Donald Dummer, OMI
- Thomas Erickson
- Ryan Erickson
- Augustine Hanchak, CPPS
- Richard Herrmann
- Joseph Higgins
- Irving "Jack" Klister
- James Kraker
- John "Jack" Leipert
- Gerald Mahon
- David Malsch
- Lawrence Murphy
- Alan Payne
- John Regh
- Robert Scobee
- John Stremski
- Timothy Svea, ICKSP
- Louis Telegdy, CPPS

In the letter, Powers said the diocese has established a Diocesan Safe Environment Office and adopted policies and charters to protect children and young people over the past 35 years. He said more than 15,000 adults have received background checks and been trained to recognize abuse and report it to law enforcement.

The list comes after other dioceses in Wisconsin have already

published names of alleged abusers. Last year, Wisconsin Attorney General Josh Kaul launched a statewide independent review of reported abuse by clergy and leaders of faith organizations.

In April of this year, Kaul said officials had received 204 reports that led to criminal charges in one case. The list of names from the Catholic Diocese of Superior brings the total number of individuals accused statewide to nearly 180.

Last year, Kaul said not all of the state's five Catholic dioceses were cooperating with the statewide inquiry. In June 2021, the Archdiocese of Milwaukee challenged a request for documents as part of the review, saying it was "unreasonably broad" in scope. The diocese also challenged Kaul's authority to launch the investigation and raised concerns that the review only targeted the Catholic Church.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice acknowledged its review started with the Catholic Church, but it has encouraged victims to report abuse committed in any religious organization. The department has said any information provided by victims will not be shared or acted on without their consent. Those who report abuse can remain anonymous, and people can make reports online or by calling 1-877-222-2620.

The DOJ plans to issue a report of its findings once the statewide review is complete.

The diocese said the list stems from three separate reviews of clergy files, including one analysis by private security consulting firm Defenbaugh & Associates, Inc.



Aroma Coffee owner Meg Gustafson prepares an iced coffee. Her business is one of many that opened during the pandemic. (Tom Stankard/Staff photo)

» ENTREPRENEURS FROM PAGE A1

Like ScareCrow, support from the local community provided for good business during the pandemic. The Gitch sells protein shakes and energy teas as well as regular caffeine-free teas, hot or iced protein coffees and snacks.

But as the pandemic subsided, new challenges set in. For every business that opened, another seemed to close as owners struggled to find staff. Even such Ashland favorites as the Burger Barn and El Dorado restaurant closed.

But entrepreneurs continue to seek opportunities in the Bay Area. El Dorado recently reopened under a new name, El Tarasco, as owner Jose Alvarez prepares to move the business to a new location next to Kwik Trip on the opposite end of town.

On Ashland's Main Street, several businesses have opened over the past year or so, including You Made Me Ink, Knick of Time Escape Rooms and most recently Gitchi Goomii Tattoo & Arts Studio.

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"We can fit people to where they need to be and connect the dots," McPhetridge said.

But there's only so much they can do. Any new restaurant has to begin with an entrepreneur willing to take a risk.

From there, the city can help apply for grants or seek other funding help, Kucera said.

"If someone wants to locate in the district, the city can

borrow money against that district to make construction work improvements that are necessary," he said.

That sort of investment can be enough to help an entrepreneur's business plan make sense, he said.

"This is the way for the city to assist with shortfalls that will get them over the finish line and start something," Kucera said. "This diversifies the economy."

Kucera, like Wygonik and Kemp, wants to see the city attract more restaurants — but

not just to satisfy his culinary cravings. Restaurants tend to help other businesses thrive, he said.

"The foot traffic is there for a longer time and they tend to do more shopping," he said.

Melissa Martinez, Washburn Area Chamber of Commerce director, said her city has done a good job attracting such businesses, with a new Mexican restaurant, pizza place and martini bar opening in recent months.

Now she's trying to diversify the economy by attracting

more retailers.

"I'm not talking T-shirts or sweatpants. I'm talking about a place people can buy socks and underwear for a kid instead of having to drive all the way to Ashland and go to Walmart," Martinez said.

Kemp, who enjoys shopping at local clothing stores that make the Bay Area unique, would welcome that.

She — like a lot of other local customers — also hopes for something not terribly realistic: A local Kohl's.

Unless something dramatically changes in the Bay Area, a Kohls' — or a Menards, or Olive Garden or even an Aldi — isn't likely to come to the

area. National chains are driven purely by numbers.

"They look at traffic along the highways and market statistics," McPhetridge said. "I don't know if the market is really big enough."

More realistic, perhaps, is Ashland resident Steven Carlson's hope for more recreation options. He would love Ashland to attract a bowling alley or miniature golf course.

"I really enjoy those things and being a college town, I think it would do well also," the 26-year-old said.

Martinez agreed. "That would be a smart way to go if you want to see success right away," she said.



McPhetridge



Wygonik



Martinez

» GOO FROM PAGE A1

The students already have the polymer working well to attract copper and are working to get it to work with nickel and cobalt — cobalt being especially useful in making special alloys contained in advanced batteries, among other things.

"We're making all these great advances in portable electronics. When those reach the end of their lifetime, how do you pull the metals out? It's being researched throughout the world," he said.

Although their research isn't groundbreaking, it could be a baby step in a major development, Fine said.

And if it doesn't turn

The students already have the polymer working well to attract copper and are working to get it to work with nickel and cobalt — cobalt being especially useful in making special alloys contained in advanced batteries, among other things.

out that way, well, Fine said working on the type of research that can help save the environment has inspired her.

"Our project is not going to save the world. We're merely exploring one small facet of a technology that has potential ecological applications. However, the fact that our research is taking steps toward addressing issues concerning sustainability makes the work more meaningful, in addition to fitting in well

with the college's values," Fine said.

If anything, Robertson said the project gives students an opportunity to conduct their own research in their pursuit of bigger and better things after college.

Science has inspired Johnson since she was a child. Growing up, she wanted to be a shark biologist and enjoyed going to the library to

read about them. The goo project helped her realize she wants to pursue an advanced degree in chemistry, leaving the sharks to Peter Benchley fans. Her ultimate goal is to become a professor running her own lab like Robertson.

"I want to have an opportunity to teach students in the lab and interact with them," she said. "It's fun seeing them get excited. I want to do that and my own research."

If given the opportunity, Johnson wants to build upon the Northland work with polymers and research catalysts.

"They are molecules that help chemical reac-

tions happen. I think it's really cool because you can design these molecules and can make a huge difference in how it functions. I want to design catalysis to make sustainable polymers," she said. "I want to try to make polymers that could

compete with current commodity materials that are not sustainable. That would be my ideal goal."

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The School District of Ashland and the Bad River JOM / Title VII Education Committee

Invites parents / guardians of students attending the School District of Ashland to review the **Title VII—American Indian Policy and Procedures** and to provide any comments or recommendations.

Tuesday, November 29, 2022
5:00 PM—JOM / Title VII Education Committee Meeting
6:00 PM—AIPP Public Forum
Bad River Convention Center

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