



FOOD: On Gretchen's Table

Cauliflower  
twice-baked  
sweet potatoes ▶ 8B



## WAUKESHA COUNTY



# The FREEMAN

\$1.50

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## Artifacts uncovered as past resurfaces

### Construction at Club 400 reveals bits of local history

By Isabella Kostolni  
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WAUKESHA — What started out as an ordinary construction job at Club 400 ended up being an excavation of a few relics of historic Waukesha.

When the project to insert a water line began, Club 400 owner Andrea Dorantes didn't anticipate finding any artifacts. The building itself is a gold mine for old finds, but to locate bits of the bar's history around the outside of the property was unexpected.

"We're always finding treasures in this building," Dorantes said.

Monday, a construction crew uncovered Club 400's original foundation, brick pavers underneath the concrete road and sidewalk, pieces of coal, and a small, yet intriguing, bottle.

As soon as these artifacts were spotted by the construction crew, Dorantes had to take a look for herself.

"One of the workers was showing me the different layers (of the road)," she said. "There's an ash layer. The ash layer is from when people would put their coal on the street. Sometimes they would put garbage on the street and burn it. So, there's this little layer of ash that he found. We found some old coal in one of the layers."

Some of the bricks that were uncovered also appear to be stamped with the letters "BARR." After doing some research, Dorantes has come to the conclusion that the bricks must have come from the Barr Clay Company in Illinois some time in the early 1900s.

According to the Rockford Public Library in Illinois, the Barr Clay Co. also supplied bricks to be used in projects like the Civic Opera House and the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago. Some of the company's bricks were also shipped to

See CLUB 400, PAGE 8A



Isabella Kostolni/Freeman Staff

An empty Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup bottle was found outside Club 400 during construction.



Isabella Kostolni/Freeman Staff

As construction for a new waterline outside Club 400 began, the crew made some interesting discoveries.



Courtesy of Club 400

Portions of the old brick road along Williams Street were uncovered during construction.



Courtesy of Dan Pokwinski, Former owner of Club 400

In 1917, a soldier stands on the brick road outside what is now Club 400.

## Back in action

### Former alderman Betker mounts late write-in campaign

By Isabella Kostolni  
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WAUKESHA — With elections less than a week away, former Alderman Charlie Betker has entered the race for the Common Council's District 3 seat, currently held by Cassie Rodriguez. Betker hopes to return to local government, this time as a write-in candidate.

A graduate of Waukesha South High School and longtime Waukesha resident, Betker was an alderman for more than 30 years, finally retiring in 2008.

Despite retiring, Betker continues to be an outspoken member of the community. In the 15 years since he left office, Betker has still been seen at council meetings.

After listening to feedback from Waukesha residents, he decided to come out of retirement in an attempt to reclaim the position.

"Some people have contacted me and apparently they must not be satisfied with what we have," Betker said.

Betker acknowledges the difficulties that come with being a write-in candidate.

"I know when you run a write-in campaign, it's pretty hard," he said. "I can remember when other people tried to run against the incumbent. It's a little bit different than a regular election."

His decades of experience as an elected official and ongoing dedication to the community uniquely qualify him for the position, he said.

"I've been an alderman for more than three or four of (the current aldermen) put together," Betker said.

To garner support for his bid, Betker is going door to door in his district and relying on word-of-mouth distribution of information.

"This is a low-key process and that's the way it's going to be," he said.

Prior to this development, Rodriguez was running unopposed for re-election on April 4. She was first elected in 2017 after the seat was vacated by Chris Hernandez. Rodriguez was re-elected in 2020, and is now seeking a third term. She serves on the Landmarks Commission, the Ordinance & License Committee and the Human Resources Committee. She is currently chair of the HRC.

Rodriguez did not respond to requests for comment.

## SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WAUKESHA

# Community reacts to removal of 'Rainbowland' from Heyer concert

### District standing behind policy on controversial material

By Karen Pilarski  
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WAUKESHA — At the heart of the argument over a pop/country song's inclusion in a spring concert is the question of whether it is age-appropriate for young ears.

"Rainbowland" by Dolly Parton and Miley Cyrus was on the list of songs for first-graders at Heyer Elementary School to sing during a spring concert. During the review process, the song was nixed due to possibility of it being perceived as controversial. The Freeman reached out to the principal at Heyer and the Waukesha Board of Education, as well as Superintendent Jim Sebert, about the song.

"It was determined that

'Rainbowland' could be perceived as controversial according to SDW Board Policy 2240. The teacher was asked to pick a different song for the first grade concert, which ended up being 'Rainbow Connection' by Jim Henson. That song is great for first graders and fits in their concert theme as well," Sebert said in an email last week.

"Policy 2240 has a number of areas that it covers and remember these are six-and seven-year-olds."

Sebert said the main question was is the song appropriate for the age level and maturity of the students. While the Board of Education wasn't involved in the decision-making process about the song, the policy Sebert spoke of guides the district.

According to the policy, a controversial issue is a topic in "which opposing points of view have been promulgated by responsible opinion. Which may be the subject of intense public argument, disagreement or disapproval. The topic may have political, social or personal impacts on students and/or the community, and which is likely to arouse both support and opposition in the community."

"The board will allow controversial issues to be used when it is related to the instructional goals of the course of study, appropriate for the age and maturity level of the students, does not indoctrinate or persuade students to a particular point of view; encourages open-mindedness and is conducted in a spirit of scholarly inquiry; does not cause a substantial disruption in the school environment and does not create a hostile school environment."

## SOUND OFF

What do you think?

Phone: 262-513-2641

Email: soundoff@conley.net.com

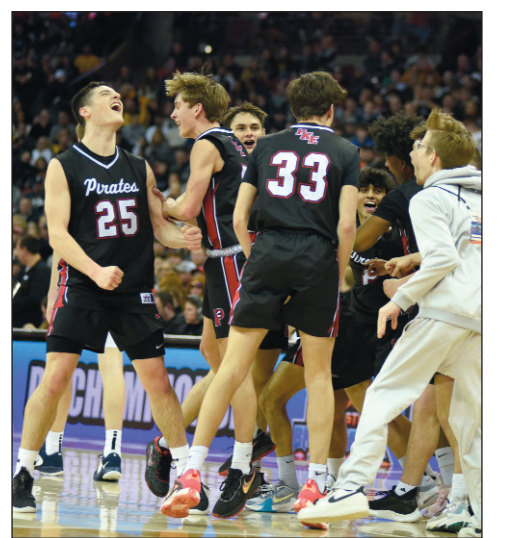
On Tuesday, Sebert emailed The Freeman again.

"We don't have any updates to provide on this matter other than to point out that the District did not insert itself into this school matter. Rather we were asked for guidance like we are nearly every day and provided it to ensure that age appropriateness was at the center of decision making like always," Sebert said.

### Community comments

Kathy Immekus has been a resident of Waukesha since 1974. Her daughter went to Lowell, Butler and North High School. She recalled the only controversy was that North

See CONCERT, PAGE 8A



## Coming up in The Freeman

Get ready, Waukesha County. The annual All-Freeman boys basketball awards will be announced in this Saturday's paper! Make sure to pick up a copy to find out who made the All-Freeman team and who will be this year's Player of the Year and Coach of the Year.

Volume 165 No. 1



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### WEATHER



Tomorrow:  
Mostly cloudy

High 47 / Low 19

See complete forecast on Page 8A

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**FIVE-DAY FORECAST**

**TONIGHT**  
Clear  
18

**TOMORROW**  
Mostly Cloudy  
47/19

**FRIDAY**  
Scattered Rain  
46/31

**SATURDAY**  
Scattered Snow  
41/26

**SUNDAY**  
Partly Cloudy  
55/41

**REGIONAL FORECAST**

**COMFORT INDEX**  
5  
What the air will feel like tomorrow, based on the temperature, humidity and wind speed. 1 poor; 10 excellent.

**ALMANAC**  
Statistics for Yesterday  
High/Low, Waukesha . . . . . 41/23  
High/Low . . . . . 48/27  
Normal High/Low . . . . . 48/32  
Last year's high for date . . . . . 32  
Last year's low for date . . . . . 21  
Precipitation, Waukesha . . . . . 0.00"  
Precipitation . . . . . 0.00"  
Precip. month to date . . . . . 3.20"  
Precip. year to date . . . . . 9.53"  
Snowfall Yesterday . . . . . 0.0"  
Snow season to date . . . . . 51.6"

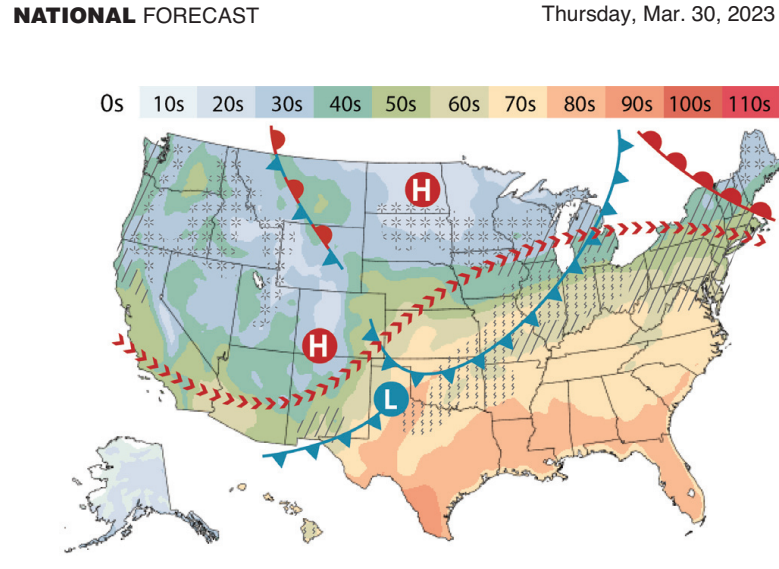
**WIND CHILL TOMORROW**  
A composite of the effects of temperature and wind on the human body  
8 a.m. . . . . 24  
Noon . . . . . 32  
4 p.m. . . . . 34  
8 p.m. . . . . 30

**HEATING DEGREE**  
An index of energy consumption indicating how many degrees the day's mean temperature was below 65 degrees.  
Yesterday . . . . . 27  
Month to date . . . . . 812  
Season to date . . . . . 4961  
Normal season to date . . . . . 5469

**ALMANAC**  
Apr. 6 Full  
Apr. 13 Last  
Apr. 20 New  
Apr. 27 First

Sunset today . . . . . 7:15 p.m.  
Sunrise tomorrow . . . . . 6:38 a.m.

Moonrise tomorrow . . . . . 12:38 p.m.  
Moonset tomorrow . . . . . 3:57 a.m.



**SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN**  
Tonight: Clear. Lows around 18. West winds up to 5 mph.  
Thursday: Not as cool. Sunny in the morning, then mostly cloudy with a 30 percent chance of light rain, possibly mixed with snow in the afternoon. Highs in the upper 40s. South winds 5 to 15 mph.

**MARINE FORECAST**  
**Lake Michigan near shore forecast:**  
Tonight: NW wind 5 to 10 kt. Clear. Waves 1 ft or less. Thursday: SSW wind 5 to 10 kt. A slight chance of rain and snow after 1pm. Waves 1 ft or less building to 4 ft.  
Lake Michigan water temperature is 34 degrees.

**ULTRAVIOLET INDEX FORECAST**  
The UVI forecast for Thursday is 4  
UV scale and warnings on possible skin damage: 0-2 low risk, 3-5 moderate risk, 6-7 high risk, 8-10 very high risk, 11-over extreme risk.

**TRAVEL ADVISORY FOR TOMORROW**

<b>ATLANTA</b> High: 71 Low: 43	<b>CHICAGO</b> High: 50 Low: 26	<b>DALLAS</b> High: 73 Low: 55
<b>DENVER</b> High: 68 Low: 29	<b>LOS ANGELES</b> High: 59 Low: 47	<b>MIAMI</b> High: 79 Low: 72
<b>MINNEAPOLIS</b> High: 41 Low: 14	<b>NEW YORK</b> High: 47 Low: 32	<b>PHOENIX</b> High: 65 Low: 53
<b>SEATTLE</b> High: 54 Low: 42	<b>ST. LOUIS</b> High: 64 Low: 37	<b>WASHINGTON</b> High: 53 Low: 35

# 38 dead in Mexico fire after guards didn't let migrants out

CIUDAD JUAREZ, Mexico (AP) — When smoke began billowing out of a migrant detention center in the Mexican border city of Ciudad Juarez, Venezuelan migrant Viangly Infante Padrón was terrified because she knew her husband was still inside.

The father of her three children had been picked up by immigration agents earlier in the day, part of a recent crackdown that netted 67 other migrants, many of whom were asking for handouts or washing car windows at stoplights in this city across the Rio Grande from El Paso, Texas.

Infante Padrón recounted how she saw immigration agents rush out of the building after fire started late Monday. Later came the migrants' bodies carried out on stretchers, wrapped

in foil blankets. The toll: 38 dead in all and 28 seriously injured, victims of a blaze apparently set in protest by the detainees themselves.

"I was desperate because I saw a dead body, a body, a body, and I didn't see him anywhere," Infante Padrón said of her husband, Eduard Caraballo López, who in the end survived with only light injuries, perhaps because he was scheduled for release and was near a door.

But what she saw in those first minutes has become the center of a question much of Mexico is asking itself: Why didn't authorities attempt to release the men — almost all from Guatemala, Honduras, Venezuela and El Salvador — before smoke filled the room and killed so many?

"There was smoke everywhere. The ones they let out

were the women, and those (employees) with immigration," Infante Padrón said. "The men, they never took them out until the firefighters arrived."

Immigration authorities said they released 15 women when the fire broke out, but have not explained why no men were released.

Surveillance video leaked Tuesday shows migrants, reportedly fearing they were about to be moved, placing foam mattresses against the bars of their detention cell and setting them on fire.

In the video, later confirmed by the government, two people dressed as guards rush into the camera frame, and at least one migrant appears by the metal gate on the other side. But the guards don't appear to make any effort to open the cell doors and



Migrants grieve in front of a Mexican immigration detention center in Ciudad Juarez, Mexico, on Tuesday, where a fire in a dormitory left more than three dozen migrants dead. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said the fire was started by migrants in protest after learning they would be deported.



Some of the bricks were stamped with the letters "BARR." Dorantes found out that these bricks came from the Barr Clay Company in Illinois

## Club 400

From Page 1A

Central America to be used in the construction of the Panama Canal. The Barr Clay Co. closed its doors in 1923.

Local historian John Schoenkecht said brick roads were used for many decades in Waukesha. "They lasted from the early 1900s and there were still some there in the '60s and '70s," he said.

As Schoenkecht explains it, many cities began to move away from brick pavers during the mid-20th century for both economic and durability reasons.

"The bricks would heave with the frost," he said. "To just do blacktopping was a lot cheaper and more stable."

**History made permanent**

Beyond the bits of brick and foundation, the crew also discovered a curious glass bottle. The empty container is emblazoned with the words "Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup."

According to the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup was a patent medicine introduced in the 1800s that was marketed as a way to calm fussy babies, clean teeth, and freshen breath. Patent medicine is a term that was used for medication that could be purchased without a prescription. Ingredients

in these treatments generally remained undisclosed to consumers.

Unbeknownst to parents, the syrup contained alcohol and morphine in dangerous amounts. Because morphine can be lethal, even in small quantities, some children who took the syrup went to sleep and never woke up. Despite the American Medical Association denouncing the product in the early 20th century after the passage of the Pure Food and Drug Act, Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup remained on the shelves of consumers until the 1930s.

Dorantes is working out a way to display these new discoveries in the bar in order to continue to showcase the business's history.

"I plan on keeping them somewhere in here," she said. "When people come into the bar, we always show them around. We take them into the basement, we show them the old foundation and the old wood floors. So, I'm going to keep the bricks and bottle here."

Ever since taking over the business in 2021, Dorantes has committed to honoring Club 400's history.

"We do this by celebrating the anniversary of the bar every year, by keeping the name the same," she said. "We brought back live music, since it was Les Paul's family's bar. We try to have live music and local artists as much as we can. That's another way we honor the legacy of the bar."

Originally called the Northwestern Hotel, the

building at 322 Williams St. first opened its doors for lodging and dining in 1894. Decades later, the name was changed to Club 400, as a tribute to the 400 Train that would make stops at the old train station across the street. In 1948, the business was taken over by Les Paul's brother and father, George and Ralph Polfuss.

Dorantes acknowledges the significance of the building, and plans to keep its history at the forefront of customers' minds.

"There's an old door that we had to replace because of fire code," she said. "But we are finding a place to display it because it's the original door from 1948. It really shows the time period of the building."

These unearthings brought Dorantes joy and gave her a sense of Waukesha's past.

"It was really cool to see little bits of what it was like," she said. "Now, we can say 'that was used in this building' or 'that's how people lived' or 'this is what people used' or 'that was what the road was like.' I was excited. It was fun."

With new construction cropping up throughout the city, Dorantes wants the community to reflect on days gone by.

"As Waukesha starts changing, as new apartments are being built and they're updating a lot of stuff, it's important just to hold on to the historical part of Waukesha. When you see old brick or an old building, appreciate it," she said.

# AP sources: Judge rules Pence must testify before grand jury

WASHINGTON (AP) — A federal judge has ruled that former Vice President Mike Pence will have to testify before a grand jury in the Justice Department's investigation into efforts by former President Donald Trump and his allies to overturn the results of the 2020 election.

That's according to two people familiar with the decision, who spoke Tuesday on condition of anonymity because it remains under seal.

The people said, however, that Pence would not have to answer questions about his actions on Jan. 6, 2021, when a mob of Trump's supporters stormed the Capitol building as Pence was presiding over a joint session of Congress to certify Democrat Joe Biden's victory. But he would have to testify about any potential illegal acts committed by the former president, one of the people said.

Pence and his attorneys had cited constitutional grounds in challenging the grand jury's subpoena. They argued that, because he was serving as president of the Senate that day, he was protected from being forced to testify under the Constitution's "speech or debate" clause, which is intended to protect members of Congress from questioning about official legislative acts.

Trump's lawyers had also objected to Pence complying, citing executive privilege.

A Trump spokesman criticized the decision in a statement, accusing the Justice Department of "continuously stepping far outside the standard norms in attempting to destroy the long accepted, long held, constitutionally based standards of attorney-client privilege and executive privilege."

Pence's team is evaluating whether it will appeal.

# AP sources: No more action from Trump grand jury this week

NEW YORK (AP) — The Manhattan grand jury that has been hearing testimony about hush money paid on Donald Trump's behalf will not take up that inquiry again this week, meaning any potential vote on an indictment won't happen until next week at the earliest, two people familiar with the matter said Tuesday.

The panel did meet on Monday, and a longtime Trump friend and potential key witness in the

investigation was seen leaving the building where the grand jury has been meeting.

The grand jury has been meeting regularly on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, but did not hold last Wednesday's session and met last Thursday for other unrelated matters.

Trump has ratcheted up anticipation that an indictment could be near by posting on his social media platform that he expected to be arrested imminently.

# Concert

From Page 1A

High School had an open classroom concept when it opened in 1974.

She said the school environment now means no rainbows in classrooms, on clothes, and even lanyards need to be one color.

"Banned books that they felt were inappropriate. They have told teachers what they can and can't wear, yet I see students going to school with tops exposing their stomachs and pants practically falling off their hips. Now they have taken on the role of censorship of what songs can be sung at a spring concert put on by first graders," she said.

Immekus said she found nothing wrong about the song.

# Questions remain

Many people are asking what specifically is wrong with "Rainbowland." Helen Lewis said the district should state why the song is controversial.

"How are teachers expected to know what's allowed or not when the people agreeing with banning the song can't even explain or agree among themselves why it should be banned?"

"Not to mention it's a ridiculous waste of time and resources scrutinizing song choices to decide if someone in the community might decide its controversial when we're supposed to be focused as a district on improving academic achievement," Lewis said.

Charlotte Peterson also wanted to know what the real controversy was.

"Were there actual complaints, or just questions? Is the concern over 'rainbow' or the lyrics saying the world is a mess? And what steps were taken? What was the decision process? I'm all for schools being trusted to make decisions. And I support parents having access to the decisions. It seems this has become a sensationalized topic without having facts or real information," Peterson said.

Steven David said he read the lyrics to "Rainbowland" and doesn't understand the fuss.

"Interesting that they chose 'The Rainbow Connection' by Kermit the Frog as an alternative, which contains references to a morning star, a spell, magic, and dreamy voices calling out to young sailors," David said.

Dawn Westburg said when she was in grade school, for music class, students had to sing the theme song from the show "M\*A\*S\*H."

"You know, 'Suicide is Painless'. Yep, a bunch of kids singing about suicide. Nobody objected to that, but rainbows? Inclusivity? Everyone getting along? Outrageous," she said.

Mikey Dietrich is a professional DJ. He said he would have to listen to the lyrics, then determine if it is appropriate for the age group.

"For example, if the song has political overtones, then I might deem it inappropriate for first graders. It largely depends on what the song is trying to say. Maybe they are not trying to send a message, in which case people need to relax. If they are sending a message, well, then it depends on the message," Dietrich said.

Dan Schneiderman said to remember this is a song and these are children.

"That's it, no hidden agenda, no politics, no negativity, just a song. We have a whole community of adults clamoring about how the song should be sung or how it shouldn't be sung and we all want to sit here and debate on Facebook, but has anyone just simply asked the children what they would like to sing? Does their opinion matter at all? Do we really feel the need to protect them from a song? The sooner you allow children to make their own decisions, the better their decisions get as they grow older."

"They and their music teacher are perfectly capable to decide what they want to sing and what they don't want to sing."

"People who act like children are these unintelligent people who can't think for themselves. The only reason they can't think for themselves is simply because they have not learned it yet. It's a song and they have a voice. Does anyone remember what it's like to be a child? They don't care about politics or agenda, they just want to sing a song. Let them pick their own song to sing. Stop trying to control them so much," Schneiderman said.