



Waukesha South esports team wins second state title

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WAUKESHA COUNTY



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Shine of the times

Car wash popularity rising



Photos by Katherine Beck/Freeman Staff

The view from inside a car wash.

By Katherine Beck
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For many growing up in America, a car wash meant mom or dad handing you a bucket filled with a big sponge and soapy water and being told to wash the car in the driveway. Increasingly, that method has gone by the wayside as more people opt to drive through a standalone car wash or one attached to a gas station. The growing popularity of car washes can be witnessed by the locations being constructed around Waukesha County, sometimes even across from one another like in Muskego.

Adam Trzebiatowski, planning manager for Muskego, said car washes aren't unusual in the city, although in the past they have tended to be at gas stations whereas the two that are being built are free-standing operations. When the proposal for the Jilly's Car Wash came forward on the east side of Moorland Road on Commerce Center Parkway at about the same time the proposal for the A.J. Car Wash on the west side of the road was presented, the two developers were made aware of each other's plans, but they decided to proceed. While their operations will be similar, Trzebiatowski said their appearances will be very different.

Waukesha is also getting two new car washes, however, they will be on opposite sides of town. Both are being constructed on the sites of former restaurants that have been demolished. Land near the corner of Sunset



A vehicle goes through the car wash at Kwik Trip off Racine Avenue in Waukesha on Friday. About half of Kwik Trip locations have a car wash.

Drive and Grand Avenue that was home to a convenience store and Pho King restaurant has been prepped for a Tsunami Car Wash. Drive a few miles across the city, and the future home of a Jilly's Car Wash can be found on property that was the site of Albanese's Road House at 2301 Bluemound Road.

Neither Jilly's nor Tsunami Car Wash responded to requests for comment for the story. Several Jilly's have been constructed across southeastern Wisconsin. The Waukesha location will include a stacking lane which will allow for up to 16 vehicles. There will be 20 stalls for vacuuming and cleaning cars after they have gone through the wash.

See WASH, PAGE 6A

By the numbers

16,976 car washes in the United States in 2019

\$14.7 billion was the valuation of the industry in 2022

\$11.2 billion was the valuation of the industry in 2014

84.2% of washing and cleaning services were for cars and light-duty trucks in 2017

\$5 billion of \$9.7 billion car wash sales in 2017 were for automatic washing and waxing services

Source: U.S. Census Bureau and Statista

SCHOOL DISTRICT OF WAUKESHA

Teacher behind 'Rainbowland' controversy to have hearing on July 12

Melissa Tempel faces possible termination

By Karen Pilarski
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WAUKESHA — The School District of Waukesha teacher who brought attention to the removal of a song from a spring concert will have a hearing on July 12 regarding her possible termination. Melissa Tempel is a dual language teacher at Heyer Elementary School for the first grade.

Superintendent Jim Sebert confirmed to The Freeman the date of her hearing. Tempel hasn't responded to repeated requests for comment.

During the hearing, Tempel will have the right to legal representation at her expense, as well as the right to call witnesses, present evidence and/or testimony on her behalf and to cross-examine district witnesses. At Tempel's request, the hearing may be held in open session.

The Alliance for Education in Waukesha, on behalf of Tempel, previously provided a copy of the investigation letter to The Freeman. The letter was from Sebert to Tempel.

According to her Twitter profile, Tempel calls herself a "teacher activist."

The letter, dated May 15, said the district completed its investigation into Tempel's conduct in response to the "Rainbowland" song not being included in a Heyer Elementary School concert.

The letter said Tempel is entitled to agree or disagree with the decision over the song however her way of expressing it was "inappropriate." The letter said she violated various district policies and didn't raise her concerns through the appropriate channels.

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Two finalists selected for Menomonee Falls superintendent

Interim Superintendent James Heiden's contact was extended

By Karen Pilarski
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MENOMONEE FALLS — The School District of Menomonee Falls Board of Education has selected two finalists for its next superintendent of schools following a nationwide search and first-round interviews: Jerome Sardina and David Muñoz.

Sardina has been the superintendent of schools at Iron Mountain Public Schools in Iron Mountain, Michigan, since 2019. From 2014-2019, he served as principal at South Haven High School in South Haven, Michigan. From 2007-2014, he served Stephenson Middle School and High School in Stephenson, Michigan, in roles including principal, assistant principal and athletic director. From 1994-2007, Sardina was a law enforcement officer for Greenfield in Wisconsin.

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WEATHER



Tomorrow:
Showers likely
High 78 / Low 56

See complete forecast on Page 8A

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Celebrating our 25th year in Waukesha County



Katherine Beck/Freeman Staff

Car owners use the vacuums at Take 5 Car Wash, 1676 Arcadian Ave., Waukesha, on Friday. Most standalone car proposals include multiple vacuum cleaners for customers.

Wash

From Page 1A

Plans for the Tsunami Car Wash call for a 4,800-square-foot building with a single car wash bay that will run parallel to Sunset Drive. There will be two stacking lanes that will run between the street and the front of the building. Vacuums will also be available for use and two dog-washing stations have been incorporated into the plans.

Having enough space to accommodate cars waiting for a wash is definitely a concern, as is witnessed on an early spring day when vehicles covered in road salt often stretch across parking lots, such as at Kwik Trip locations.

Shannon Jandt, project manager car wash at Kwik Trip, Inc., said about 50% of its locations have car washes. It's a feature the business likes to incorporate into any of its locations when there is enough space for one.

There's no doubt that car washes are more popular than ever, Jandt said.

"The convenience of automatic car washes has certainly increased. People are washing more in automatic car washes versus at home. While there are other factors too, washing at an automatic car wash tends to be more environmentally friendly and saves people time," she said in an email.

National numbers from United States Census Bureau back that up. According

to the 2019 County Business Patterns program, the amount of car washes in the U.S. grew by 6.8% from 2015 to 2019 for a total of 16,976 car washes with paid employees. The industry had a valuation of \$14.7 billion in 2022, compared to \$14.5 billion in 2019 and \$11.2 billion in 2014, according to Statista.

The largest number of vehicles visit Kwik Trips during the winter followed by spring and early summer when pollen fills the air.

While Wisconsin doesn't make it on to the list of the top 10 states for the number of car washes, Illinois does with 721 in 2019. California came in No. 1 with 2,025 that same year, according to the U.S. Census.

While new car washes have tended to be standalone businesses versus additions to gas stations, Jandt says Kwik Trip's employees and customer service are what give it an edge over competition.

"Our coworkers at each location are vital to ensuring that the washes are working properly and that our guests have a good experience. Our retail coworkers have scheduled daily time in their bays to pick up debris, fill the salt and watch vehicles while they are washing to verify that everything is working as it should," she said. "They are our front line to ensure each guest is getting a consistent wash whether they use one of our washes in Waukesha or in Des Moines, Iowa."

Regular maintenance is also conducted to make sure every part of the car wash process is working as it should. Plus, Jandt said customers can get gas and food items during the same visit.

With so many car washes around the area, each brand tries to set itself apart, whether that's getting a discount on a car wash with the purchase of gas or using reclaimed water at Bubble's Foam Farm in Oconomowoc.

Opened in 2020, Bubble's Foam Farm, 1604 Water Place, also offers slow-spin brushes that are gentler on the car and operate more quietly, as well as a longer tunnel so vehicles get a more thorough wash and have a shorter wait time.

Co-owner Chris Mullett said in 2020 that he believes Bubble's car wash provides a better wash than most in-bay washes because of the number of touches the vehicle receives.

When drivers first enter the wash, an attendant power-washes salt, dirt and grime off the car to prep it to go into the car wash. From there, different detergents and shampoos are applied to allow stuff to quickly dissolve and slide off the car before the brushes even touch it.

"Our brushes rotate at not even a third of the speed of your typical brush car wash," Mullett said. "... (T)hey spin slow and barely touch the car. So, every spot on the car gets a gentle hand clean."

Teacher

From Page 1A

The letter said Tempel "significantly undermined the interests" of the district and did so "deliberately and repeatedly." Sebert concluded the letter saying that he will be recommending to the Board of Education that her employment be terminated.

The letter said Tempel will be offered an opportunity for a hearing before the Board of Education regarding the recommendation of termination.

Background of controversy

The controversy around "Rainbowland" by Dolly Parton and Miley Cyrus came after it was on the list of songs for first-graders at Heyer Elementary School to sing during a spring concert.

Tempel previously told The Freeman she and her colleague found "Rainbowland" and felt the students would love the catchy tune. The two first-grade teachers came up with "Rainbow Connection" from "The Muppet Movie." There is also a Spanish song called "De Colores" which is about the colors of the world.

"It was a slow song so we thought we should pick 'Rainbowland' because it is faster. So, the kids don't get bored with slower songs," she said.

Tempel later received an email from the music teacher indicating the principal said they were not able to use "Rainbowland." Tempel said she was told they couldn't use "Rainbow Connection" due to a complaint.

Tempel felt the district was taking things too far and not looking out for the best interests of students.

"They need to feel welcome at the school and we need be transparent about what is going on. They are very confused as to why they can't sing 'Rainbowland.' They are very hurt by it. They were so upset. I don't know what to say. That is the honest truth," she said.

In a previous letter, Board of Education President Kelly Piacsek and Sebert addressed the policy used to decide on the fate of the song.

"This policy which is shared among hundreds of school districts across the country, states controversial topics include those which might create significant disagreement within the community, which this topic certainly has done," the letter said.

The letter said the Heyer officials made their decision after considering the song's appropriateness for the school setting and subject matter in its lyrics. They also considered the age and maturity of the grade level.

Falls

From Page 1A

Sardina graduated from Milwaukee Area Technical College with an associate degree in Police Science, Maranatha University with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration and Management, and Northern Michigan University with a Master of Arts in Education Administration and Supervision in Elementary and Secondary Adminis-

tration.

Muñoz has been the superintendent of schools at Mosinee School District in Mosinee since 2019. From 2010-2019, he served the Menomonie School District as principal of Menomonie High School. From 2003-2010, he served the Wausau School District as associate principal of Wausau West High School in Wausau.

Muñoz graduated from Lawrence University with a Bachelor of Arts in Government, Lakeland College with a Bachelor of

Arts in Broad Field Social Studies, 6-12, and the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee with a Master of Science in Administrative Leadership and Supervision in Education. Muñoz earned his Superintendent Educational Specialist Certification from Viterbo University.

During the first week in July, each finalist will tour the district and community with board members and meet school principals. Final interviews will be held with key administrators following the

finalists' day in the district. Once a superintendent is selected, the board will schedule events to introduce him to staff and the community.

In February the one-year contract of Interim Superintendent James Heiden was extended through the 2023-24 school year, according to a post on the district's Facebook page.

The additional one-year contract will give the district stable leadership and support, allowing the board to continue active

recruitment to hire a permanent superintendent, the post says. "Dr. Heiden has done a tremendous job in the past six months he has served as interim superintendent. He is, by far, the best person to continue the board's commitment to stability," said Eric Pelzer, board president. "We are fortunate to have his leadership experience to steer us toward success."

Last fall, the board launched a search for a permanent superintendent with the executive search firm HYA.

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