



Eye opening

At Monday morning's legislative exchange, in the Monroe County Board assembly room, I was very impressed with what Monroe County Board President, Cedrick Schnitzler, had put together. Many departments aired their views and offered ways to improve state and federal opportunities and statutes.

To me, this was very eye opening, at how much the local-county government depends on the state and federal governments for funding. The department heads that spoke offered all valid changes to legislation. They spoke to the state representatives and federal representatives, face to face.

The state representatives were very in-tune and aware with what the department heads were talking about and asked many questions during the session, to help get to the grit of the issues.

In recent weeks, at the newspaper office, there has been talks about reviving the editorial page. When I originally took over as editor, about a year ago now, that was not a priority of mine. My focus was on local news and what is going on in Monroe County and the area we cover. My goal was to stay focused on hyperlocal news.

With my goals and priorities, I lost sight of what an editorial (opinion) page means to a newspaper. It keeps people engaged and thinking about more than just what's going on



Kyle's Files
By Kyle Evans

here locally.

Editorials are not news, but rather reasoned opinions based on facts. The reviving of the Editorial page will feature letters from our state and federal representatives on various bills and topics. It may also have editorials from locals or local government officials and maybe some cartoons.

Also, locals can engage, by writing in letters to the editor. Maybe you don't agree with a state representatives' viewpoint on things, and maybe you want to put your viewpoint out there.

Now, with Benny as the Editor, we all feel this will be a good thing for engagement and provide readers with some insight to what's going on, on a local, state and federal level. But it will only be this page, the other pages will still provide hyperlocal Monroe County news.

We've decided it'll be best to start with a weekly editorial page. It may grow as we move along, but for now, we will start to have this page every Thursday.

To send in letters to the editor or editorials to be considered e-mail Benny Mailman at editor@monroecountyherald.com.

From the Editor's Desk

Greetings super cool awesome humans of Monroe County. Wow, it has been a maximum-effort week for me, both as editor and reporter. I had the fortunate opportunity to interview Dr. Judy Lottmann, MD, on Tuesday. Dr. Lottmann took my appendix out when I was in ninth grade, so I feel, in a way, it is a full-circle moment in the cosmos. We chatted about her schooling, as well as her continued work with rural Wisconsin hospitals and her work in the field of Bioethics. My wife came with me for the nice drive, deep into Warrens cranberry country.

I get swamped here at the office, which unfortunately means that I do not make it over to Tomah that often, so I took the opportunity, while I was in the area, to stop by the Tomah Chamber of Commerce. I chatted with Tina Thompson for a bit, and it was a very informative discussion. That is another article Kyle and I are working on, for the Sparta and Tomah



Benny Mailman
Editor

Chambers. There is such a feeling of warmth and comfort in that building. Megan and Berta, along with Tina, are the coolest and kindest people you could hope to run into.

The weather, wow. I told my wife, around November, that I could not explain a Wisconsin winter, and that she would have to experience it in real time, to pass judgement on it. I think she is doing quite well, but we have not had the long walks we enjoyed in the fall.

Many things between my wife's culture and the American culture are quite different... well, really different. Among those things is humor. Yesterday, she asked me what the difference was between hippo and zippo. She was laughing hysterically. I told her, while I found it (to

quite a lesser degree) to be funny also, it was not a gut-buster to me. Later in the night, I said, "Well, as a comedian, a hippo is heavy and a Zippo is lighter."

She starts laughing even harder, and says, "I know, that is what it said in the meme."

"You got me," I said. Apparently watching the question marks in my eyes provided her with hours of enjoyment, as I was very confused as to her continuing "Hippo/Zippo" remarks.

That was actually one of the first endearing qualities I noticed with her, in Cambodia. Wherever we went, she made people laugh, always. Whether it was the lady selling root vegetables, or the ticket man at the bus station, she always had them in stitches. Mind you, I had no idea what she was saying because she was speaking in her native tongue, Khmer. But I would smile, knowing we had the same outlook on life: making people happy.

Stay cool Monroe County.

Letters to the Editor policy

The Herald encourages letters to the editor on current issues. Please limit letters to 500 words or fewer, anything over 500 words will be at the editor's discretion. Letters should not contain any libelous statements. The Herald reserves the right to edit letters or not publish those it deems inappropriate. Writers may submit one letter per 30 days. Letters must be signed and include the author's address and phone number for verification; letters will not be published without this information. The Herald will not publish a letter to the editor from a political candidate in an upcoming election or thanking the voters, those candidates can purchase advertising space. Letters must be submitted in an electronic format through e-mail or through monroecountyherald.com. Letters can be e-mailed to editor@monroecountyherald.com, please put "letter to the editor" on the subject line or go to monroecountyherald.com under submissions, click letter to the editor.

Guest opinion policy

Guest opinions should not contain any libelous statements. The Herald reserves the right to edit guest opinions or not publish those it deems inappropriate. The Herald will print guest opinions at the editor's discretion.

Deadline

The deadline for either guest opinion or a letter to the editor is Friday at noon for a Monday paper or Wednesday at noon for a Thursday paper.

Letters to the Editor

Vote Kelly in Supreme Court Primary

Dear Editor:

I am encouraging a vote for Justice Daniel Kelly in the Primary Election for the Wisconsin Supreme Court, on February 21st. There are four candidates in this non-partisan primary, which will determine the two candidates for the April 4th Spring Election.

There are two conservative candidates, Justice Daniel Kelly and Judge Jennifer Dorow, who are both highly qualified individuals that will rule on the word of law, such as the Constitution, and will put their personal preferences aside. The other two have expressed opinions sounding like legislators who make the laws, not justices that decide if the laws are valid, or were followed. Both Kelly and Dorow understand this significant difference.

Both Justice Kelly and Judge Dorow have a long list of endorsements from Sheriffs. Both are endorsed by Wisconsin Right to Life, but Kelly is also endorsed by Wisconsin Family Action and Pro-Life Wisconsin.

Justice Kelly is the better candidate for the Supreme Court given his experience as a litigator, law clerk, special prosecutor, and previous experience on the Wisconsin Supreme Court. Most recently he was a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Reforming Government, where he authored a manual on legislative oversight. Justice Kelly has visited Monroe County on several occasions.

Join me in voting for Justice Daniel Kelly in the Primary Election for Wisconsin Supreme Court on February 21st and again in the April 4th Spring Election. He is the best candidate!

John Christy
Cataract

Guest Opinion

Bail Reform Will Help Fight Violent Crime

As a state senator, I've worked alongside our law enforcement officers, on legislation and also on ride-alongs. I've spent time with the Wisconsin State Patrol and several county sheriff's departments, across Central Wisconsin. Nothing that I'd seen though, could prepare me for the day I spent with the Milwaukee Police Department, last summer. I saw the victim of a homicide – one of 224 people killed in Milwaukee in 2022 – and I was there later that day, when the officers responded to shots fired. While it's a day I'll never forget, it has unfortunately become all too common for our officers. That's why I support a constitutional amendment to reform our bail system.

Recent statistics from Milwaukee indicate that nearly twenty percent of those suspected of attempting or committing murder were out on bond for a different felony.



Patrick Testin
24th Senate District

Even worse, some of these individuals purchased their freedom with only a signature or a few hundred dollars.

Currently, the Wisconsin Constitution prohibits judges and court commissioners from considering a number of factors, when determining whether to impose cash bail. Some might say that's just how the system works. I say it's a good example of a system that doesn't work – especially in the wake of the Waukesha Christmas parade tragedy, where Darrell Brooks, who was out on bail, killed six people and injured sixty-two others.

The proposed constitutional amendment unties the hands of

our justice system, by allowing courts to set conditions of release, to prevent serious harm to the public and enabling courts to consider all of the circumstances surrounding a crime. This would include its seriousness, previous convictions of the accused, the probability that the defendant will appear in court and the need to prevent witness intimidation when setting cash bail.

To become part of the state constitution, an amendment must pass both houses of the legislature in consecutive sessions. This amendment has done so, picking up votes from members of both parties along the way. Now all that's needed for adoption is to win approval from the voters in this spring's election on April 4th. Dangerous people should not be allowed to buy the opportunity to strike again.

Patrick Testin is a Wisconsin State Senator in the 24th District.

THE LAST TIME THE "GREEN COMET" APPEARED WE WERE IN THE STONE AGE



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